

When Life Unravels

Lessons from Lamentations

November 5, 2023



"Is anyone crying for help? GOD is listening, ready to rescue you. If your heart is broken, you'll find GOD right there; if you're kicked in the gut, he'll help you catch your breath. Disciples so often get into trouble; still, GOD is there every time. He's your bodyguard, shielding every bone; not even a finger gets broken. Psalm 34:17-20 (MSG)

When life unravels:

1. EXPRESS _____.

Lamentations 3:1-9 (NLT) – "I am the one who has seen the afflictions that come from the rod of the LORD's anger. He has led me into darkness, shutting out all light. He has turned his hand against me again and again, all day long. He has made my skin and flesh grow old. He has broken my bones. He has besieged and surrounded me with anguish and distress. He has buried me in a dark place, like those long dead. He has walled me in, and I cannot escape. He has bound me in heavy chains. And though I cry and shout, he has shut out my prayers. He has blocked my way with a high stone wall; he has made my road crooked."

Lamentations 3:17-18 (CEV) – "I cannot find peace or remember happiness. I tell myself, "I am finished! I can't count on the LORD to do anything for me."

2. REFOCUS _____.

Lamentations 3:19-24 (GNT) – "The thought of my pain, my homelessness, is bitter poison. I think of it constantly, and my spirit is depressed. Yet hope returns when I remember this one thing: The LORD's unfailing love and mercy still continue, fresh as the morning, as sure as the sunrise. The LORD is all I have, and so in him I put my hope."

Lamentations 3:31-33 (GNT) – "The Lord is merciful and will not reject us forever. He may bring us sorrow, but his love for us is sure and strong. He takes no pleasure in causing us grief or pain."

3. WITHDRAW _____.

Lamentations 3:28-29 (MSG) – "When life is heavy and hard to take, go off by yourself. Enter the silence. Bow in prayer. Don't ask questions: Wait for hope to appear."

Matthew 6:6 (MSG) – "Here's what I want you to do: Find a quiet, secluded place so you won't be tempted to role-play before God. Just be there as simply and honestly as you can manage. The focus will shift from you to God, and you will begin to sense his grace."

Lamentations 3:25 (TLB) – "The Lord is wonderfully good to those who wait for him, to those who seek for him."

4. CHANGE _____.

Lamentations 3:40 (TLB) – "Let us examine ourselves instead, and let us repent and turn again to the Lord."

5. CALL OUT _____.

Lamentations 3:53-57 (NLT) – "My enemies threw me into a pit and dropped stones on me. The water rose over my head, and I cried out, "This is the end!" But I called on your name, LORD, from deep within the pit. You heard me when I cried, "Listen to my pleading! Hear my cry for help!" Yes, you came when I called; you told me, "Do not fear."

Psalm 34:4 (NLT) – "I prayed to the LORD, and he answered me. He freed me from all my fears."

Philippians 4:6-7 (NLT) – "Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus."

6. EXPECT _____.

Lamentations 5:21 (NLT) – "Restore us, O LORD, and bring us back to you again! Give us back the joys we once had!"

Joel 2:25 (NLT) – "The Lord says, 'I will give you back what you lost to the swarming locusts, the hopping locusts, the stripping locusts, and the cutting locusts.'"

Isaiah 61:7 (MSG) – "Because you got a double dose of trouble and more than your share of contempt, Your inheritance in the land will be doubled and your joy go on forever."

Psalm 30:5 (NLT) – "Weeping may last through the night, but joy comes with the morning."

Romans 8:28 (MSG) – "That's why we can be so sure that every detail in our lives of love for God is worked into something good."

NOTES:
