

# SEMINAR: Digging into the Psalms for Yourself

Welcome!

## INTRODUCTION TO THE PSALMS of LAMENT

### Groupings of the Psalms



1. **Psalms of Lament**— over 1/3 of the Psalms.
2. **Psalms of Praise**—These psalms allow the worshipping community to praise the goodness and greatness of their covenant God both for his \_\_\_\_\_ and for his \_\_\_\_\_
3. **Psalms of Thanksgiving**—These psalms, which like the laments can be the expression of an individual worshiper or of the community, thank God for specific \_\_\_\_\_ to prayers, especially for things lamented.
4. **Kingship Psalms**—All of them have a focus on the Messiah as the final ruler of the Davidic dynasty, either directly or indirectly. They also focus on God’s Role as Sovereign King.
5. **Wisdom Psalms**—These songs express themes characteristic of the ‘wisdom literature’ of the Old Testament, Proverbs, Job, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Songs. There is often a contrast between righteousness and wickedness or a focus on the blessings granted to those who obey God.

### Lament Psalms

- **Definition:** “Lament is the honest cry of a hurting heart wrestling with the paradox of pain and the promise of God’s goodness”.
- **Characteristics:**
  - it is a \_\_\_\_\_ offered to God
  - It is from a situation that is \_\_\_\_\_
  - the author is often struggling in his relationship with God, trying to reconcile the circumstances with what is known about God
  - Lament is a prayer in pain leading to \_\_\_\_\_
- **Two types:** Individual and Corporate

<b>Community Lament</b>	Psalm 12, 44, 58, 60, 74, 79, 80, 83, 85, 89*, 90, 94, 123, 126, 129
<b>Individual Lament</b>	Psalm 3, 4, 5, 7, 9-10, 13, 14, 17, 22, 25, 26, 27*, 28, 31, 36*, 39, 40:12-17, 41, 42-43, 52*, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 59, 61, 64, 70, 71, 77, 86, 89*, 120, 139, 141, 142

- **4 stages** of the Lament Psalms.....
  - GO ..... Go to God
  - GROAN.... Express your Pain to God
  - ASK.....Ask for Help from God
  - TRUST..... Choose to Trust God

## USING THE PSALMS OF LAMENT

### Finding the 4 Stages of Lament in the Psalm

#### 1. READ THE PSALM.... then..... REREAD

- Make note of the \_\_\_\_\_ context. IE. **Psalm 3** -
- This approach is not reading \_\_\_\_Psalms in \_\_\_day , but to read \_\_Psalm for \_\_\_days (at least!!)
- The goal is to turn the Psalm into YOUR prayer.

#### 2. HIGHLIGHT THE PSALM

Lament KEY	
GO.....	Go to God
GROAN.....	Express your pain
ASK .....	Ask for help
TRUST.....	Choose to trust

#### PSALM 3 - *A Psalm of David, when he fled from Absalom his son.*

- 1 O Lord, how many are my foes! Many are rising against me;
- 2 many are saying of my soul, "There is no salvation for him in God. Selah
- 3 But you, O Lord, are a shield about me, my glory, and the lifter of my head.
- 4 I cried aloud to the Lord, and he answered me from his holy hill. Selah
- 5 I lay down and slept; I woke again, for the Lord sustained me.
- 6 I will not be afraid of many thousands of people who have set themselves against me all around.
- 7 Arise, O Lord! Save me, O my God! For you strike all my enemies on the cheek; you break the teeth of the wicked.
- 8 Salvation belongs to the Lord; your blessing be on your people! Selah

#### 3. TRANSFER THE PSALM STAGES TO THE CHART, "

STAGE of Lament	Scripture	Your Application.... Your Prayer
Go		
Groan		
Ask		
Trust	What about God enhanced his trust? What does the author do that showed his trust?	
THEME –		

Psalm 3

STAGE of Lament	Scripture	Your Application... Your Prayer
Go	1 O Lord!, 3 O Lord! 7 O Lord! O my God!	
Groan	how many are my foes! Many are rising against me; 2 many are saying of my soul, "There is no salvation for him in God. Selah 6 afraid of many thousands of people who have set themselves against me all around.	
Ask	7 Arise, O Lord! Save me, O my God! For you strike all my enemies on the cheek; you break the teeth of the wicked. 8 your blessing be on your people! Selah	
Trust	3 But you, O Lord, are a shield about me, my glory, and the lifter of my head. 4 I cried aloud to the Lord, and he answered me from his holy hill. Selah 5 I lay down and slept; I woke again, for the Lord sustained me. 6 I will not be afraid of many thousands of people who have set themselves against me all around 8 8 Salvation belongs to the Lord; What about God enhanced his trust? What does he do that showed his trust?	
THEME – “ <b>SURROUNDED BY MANY DANGERS</b> ” (Psalm 3)		

- You don't need to bring all the verses over to the table. Bring the phrases that most impact you
- See if there is a theme that jumps out at you as you reflect on the Psalm ... “**Surrounded by many dangers**” (vs. 6 and vs. 3).

