

The Psalms of Lament

PSALM 13 WORKSHEET

INTRODUCTION

This worksheet was designed to help you contemplate Sunday, April 26th's sermon through Psalm 13. Before Sunday, we invite you to read through Psalm 13 then set aside some time to work through this sheet and write your own lament.

THE PSALMS

The Psalms direct our complaints, our fears, our doubts, our failures, our praises, our needs, and our hopes, to God and God alone. Along with this, the Psalms give us permission to speak to God in total, raw authenticity and unfiltered honesty. Yet, they never leave us there. The point of scripture is to shape our hearts and minds into the right kind of thoughts and desires - to be and become God's faithful and righteous people. Our desire is that, by looking together at these very raw and unfiltered Psalms, the Spirit would shape our raw emotions and confessions into right emotions and confessions.

A 3-PART PSALM

1. The Lament - How Long, O Lord?: vs.1-2

Most likely the words "How Long, O LORD," hold different meaning for each of us. We are all going through a very difficult season but that doesn't stop the other troubles in our personal lives from continuing. For some, "how long?" is a prayer for a certain ailment we've dealt with for too long. For others maybe it has to do with family issues, a wayward child, an unloving spouse. For others maybe you think of financial difficulty. For others it's your personal struggle with sin and temptation that comes to mind. Whatever it is - bring your lament before the Lord. Write out your, "How long, O Lord?" (ie: I don't understand why you haven't answered my prayer for deliverance. I'm tempted to doubt that you love me or that you care about my struggle and my personal well being.)

Confess your doubt and frustration to the Lord in the midst of your waiting by writing it out.

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2. The Plea - Answer me! Act, intervene, do something: vs. 3-4

"Light my eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death, lest my enemy say, 'I have prevailed over him,' Lest my foes rejoice because I collapse to the ground, lifeless."

What do you fear? Speak out those fears to the Lord whether they are rational or irrational, founded or unfounded. They need to be confessed.

As we pray and sing such Psalms, they remind us that God, in fact, has not forgotten us, that what we feel isn't always real, and that God's promises are more true than our perceptions. The Psalmist is praying for some sign of hope as He prays, "Light my eyes." *What does hope look like for you in this season? Be specific. Ask God for that thing. What does salvation and deliverance look like in this season? Ask your God who loves you, the one who invites you to cast your cares on him, the one who welcomes you to his throne of grace!*

3. The Resolve: I will trust, I will sing, I will celebrate: vs. 5-6

How can we trust, sing, and celebrate in a valley of despair or in the wilderness of scarcity? It is only by going back and recounting the ways that God has worked in times past, from creation to the Exodus, from Exile in Babylon to the cross, from the cross to the resurrection, from the difficulties of this life to the many ways God has intervened. Read at least one passage of God's great deliverance in scripture and then journal your own experience of God's salvation, working or provision in your life. Take this story and testament with you into your week. Each time you feel those feelings of doubt, fear or abandonment, etc, remember these contemplations and our great God who saves, who delivers us, and who journeys the way with us.