

**Lament psalms:**

- God has given prayers, hymns, songs for *‘the dark nights of the soul’*. To guide and help us. They’re called **“Lament psalms”**.
- *“Lament can be defined as a loud cry, a howl, or a passionate expression of grief. However, in the Bible lament is more than sorrow or talking about sadness. It is more than walking through the stages of grief. Lament is a prayer in pain that leads to trust.”*
- Lament psalms have a typical structure/organization: pain > petition > praise

**THESIS- God has given this “psalm” to teach us to pray when God seems distant.**

1. be honest with your God (1-2)      ask your questions
2. be moving toward your God (3-4)      make your requests
3. be trusting in your God (5-6)      affirm your intentions

## **I. BE HONEST WITH YOUR GOD! (1-2)**

***Guard from these subtle/but sinful \*wrong\* responses***

1. Flight -
2. Fight -
3. Fury -
4. Folly -

## **II. BE MOVING TOWARD YOUR GOD! (3-4)**

*Days of trouble must be days of prayer* (Matthew Henry)

- 3 petitions as you *move toward GOd in prayer*:
  1. *Concentrate on me - look!*
  2. *Respond to me - answer!*
  3. *Illumine me (enlighten my eyes)*

## **III. BE TRUSTING IN YOUR GOD! (5-6)**

*“But as for me...”* (contrast, conviction, consecration, choice)

**Psalm 13 — "Learning to Pray When God Seems Distant"**

You must actively \*choose\* to dwell on these amazing realities *while in* your pain.

- **I will TRUST!** — in God's LOVE
- **I will REJOICE!** — IN GOD'S SALVATION
- **I will SING!** — GOD HAS DEALT BOUNTIFULLY WITH ME

*What are lessons for us to help us to do this while in the pain?*

- ★Sing to give you perspective.
- ★Remember God's great works of old
- ★Give thanks for His works in your life
- ★Stand amazed at His mercy toward you
- ★Consume your heart with heaven's nearness.

## A STUDY ON LAMENT PSALMS

### *The lament psalms: guiding you to sorrow well while trusting God.*

**\*\*At the very center of lament is a TRUST in God's sovereignty\*\***

There are around 65 Psalms (that is nearly half of the Psalms) that are Psalms of lament. [Psalm 3, 13, 22, 42, 44](#), and 60 are just a few of them. This should tell us something – lament is an important part of the human experience! Just as much as the Christian ought to come before God with songs of thanksgiving and praise, we ought to come before God with lament.

#### *Typical Structure of a Lament Psalm*

***Direction - directs the complaint to God — O LORD.. O GOD...***

***Description - Complaint / what's going on ...***

***Dependence - God, come to my aid. help me... if you don't....***

***Determination - Dwelling on God - I will trust; but as for me, I will praise...***

Lament is not simply complaining; nor is it spewing trite theological answers. Lament is both expressing our true anguish and pain to our Sovereign King and then finding hope and comfort in the truths of His faithful character and promises.

In his book *Dark Clouds, Deep Mercy*, Mark Vroegop defines lament as, "a prayer of pain that leads to trust," (pg. 28). Lament is the wailing of the heart before a God who hears, who listens, and who responds to our cries.

### **More from Mark Vroegop's book *Dark Clouds, Deep Mercy*:**

"Lament is how you live between the poles of a hard life and trusting in God's sovereignty. Lament is how we bring our sorrow to God. Without lament we won't know how to process pain." (Mark Vroegop)

"You might think lament is the opposite of praise. It isn't. Instead, lament is a path to praise as we are led through our brokenness and disappointment.<sup>6</sup> The space between brokenness and God's mercy is where this song is sung. Think of lament as the transition between pain and promise. It is the path from heartbreak to hope."

The practice of lament—the kind that is biblical, honest, and redemptive—is not as natural for us, because every lament is a prayer. A statement of faith. Lament is the honest cry of a hurting heart wrestling with the paradox of pain and the promise of God's goodness."

"When brokenness becomes your life, lament helps you turn to God. It lifts your head and turns your tear-filled eyes toward the only hope you have: God's grace."

Lament gives us hope because it gives us a glimpse of truth."

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"Lament is a prayer in pain that leads to trust."

### **WHAT IS LAMENT AND HOW DOES IT RELATE TO BIBLICAL COMPLAINING/GRUMBLING? what's the difference? Answer: a humble attitude.**

"here are a few steps in learning how to complain the right way: Come Humble"

"Complaint is central to lament. But Christians never complain just to complain. Instead, we bring our complaints to the Lord for the purpose of moving us toward him. We allow the honest opening of our souls to become a doorway to the other elements of lament."

"lament invites us to grieve and trust, to struggle and believe."

**Psalm 13 — "Learning to Pray When God Seems Distant"**

"You need to know that lament does not always lead to an immediate solution. It does not always bring a quick or timely answer. Grief is not tame. Lament is not a simplistic formula. Instead, lament is the song you sing believing that *one day* God will answer and restore. Lament invites us to pray through our struggle with a life that is far from perfect."

"Every Christian has a record of God's steadfast love. Therefore, we should remind ourselves about God's worthiness to be trusted. To be a Christian means trusting in what God says and who he is. We came to faith that way. We trusted that the Bible is true. We believed forgiveness is possible for those who receive Christ. Trusting in God's grace welcomed us into God's family. But that was only the beginning. Christians don't leave behind trusting God after coming to faith. On the contrary, being a follower of Jesus requires that we walk through life in continual trust. Seasons of suffering are no different."

**"To lament is Christian as we turn to God in prayer, lay out our complaints, ask boldly, and choose to trust."**

## PSALM 13: The Psalter

*Tune: O the deep, deep love of Jesus*

How long, Lord, will You forget me?  
 How long will You hide Your face?  
 How long, Lord, will this depression  
 grip my soul in its embrace?  
 How long will this dreadful sorrow  
 pierce my heart all night and day?  
 How long will my soul's attacker  
 be exalted o'er my way?

Look on me, Lord, come and answer,  
 Light my eyes lest death approach;  
 Lest my enemy claim vict'ry  
 and my foes gloat in reproach.  
 But I trust Your lovingkindness,  
 in salvation I'll rejoice;  
 For the Lord has been good to me,  
 I will sing with heart and voice.

## HE WILL HOLD ME FAST

When I fear my faith will fail  
 Christ will hold me fast  
 When the tempter would prevail  
 He will hold me fast  
 I could never keep my hold  
 Through life's fearful path  
 For my love is often cold  
 He must hold me fast

**He will hold me fast  
 He will hold me fast  
 For my Savior loves me so  
 He will hold me fast**

Those He saves are His delight  
 Christ will hold me fast

Precious in His holy sight  
 He will hold me fast  
 He'll not let my soul be lost  
 His promises shall last  
 Bought by Him at such a cost  
 He will hold me fast

For my life He bled and died  
 Christ will hold me fast  
 Justice has been satisfied  
 He will hold me fast  
 Raised with Him to endless life  
 He will hold me fast  
 Till our faith is turned to sight  
 When he comes at last