



## “Learning from Our Suffering” (Lamentations 3:1-33) April 5, 2020

1 I am the man who has seen affliction by the rod of the LORD’S wrath. 2 He has driven me away and made me walk in darkness rather than light; 3 indeed, he has turned his hand against me again and again, all day long. 4 He has made my skin and my flesh grow old and has broken my bones. 5 He has besieged me and surrounded me with bitterness and hardship. 6 He has made me dwell in darkness like those long dead. 7 He has walled me in so I cannot escape; he has weighed me down with chains. 8 Even when I call out or cry for help, he shuts out my prayer. 9 He has barred my way with blocks of stone; he has made my paths crooked. 10 Like a bear lying in wait, like a lion in hiding, 11 he dragged me from the path and mangled me and left me without help. 12 He drew his bow and made me the target for his arrows. 13 He pierced my heart with arrows from his quiver. 14 I became the laughingstock of all my people; they mock me in song all day long. 15 He has filled me with bitter herbs and given me gall to drink. 16 He has broken my teeth with gravel; he has trampled me in the dust. 17 I have been deprived of peace; I have forgotten what prosperity is. 18 So I say, “My splendor is gone and all that I had hoped from the LORD.” 19 I remember my affliction and my wandering, the bitterness and the gall.

20 I well remember them, and my soul is downcast within me. 21 Yet this I call to mind and therefore I have hope: 22 Because of the LORD’S great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. 23 They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. 24 I say to myself, “The LORD is my portion; therefore I will wait for him.” 25 The LORD is good to those whose hope is in him, to the one who seeks him; 26 it is good to wait quietly for the salvation of the LORD. 27 It is good for a man to bear the yoke while he is young. 28 Let him sit alone in silence, for the LORD has laid it on him. 29 Let him bury his face in the dust— there may yet be hope. 30 Let him offer his cheek to one who would strike him, and let him be filled with disgrace. 31 For no one is cast off by the Lord forever. 32 Though he brings grief, he will show compassion, so great is his unfailing love. 33 For he does not willingly bring affliction or grief to anyone.

1. What is the difference between God’s perfect will and his decretive will?
2. Have you had the experience of God redeeming a difficult situation for you growth or benefit?
3. The pattern of those who suffer in the bible is 1) acknowledge God’s hand in the suffering, 2) draw closer to God and seek his help, and 3) be still before God and submit to him with a humble, learning posture. How do you feel about your ability to enter into this process?
4. What are the ways that God may be using this COVID-19 crisis to train you in righteousness?