



- b. A life cumbered with despair (Lamentations 3:52-54)
  - (1) The chased prophet (Lamentations 3:52)
    - a) The ones chasing
      - i) Their association—“Mine enemies”
      - ii) The supposed timing
        - (a) During the reign of the final king of Judah, Zedekiah (Jeremiah 37:1)
        - (b) During a time when none did hearken unto the words of the Lord (Jeremiah 37:2)
        - (c) During a time of supposed peace because of the help offered by Egypt (Jeremiah 37:3-10)
        - (d) During a time when the prophet Jeremiah was falsely accused of treason (Jeremiah 37:11-21)
      - iii) Their identification
        - (a) Their names (Jeremiah 38:1)
          - (i) Shephatiah, the son of Mattan
          - (ii) Gedaliah, the son of Pashur
          - (iii) Jucal, the son of Shelemiah
          - (iv) Pashur, the son of Malchiah
        - (b) Their problem—the words of Jeremiah, or the words of the Lord (Jeremiah 38:1b-4)
        - (c) Their purpose (Jeremiah 38:5-6)
    - b) The one being chased—“me,” Jeremiah the prophet
    - c) The manner of chasing
      - i) The intensity—sore
      - ii) The likeness—like a bird
      - iii) The motive—without cause
  - (2) The captured prophet (Lamentations 3:53)
    - a) The captures—“They”; referring to Jeremiah’s enemies
    - b) The imprisonment
      - i) They put him in the dungeon.
      - ii) They cast a stone upon him. Note: This likely refers to casting a stone upon the opening of the dungeon itself rather than throwing a stone down into the dungeon on top of Jeremiah.
      - iii) This testimony would seem to match the testimony of Ebed-melech in Jeremiah 38:7-13.
  - (3) The cut off prophet (Lamentations 3:54)
    - a) The conditions in the dungeon
      - i) In the dungeon there was no drinking water, but mire (Jeremiah 38:6).
      - ii) By definition, the word *mire* testifies that there was water, but the water mixed with the dirt to make mud in which Jeremiah was sinking (Jeremiah 38:6).
      - iii) Whether exaggeration, figurative, or literal, Jeremiah testified that waters flowed over his head.
    - b) The expectation of the prophet—“then I said, I am cut off.”



## C. Drawing Nigh unto God (Lamentations 3:55-66)

1. Jeremiah's initial prayer (Lamentations 3:55-56)
  - a. The indication of prayer (Lamentations 3:55)
    - (1) The practice of prayer—"I called upon thy name." Note: This is the very definition of prayer. Some have defined it as *asking and receiving*, but the reality is that the Bible contains passages self-defined as prayer that never ask or request a single thing from God.
    - (2) The person of prayer—"O LORD"
  - b. The place of prayer (Lamentations 3:55)
    - (1) Jeremiah prayed "out of the low dungeon."
    - (2) This likely ties the prayer of Lamentations 3 to Jeremiah 38:6.
    - (3) Jeremiah was placed beneath the surface with cords (Jeremiah 38:6) and a stone was placed over the opening (Lamentations 3:53). Any one of these things would have made it difficult for Jeremiah to be heard, but the two combined would have likely made it impossible. Although men could not hear the cries of the prophet, God could hear them and He could get the attention of a man who could come to the prophet's aid (Jeremiah 38:7-13).
  - c. The faith in prayer—"Thou hast heard my voice" (Lamentations 3:56).
  - d. The request in prayer (Lamentations 3:56)
    - (1) Hide not thine ear at my breathing.
    - (2) Hide not thine ear at my cry.
2. God's response to Jeremiah (Lamentations 3:57-59a)
  - a. He drew nigh (Lamentations 3:57).
    - (1) The Lord drew near, but He did so "in the day that I [Jeremiah] called upon thee."
    - (2) This, to some degree, matches the principle set forth in James 4:8—"Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you."
  - b. He spoke peace (Lamentations 3:57).
    - (1) The message spoken—"Fear not."
    - (2) The timing of the message
      - a) In the day Jeremiah called upon Him
      - b) This was prior to a solution visible to the eyes of Jeremiah.
  - c. He pleaded for Jeremiah (Lamentations 3:58).
    - (1) He pleaded the causes of Jeremiah's soul.
    - (2) In other words, the expressions of Jeremiah's soul through prayer were then pleaded by the Lord.
  - d. He redeemed Jeremiah (Lamentations 3:58). Note: This was not a spiritual redemption, but a physical redemption from a dungeon.
  - e. He saw the truth (Lamentations 3:59a).
    - (1) He saw Jeremiah's wrong.
    - (2) This does not mean that Jeremiah did wrong, but rather was done wrong.



3. Jeremiah's continued prayer (Lamentations 3:59b-66)
  - a. The plea for God to judge (Lamentations 3:59b-62)
    - (1) Self (Lamentations 3:59b)
      - a) Jeremiah desired for the Lord to judge his cause.
      - b) The Lord had seen Jeremiah's wrong and Jeremiah wanted the Lord to work on his behalf.
    - (2) Opposition (Lamentations 3:60-62)
      - a) What God had seen (Lamentations 3:60)
        - i) Their vengeance
        - ii) Their imaginations
        - iii) All of which was against Jeremiah.
      - b) What God had heard (Lamentations 3:61-62)
        - i) Their reproach (Lamentations 3:61)
        - ii) Their imaginations (Lamentations 3:61)
        - iii) Their lips and devices (Lamentations 3:62)
        - iv) All of which was against Jeremiah (Lamentations 3:61-62).
    - b. The plea for God to behold (Lamentations 3:63)
      - (1) The object of beholding
        - a) Their sitting down
        - b) Their rising up
      - (2) The cause of beholding—"I am their musick."
    - c. The plea for God to render (Lamentations 3:64-66)
      - (1) A recompense (Lamentations 3:64)
        - a) Render unto them a recompense.
        - b) According to the work of their hands
      - (2) A curse (Lamentations 3:65)
        - a) Give them sorrow of heart.
        - b) Thy curse unto them
      - (3) Destruction (Lamentations 3:66)
        - a) Persecute them in anger.
        - b) Destroy them in anger.
        - c) From under the heavens
    - d. Consider other similar prayers
      - (1) The prayer of Asaph (Psalm 83:1-18)
      - (2) Prayers of David
        - a) In Psalm 6 (Psalm 6:10)
        - b) In Psalm 7 (Psalm 7:10-17)
        - c) In Psalm 35 (Psalm 35:1-28)
        - d) In Psalm 109 (Psalm 109:1-31)
      - (3) Key principles to consider
        - a) We must not return the bad treatment given (1 Peter 3:8-9).
        - b) We must understand that vengeance belongs to God (Romans 12:19).
        - c) We must not rejoice in others when they are judged of the Lord (Proverbs 24:17-18).