**ACTIVITY:**

Take Psalm 57 and highlight the Psalm (leave the phrases you don't know what to do with for now).

PSALM 57

*Of David. A miktam. When he had fled from Saul into the cave.*

- 1 Have mercy on me, my God, have mercy on me, for in you I take refuge. I will take refuge in the shadow of your wings until the disaster has passed.
- 2 I cry out to God Most High, to God, who vindicates me.
- 3 He sends from heaven and saves me, rebuking those who hotly pursue me— God sends forth his love and his faithfulness.
- 4 I am in the midst of lions; I am forced to dwell among ravenous beasts— men whose teeth are spears and arrows, whose tongues are sharp swords.
- 5 Be exalted, O God, above the heavens; let your glory be over all the earth.
  
- 6 They spread a net for my feet — I was bowed down in distress. They dug a pit in my path— but they have fallen into it themselves.
- 7 My heart, O God, is steadfast, my heart is steadfast; I will sing and make music.
- 8 Awake, my soul! Awake, harp and lyre! I will awaken the dawn.
- 9 I will praise you, Lord, among the nations; I will sing of you among the peoples.
- 10 For great is your love, reaching to the heavens; your faithfulness reaches to the skies.
- 11 Be exalted, O God, above the heavens; let your glory be over all the earth.

**ACTIVITY:**

Take the phrases, verses from Psalm 57 and put them into your chart.

STAGE of Lament	Scripture	Your Application.... Your Prayer
Go		
Groan		
Ask		
Trust	<p>What about God enhanced his trust? What does he do that showed his trust?</p>	
THEME –		

**DISCUSS:**

Share with others what stood out to you. What phrases? Where did you put them?  
What phrases did you have trouble putting somewhere?

**4. PERSONALIZE THE PSALM TO YOUR OWN LIFE**

STAGE of Lament	Scripture	Your Application.... Your Prayer
Go	1 O Lord! 3 O Lord! 7 O Lord! O my God!	Lord, I come to you. I don't have anywhere else to turn. I belong to You, but you also belong to me. You are my own Lord, personally aware, personally involved, personally related to me as Your son. You are MY God.
Groan	how many are my foes! <b>Many are rising against me;</b> 2 many are saying of my soul, "There is no salvation for him in God. Selah 6 afraid of many thousands of people who have set themselves against me all around.	There are so many ways I feel vulnerable right now, Lord. There are so many dangers. I feel surrounded by them. I am scared to face _____ tomorrow. I feel exhausted from being a parent right now. I am questioning myself, as I hear the voices of my children who are condemning me, rejecting me.
Ask	7 Arise. O Lord! Save me. O my God! For you strike all my enemies on the cheek; you break the teeth of the wicked. 8 your blessing be on your people! Selah	O God.... intervene! I need You to fight for me. To silence the voices that are screaming in my head. Give me the strength to keep moving, keep trusting, keep believing You.
Trust	3 But you, O Lord, are a shield about me, my glory, and the lifter of my head. 4 I cried aloud to the Lord, and he answered me from his holy hill. Selah 5 I lay down and slept; I woke again, for the Lord sustained me. 6 I will not be afraid of many thousands of people who have set themselves against me all around 8 8 Salvation belongs to the Lord;	You protect me on every side. All that is coming to me right now has come thru Your shield, so I believe You to also give me the grace to stand in it. God, you are the One who lifts me in my sorrow. You have done it before. God, nothing gets in to me, except thru Your shield. I claim that promise. I claim the promise of grace to stand in the face of many dangers. You have sustained me before. God, I believe you to do it again.
THEME – "SURROUNDED BY MANY DANGERS" (Psalm 3)		

**ACTIVITY:**

**PSALM 57** – personalize the phrases of the Psalm by turning them into your own prayer to God. (on the form you used above).

**ACTIVITY**

Move your chairs into a group of 4