

## The Lord is My Portion

The kingdom of Israel had been overrun by the Assyrians in about 722 B.C., and in 586 B.C. the Chaldeans (often called the Neo-Babylonians) under Nebuchadnezzar had captured Jerusalem and the southern kingdom of Judah fell. Somewhere in between, historians say about 627 B.C., a young man began to prophesy in Judah. His name, Jeremiah, means “Jehovah exhorts”, and he went about the task of trying to convince the Hebrew people to rededicate their lives to the service to God. For the most part, his encouragement fell on deaf ears. In spite of his warnings of certain defeat by other nations, the Hebrew people continued to be apostate toward God.

**Jeremiah 52** describes the defeat of Judah, the sack of Jerusalem, the destruction of the temple, and the carrying of 4,600 Jews into captivity. The situation for Jeremiah was almost more than he could bear. He lamented over the destruction of Jerusalem and expressed deep grief that this had befallen the people of God. These expressions of grief are recorded in the Old Testament book of Lamentations.

If you read the book of Lamentations, feel his despair over what has happened. Still, in the middle of all of this, Jeremiah knew where to go for encouragement, reassurance, and security. God was the source of all the things Jeremiah sought. **Lamentations 3:19-24** contain these comforting words:

**“I remember my affliction and my wandering, the bitterness and the gall. I well remember them, and my soul is downcast within me. Yet I call this to mind and therefore I have hope: Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for His compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. I say to myself, 'The Lord is my portion; therefore I will wait for Him.’”**

Paul, in one of the most beautiful passages of the New Testament, says much the same thing in **II Corinthians 4:8-18**. Please read this when you have the opportunity. Part of what he says is this:

**“We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed.”**

His message is no different than that of Jeremiah. When you feel there is no hope, don't lose heart. Place your trust in the Lord – fix your eyes on the unseen. God will comfort you and renew your hope within you.