

Singing His Songs: The Artistry of the Poetry of Psalms

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Lament Psalms

“The psalms do not simply express emotions: when sung in faith, they actually shape the emotion of the godly. The emotions are therefore not a problem to be solved but are part of the raw material of now-fallen humanity that can be shaped to good and noble ends.”



Lament Psalms

**Lament psalms “gives
voice to our sorrow.”**

Westermann



Lament Psalms

“The theological significance of the personal lament lies first of all in the fact that it gives voice to suffering. The lament is the language of suffering: in it, suffering is given the dignity of language.”

Westermann



Lament Psalms

“The secret of the language of the psalms lies in the fact that many people and many succeeding generations can recognize and utter it as their own prayer.”

Derek Kidner



“The one who laments his suffering to God does not remain in his lament.”

Westermann



Interpreting the Lament Psalms

- **Read the lament in its literary and historical context**
- **Apply the conventions of ancient Semitic poetry**
- **Try to discover the reason for the lament**
- **Explore the theological teaching of the lament**
- **Reflect on the lament's appeal to our emotion and will**

Exhortations to Application

- Preach/teach the psalms
- Use the psalms in worship
- Use the psalms in counseling
- Use the psalms in evangelism

The Form of the Lament Psalm of the Individual.

**Address, with introductory cry for help or
turning to God**

The Lament (i.e. the problem)

Confession of trust

Petition

-for God to be favorable

-for God to intervene

Assurance of Being Heard

**2nd Wish or petition for God's intervention
(2nd time re: #4)**

Vow of Praise

Praise of God



The Form of the Lament Psalm 69

**Address, with introductory cry for help or
turning to God**

The Lament (i.e. the problem)

Confession of trust

Petition

- for God to be favorable**
- for God to intervene**

Assurance of Being Heard

**2nd Wish or petition for God's intervention
(2nd time re: #4)**

Vow of Praise

Praise of God



The Form of the Lament Psalm 55

**Address, with introductory cry for help or
turning to God**

The Lament (i.e. the problem)

Confession of trust

Petition

- for God to be favorable**
- for God to intervene**

Assurance of Being Heard

**2nd Wish or petition for God's intervention
(2nd time re: #4)**

Vow of Praise

Praise of God



The Form of the Lament Psalm 102

**Address, with introductory cry for help or
turning to God**

The Lament (i.e. the problem)

Confession of trust

Petition

- for God to be favorable**
- for God to intervene**

Assurance of Being Heard

**2nd Wish or petition for God's intervention
(2nd time re: #4)**

Vow of Praise

Praise of God



**The Form of
the Lament:
“Cliff Notes”**

**The Lament (i.e. the
problem)**

Petition

**Expression of Confidence
& Promise of Praise**



**The Form of
the Lament:
Psalm 13**

**The Lament (i.e. the
problem)**

Petition

**Expression of Confidence
& Promise of Praise**



“The question is specifically the utterance of one who is experiencing a suffering that seems determined to continue. Here, time, itself becomes the destructive force, wearing down a man’s ability to hold out and intensifying the suffering to an inhuman level.”

Westermann, 71.



**“The suffer is alone, and
suffering in loneliness
aggravates the anguish.”**

VanGemeren



Pain is self-centering: How many times is the 1st person used?



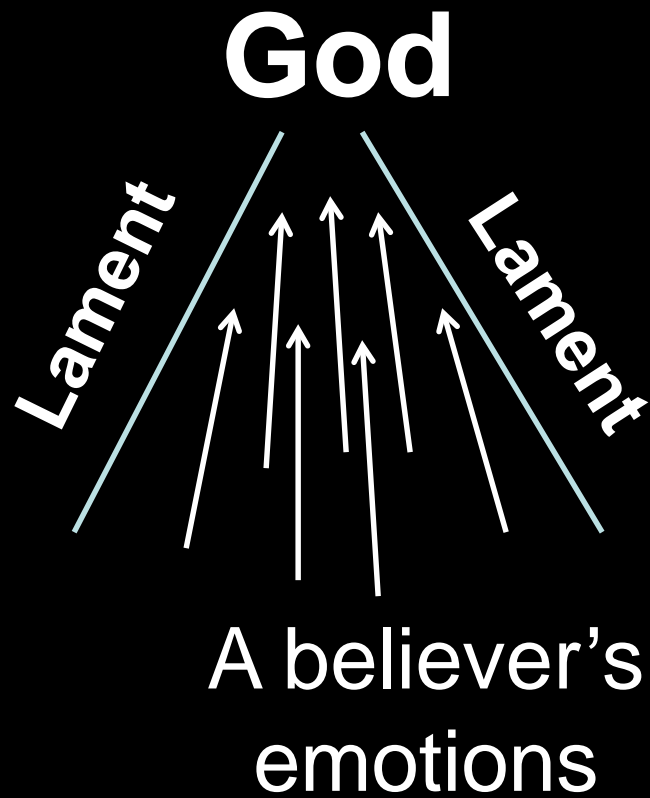
Is it okay to complain?



**“We may not complain
of Him but we may
complain *to* Him.”**

Spurgeon





Lament Psalms

“The psalms do not simply express emotions: when sung in faith, they actually shape the emotion of the godly. The emotions are therefore not a problem to be solved but are part of the raw material of now-fallen humanity that can be shaped to good and noble ends.”

