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# Key Notes

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## I AM THE MAN

A Personal Paraphrase of Lamentations 3:1-40

If you want to know what it looks like to experience God's anger and displeasure – then let me tell you my story. *I am the man* who knows all about it. Let me explain:

He has led me into darkness, not light.

He has brought sickness and diseases upon me – I am skin and bones.

He treats me like a city under siege, surrounding me with armies of bitterness and trouble.

He has put chains on me and locked me in a walled prison so I can't escape.

When I cry out to him for help – he doesn't pay any attention to my prayers.

He makes my path crooked.

He is like a bear lying in wait to ambush me. And when he attacks, he rips me to shreds with his claws.

He takes his bow and uses me for target practice. My body looks like a pin cushion filled with all the arrows he's shot at me.

People laugh at me all the time, making fun of my faith in a God who treats me like this.

He has given me bitter poison to drink.

He filled my mouth with gravel.

I've been robbed of peace. I can't even remember what happiness feels like. I never dreamed God would treat me like this! I'm so depressed and discouraged. All I can think about is my pain. I'm disappointed in life... and in God.

But there is one thing I keep remembering and this one thought gives me hope. I'm talking about God's great love. Like an infinite ocean, there are no limits to his mercy. Each new day is proof that his compassion is still there. His faithfulness is awesome!

I'm learning to talk to myself and this is what I say: "Soul, God is your inheritance! What more could you want than that? Be patient. You won't be disappointed in the end. Waiting is good for you. Relax. Trust in God. Wait quietly for him to reveal his ultimate plan." (vv. 1-26)

Here's my conclusion: God won't treat us badly forever. Oh, he may permit trouble and hardship for a season, but don't despair. He will have compassion on us again. He has an infinite reservoir of love and grace. He doesn't enjoy seeing us suffer.... So, stop complaining about how "unfair" God has been to you. Examine your ways and come back to God. (vv. 31-33, 39-40)

Pastor Stan