

# WHY THE PSALMS?

## Week 2: Psalms of Lament

What do you think of when you think of the word “lament”?

“Lament” in the Psalms

The movement of a lament

One expression we frequently see used in the Psalms of Lament is, “how long?” but that is often followed by an expression of faith.

### Psalm 13

<sup>1</sup> **How long, LORD?** Will you forget me forever?

**How long** will you hide your face from me?

<sup>2</sup> **How long** must I wrestle with my thoughts  
and day after day have sorrow in my heart?

**How long** will my enemy triumph over me?

<sup>5</sup> **But I trust** in your unfailing love;  
my heart rejoices in your salvation.

<sup>6</sup> **I will sing the LORD’s praise,**  
for he has been good to me.

### Psalm 35

<sup>17</sup> **How long,** Lord, will you look on?  
Rescue me from their ravages,  
my precious life from these lions.

<sup>18</sup> **I will give you thanks** in the great assembly;  
among the throngs I will praise you.

Often, but not always, the Psalms of Lament follow the pattern:

1. An address to God
2. An expression of the lament or complain
3. A confession of confidence in God, trust
4. A petition or request
5. Words of praise or confession of faith

### **Psalm 77**

**vv. 1-4** – He calls out to God (an invocation or address to God)

**vv. 5-6** – What is he recalling when he says this?

**vv. 7-9** – A series of 5 questions (We feel that sometimes, don't we?)

**vv. 10-20** – A remembrance of the Lord's work in the life of His people

### **Psalms 42 & 43** – one lament

#### **Psalm 42**

**vv. 1-3:** Lament

**v. 4:** Lament or Faith?

**v. 5-7:** Lament

**v. 8:** Faith/Hope (even though he acknowledges God as his Rock)

**v. 11:** Faith/Hope

#### **Psalm 43**

**v. 1:** Appeals to God as a judge, "vindicate me"

**v. 2:** Express of faith, lament

**v. 3:** guide me, lead me

**v. 4:** promise of praise

**v. 5:** lament, expression of faith

The psalmist uses the same words of lament in three places: 42:5, 42:11, 43:5.

#### **Psalm 44**

**vv. 1-8**

**vv. 9-16**

**vv. 17-22**

**vv. 23-26**

This psalm encourages us to face the difficult questions of life