

THE MYSTERY OF GOD'S WILL

STUDY SEVEN

God's Mysterious Immutability

Lamentations 3:19–32

There is nothing quite so encouraging as being in the pit and suddenly having a surge of hope.

—Pastor Charles R. Swindoll

COMPROMISES *complicate our commitments.*

New Year's resolutions! We make them with sincerity and detailed planning, but we often lack the commitment to follow-through. Perhaps something like this has happened to you.

Determined to get in shape, you invest in a shiny new treadmill exercise machine. For a few days, you're up early, getting in your miles. Soon, however, your spouse determines a treadmill doesn't adorn the bedroom well, so it finds a new home in the basement.

The basement is a long way downstairs when you wake up the next morning, so you make a small compromise. *Tomorrow morning I'll make the trek*, you say to yourself. When tomorrow comes, the next morning sounds just fine . . . and then the next and the next. That one compromise has led to a string of compromises, and now the treadmill is nothing more than a clothesline for drying laundry.

We understand. We shrug. We may even smile because we've all had similar experiences. *Compromises complicate our commitments.*

How frustrating this proves with our spiritual commitments to the Lord. And yet, God never compromises His commitment to us, which He renews every morning with the rising sun. This *Searching the Scriptures* Bible study points us to the life of Jeremiah, who reminds us that our faithlessness does not diminish God's faithfulness.



God's Mysterious Immutability

Lamentations 3:19–32



PREPARE YOUR HEART

In the Lord, our hope is secure. Reflect on the psalmist's prayer, noting the transition from fear to hope. Then offer your own prayer in the spirit of this psalm.

*O LORD, how long will you forget me? Forever?
How long will you look the other way?
How long must I struggle with anguish in my soul,
with sorrow in my heart every day?
How long will my enemy have the upper hand? . . .*

But *I trust in your unfailing love.*

*I will rejoice because you have rescued me.
I will sing to the LORD
because he is good to me. (Psalm 13:1–2, 5–6, emphasis added)*



TURN TO THE SCRIPTURES

Jeremiah earned the right to lament. Known as the Weeping Prophet, Jeremiah preached against sin . . . only to be met with mockery and beatings from his own people. Impending judgment loomed like an approaching thunderstorm as Babylon readied itself for war. *Repent . . . or else!* Jeremiah kept warning. Eventually, Judah's savage destruction and exile ensued.

When the smoke cleared, Jeremiah peered over the utter devastation of what had been Jerusalem and its temple, and with tears for ink, he penned Lamentations. The scene was rightfully lamentable. But halfway through his journal of woe, Jeremiah recalled God's character and reoriented his heart toward Him. Hope was, indeed, rising like the dawn.

Before joining Jeremiah in his lament, explore Pastor Chuck Swindoll's [overview of Lamentations](#) at [insight.org](#). Then record a few highlights you discovered.

God's Mysterious Immutability

Lamentations 3:19–32



Observation: Regretting, Remembering, Responding

Let's observe a section of Jeremiah's journal that recounted the aftermath of Jerusalem's destruction.¹ The spiritual condition of Jeremiah's people had sunk to a sinful low. Compromise after compromise sent them spiraling into godlessness until God said enough. The people had sown "the wind," as Hosea prophesied, and now they were harvesting "the whirlwind" (Hosea 8:7). Swiftly, God's judgment boomed like a thunderbolt.

Regretting—Lamentations 3:1–20

Jeremiah personally absorbed every torrential blast. With highly evocative language, he cried out in grief, recounting the details of God's judgment in [Lamentations 3:1–20](#). Which of the heart-wrenching images in this passage touches you the deepest?

Perhaps there's nothing worse than being responsible for our own affliction. It's bad enough to be a victim, but it's doubly difficult when we've caused it. God's people had deliberately, consciously, and with some sense of calculation walked away from the ways of God. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll

Remembering—Lamentations 3:21–24

Then, in his despair, Jeremiah caught a glimmer of hope. What did he remember about God in [Lamentations 3:21–24](#)? Write down the key words that describe God's character. How does Jeremiah repeat the theme of God's unchanging nature?

The Lord's mercies never cease. The Lord's compassions never fail. The Lord's faithfulness never diminishes. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll

God's Mysterious Immutability

Lamentations 3:19–32

Responding—Lamentations 3:25–32

When these truths about God's faithfulness dawned on Jeremiah's darkened heart, he rose from the ashes of his lament. What actions did he take and with what attitudes, according to *Lamentations 3:25–32*?

