



THE WELL

PSALMS OF LAMENT

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO LAMENT?

ALTHOUGH LAMENTING IS OFTEN CAUSED BY PAIN, FRUSTRATION, OR SORROW, IT IS SO MUCH MORE THAN COMPLAINING OR GRIEF. LAMENT IS A FORM OF PRAYER, IT INVOLVES TURNING TO GOD, AND IT HELPS US RENEW OUR TRUST IN HIM AS WE POUR OUT OUR HEARTS AND CALL ON HIM TO INTERVENE.

COMMUNITY

Prayers expressing deep sorrow for the troubles of a nation or a group as a whole.

Psalm 12
Psalm 44
Psalm 58
Psalm 60
Psalm 74
Psalm 79
Psalm 80
Psalm 90
Psalm 94
Psalm 123
Psalm 126
Psalm 129

INDIVIDUAL

Prayers personalized to specific to individual difficulties and pain.

Psalm 3-5	Psalm 52-57
Psalm 7	Psalm 59
Psalm 9-10	Psalm 61
Psalm 13-14	Psalm 64
Psalm 17	Psalm 70
Psalm 22	Psalm 71
Psalm 25-28	Psalm 77
Psalm 31	Psalm 86
Psalm 36	Psalm 89
Psalm 39	Psalm 120
Psalm 40:12-17	Psalm 139
Psalm 41-43	Psalm 141-142

PENITENTIAL

Prayers specifically for forgiveness from sins that have been committed.

Psalm 6
Psalm 32
Psalm 38
Psalm 51
Psalm 102
Psalm 130
Psalm 143

IMPRECATORY

More radical prayers; curses are pronounced on those who have caused crisis or pain.*

Psalm 35
Psalm 69
Psalm 83
Psalm 88
Psalm 109
Psalm 137
Psalm 140

**We often struggle with prayers like this because in our culture it feels like we have no enemies, or as Christians we know the commands to love our enemies. But these prayers are great to use against spiritual warfare, your own sin/flesh, or corruption you see in the world, injustice, etc.*

PRAYER EXAMPLE

PSALM 42

Just like the deer pants for flowing streams of water, so my soul, o Lord my God, my soul pants and thirsts and longs for you. My God, I long for you. You, the living God, the God of the nations, the God of my soul, the God who saves me, the God who is dear to me, I long for you, Most High. When I shall I be with you forever, or when will you appear again to me, to sustain me? I feel myself draining, and growing in sorrow. I feel myself drifting, and losing my strength. Those around me mock me, saying that you are distant, and my own soul speaks lies to me, that you don't care. I remember, God, I remember, how I would come before you, with the rest of the Body, and I would sing praises to your name, I would feel like I was ascending into the very throne room of grace. I would sing shouts of praise, and I would be connected to you. I would lift up shouts before you, God.

O soul, foolish soul, why are you downcast? Why are you so discouraged, why do you lose heart? Why so much turmoil, so much stress? Why the lack of joy? Hope in your God; He is indeed your salvation, He is indeed your God. He has not forgotten, He loves deeply, find strength in Him.

My soul is cast down within me, and therefore, I will remember you. Because I feel sad, I will remember you all the more, and think of you more and more fervently. You are my sustainer, I have none besides you. From the moment of my birth until now it is clear that you have been ever present, and never change. You have been performing miracles, and you have showcased your glory to me. Deep calls to deep, floods rise up, the roar of your waterfalls comes upon me, they crash over me, and it feels like chaos! Yet by the day you call your steadfast love, you remind me of the message of the cross. At night you power over me, and remind me of the truth, you have saved me! God, I am yours, you have saved. I sing to you in song, see you in the Scriptures, I speak to you through prayers. When I doubt, I ask you, where you are, do you still love me? Why have you forgotten me? My emotions, they are what rages! My emotions become my main enemy. My emotions nearly taunt me. I stop believing facts and begin believing feelings. Up and down, back and forth, basing my existence on what I'm feeling! As they speak to me, asking "Where is your God," I must recognize them for what they are.

Why are you sad, o soul? Why allow these emotions to change you? Hope in God, for again, and one day forever, will He be praised! He already has saved you, and will one day eternally save you! He is our salvation, and He has already saved, and in this we can rejoice, and one day will rejoice forever.

PRAYER EXAMPLE

PSALM 6

God, please have mercy on me. Please be patient with me and help me. I know I deserve your anger right now and you would be right to discipline me. But please, have compassion on me and show me your kindness despite my failure. I feel so weak, so helpless, so unable to right the wrongs that I have done. Would you change me? Would you heal me and save me from my sin? I ache and groan because I'm suffering in this life, most of it from my own doing and I hate what I struggle with. My very body, my bones and my heart, are in so much pain and I know it's because this world is not my home. How long, God, must I struggle? Will you please remove this from me and bring me back to you again? I don't want this anymore, but I can't save myself.

Show yourself to me, Lord, for you are my only rescue and my help in times of need. Show me the way out from under this weight. I know you are able to save me. I know you are steadfast and faithful even when I'm not. I know your love for me never ends and I beg you for mercy because of this love for me. Remember your love for me...this is the only hope I have. Won't you save me from this so that I can praise you instead? I want to live fully in you, and without you, there is nothing for me but death.

Hear my cries, God! I feel like all this sadness has consumed me. All I do is cry, day and night. I'm full of grief and it's starting to blur my vision. I can't even see straight anymore with all my tears and sorrow as my enemies surround me. I'm done with this! Anyone who is doing wrong or seeking trouble, get away from me! I know that if I resist the devil, he too will have to run away. The Lord, my God, my refuge, he has heard my cry for help. He has heard all my tears; he is so aware of me! He will answer me and come to my rescue. I am confident in him! Everyone who is against me, who is trying to take me down, they will be ashamed and afraid because of my God. Though they may come for me, they will turn back in embarrassment. They will not succeed in their evil plans.



**WHOEVER SPEAKS, AS ONE WHO SPEAKS ORACLES
OF GOD; WHOEVER SERVES, AS ONE WHO SERVES
BY THE STRENGTH THAT GOD SUPPLIES—IN ORDER
THAT IN EVERYTHING GOD MAY BE GLORIFIED
THROUGH JESUS CHRIST. TO HIM BELONG GLORY
AND DOMINION FOREVER AND EVER. AMEN.
(1 PETER 4:11).**