

# ENCOURAGING WORDS FOR DISCOURAGING DAYS

WHEN THE BOTTOM DROPS OUT

LAMENTATIONS 4; ISAIAH 43



## The Heart of the Matter

We can all identify with that sudden urge of panic that accompanies calamity. The mixture of surprise and disappointment, fear, and confusion converges upon our emotional frame instantaneously . . . inflicting an almost intolerable pressure within us. What anguish! Yet how necessary for growth! Adversity is the measure of our mettle . . . the true touchstone of our stamina. Like it was for Isaiah. And for Jeremiah. Let's take a look at one such situation that occurred more than 2,500 years ago.



## Discovering the Way

### 1. The Time

Because of Judah's sinful disobedience to God, the Babylonians came and laid siege to Jerusalem.

### 2. The Siege (Isaiah 43:1–5; Lamentations 4:1–11)

Destruction comes to the city, material possessions lose their value, and people begin to lose their dignity.

### 3. The Catastrophe (Lamentations 4:12–22)

Calamity is unexpected, it makes us feel helpless, we believe we are beyond comfort, and it leaves us exposed and vulnerable.



## Starting Your Journey

We should all remember two things about the difficult times. First, *sudden devastation could be the beginning of a reconstruction period*. And second, *behind the human pain of calamity is the faithful presence of God*.



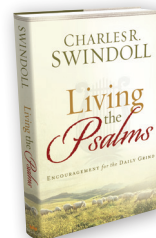
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## Tools for Digging Deeper



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