How did Jeremiah describe those who depend on God?

God is not on the edge of heaven wondering, "What am I going to do with him or her?" God's faithful to know exactly where you are. He cares. He's there. Trust Him. He remembers you. How do we do that? Wait patiently, seek Him diligently, sit silently, and submit willingly. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Interpretation: The Immutability of God

Let's get a stronger grip on *immutability*, the theological term that defines the unchangeable nature of God. Take a few minutes to review its meaning in a Bible dictionary. For a free, online option, check out the *Holman Bible Dictionary*. Record insights that stand out to you.

What qualities about God brought hope to Jeremiah? How does God's immutability enhance these qualities?

God's Mysterious Immutability

Lamentations 3:19–32

What actions should those who depend upon God take and why, according to Jeremiah?

Throughout Judah's grievous suffering, God never acted rashly or contrary to His character. *God doesn't change, and He cannot change.* He is always faithful, even when we sin.

Immutability means He stays near us when we are zealous for the truth just as much as when we reject His counsel and deliberately disobey. He remains intimately involved in our lives whether we are giving Him praise in prayer or grieving Him in our actions. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Correlation: Surrendering to God's Will

Jeremiah may be the weeping prophet, but Jesus is the weeping Savior. Jesus grieved at the graveside of Lazarus (John 11:35). He also grieved over His wayward people. With the tears of a heartbroken parent, He cried out,

“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem! . . . How often I have wanted to gather your children together as a hen protects her chicks beneath her wings, but you wouldn't let me.” (Matthew 23:37)

In deep lament, Jesus anguished in the garden of Gethsemane until “sweat fell to the ground like great drops of blood” (Luke 22:44). What relief did He find in [Luke 22:42](#)?

In His heartache, Jesus submitted to His faithful Father—which is also how Jeremiah responded. Let's look to the Lord as our faithful Father as we apply our study.

God's faithfulness starts with love, leads to mercy, and then compassion. Grace washes over you and you have a fresh start. God calls it cleansing. Stop fighting and submit to Him. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll

God's Mysterious Immutability

Lamentations 3:19–32



Application: Following Jeremiah's Lead

Jeremiah held nothing back in his lament to God. Do you feel like you have to be tactful and careful in how you speak with God? Are you or is someone you know suffering? Offer your lament. God doesn't call us to gloss over our grief. God calls us to invite Him into it.

It's tempting to skip over lament altogether or to dwell only in the darkness in our lament. Jeremiah didn't skip lamenting. Neither did he stay there. In what ways do you need to model the same pivot from the pit of lament to the promise of hope in your own life?

Follow Jeremiah's lead and, through your heartache, wait patiently on the Lord. Seek Him diligently. Sit before Him silently. And submit willingly. Take time to translate those actions in personal, timely applications. Which is most important to you in your current season of life and why? How can you implement this application?

In your season of lament, keep your eyes on God's horizon of hope. His mercies will not cease. His compassions will not fail. And His faithfulness will never fade.

God's Mysterious Immutability

Lamentations 3:19–32



A FINAL PRAYER

End this study on some of the deep truths of God by making Pastor Chuck's prayer below your own.

Lord God, thank You for Your sovereign hand upon us, for Your mercies that are new every morning, for Your great faithfulness. Thank You for being true to Your Word. Thank You for keeping Your promises and that You will never cast out anyone who comes to You. We leave our future with You, our Father, and we step out in faith as You guide us. In the name of Christ, our strong Savior, we pray. Amen.

ENDNOTE

1. To learn more about Pastor Chuck Swindoll's *Searching the Scriptures* Bible-study method, go to the web page, "[How Does Pastor Chuck Swindoll Study the Bible?](#)"

For the 2025 broadcasts, this *Searching the Scriptures* Bible study was developed by Marshall F. Davis in collaboration with Bryce Klabunde, vice president of *Searching the Scriptures* Ministries, based upon the original outlines, charts, and transcripts of Charles R. Swindoll's messages. Copyright © 1987, 2025 by Charles R. Swindoll, Inc. All rights are reserved worldwide. Duplication of copyrighted material for commercial use is strictly prohibited.

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Study 7 • Page 7

