

LAMENT: A FAITHFUL RESPONSE TO TRAGEDY

Psalms 13

Psalms 55

Romans 14:7

Awareness

Before listening, reflect:

- How do you define lament? What is its purpose?
- What is your natural reaction or response to uncertainty or difficulties? What do you do to help yourself cope?

When the circumstances of life change unexpectedly or when something or someone is unfairly or unjustly taken from us too soon, we need a way to respond to the emotions raging within us. When injustice and evil seem to persist unchecked and sometimes even unchallenged, we need a way to respond that is consistent with our faith. Prayers of lament are useful, faith-filled ways for Christians to express our anger, sadness, frustration, and despair when we experience the painful realities of our broken world. Join us in studying lament in the Bible and discover how lament engages and strengthens our faith, while also acknowledging our pain and sharing it with the only one capable of providing true comfort.

Listen: [Lament: A Faithful Response to Tragedy](#)

Reflection

After listening, consider:

- Hosts Dave Bast and Scott Hoezee define lament in these three ways: 1.) “lament...is an expression of grief...of suffering,” 2.) “lament...is an act of faith—it is an acknowledgement that this isn’t right—this isn’t the way things are supposed to be,” and 3.) “It is a call to action, it is not just an expression of sorrow or feelings of frustration; but it calls God to act...” How do these definitions set lament apart from complaining or venting? Does lament offer hope? Why or why not?
- In segment 1, Scott shares Walter Brueggeman’s analogy calling lament the “Friday voice of faith.” Why do you think this is or isn’t a meaningful comparison? Is it helpful to you?
- At the close of segment 2, Scott reminds us that “even the psalms of lament...turn the corner to light...” Are you turning that corner to light in your laments? If so, what does that look like for you? If not, what do you think is holding you back?
- Dave and Scott attribute the Psalmists’ ability to conclude their psalms of lament with expressions of faith to their remembrance of God’s *chesed*. Reflect on the varying translations of *chesed*: unfailing love, covenant love, constant love, and loving-kindness. Identify some examples of God’s *chesed* in the Bible. Then reflect on your experience. When have you experienced God’s *chesed* in your life? Do these experiences remind you that God has been good to you before? Do they also help you trust that he will be good to you again?

Related Passages

- **Psalm 74**
- **1 Peter 5:6-11**
- **Psalm 70**
- **Psalm 142**

Conclusion

Reread Psalm 13. Think about a situation or issue that currently weighs heavily on your heart. Write and pray your own prayer of lament for this situation Use Psalm 13 and the definitions offered above as guidance.

<https://groundworkonline.com/episodes/lament-a-faithful-response-to-tragedy>

Printed on July 3, 2024