

worship, repent,
fast, and pray

a study of
PSALMS

connecting
the heart
of the reader
to the heart
of God

Psalms 1

¹ Blessed is the one
who does not walk in step with the wicked
or stand in the way that sinners take
or sit in the company of mockers,
² but whose delight is in the law of the Lord
and who meditates on His law day and night.
³ That person is like a tree planted by the water,
which yields its fruit in season
and whose leaves do not wither.

Psalms of
LAMENT

*Why, my soul, are
you downcast?
Why so disturbed within me?
Put your hope in God.*

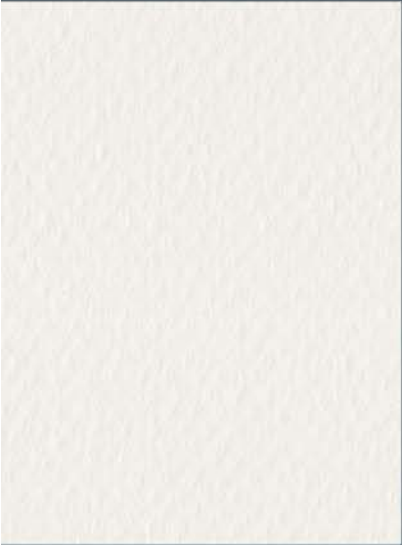
*psalm 42
and 43*

RIGHT-SIDE UP [↑] WISDOM:

There is an order to the world that makes life work.
(Proverbs, Song of Solomon)


UPSIDE-DOWN [↓] WISDOM:

There is a disorder to the world that makes life broken.
(Job, Ecclesiastes)



A lament psalm (also called a psalm of complaint or petition or prayer) is a set poetic prayer aimed to present a need to God so that he may resolve it and further his praise.

- Dictionary of Old Testament: Wisdom, Poetry, and Writings



The extreme language of the *lament* psalms are meant to include every possible situation. If your situation is less extreme, that does not make the psalm less applicable.

Psalm 42:1-3 ^{NIV}

As the deer pants for streams of water,
so my soul pants for you, my God.

² My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.
When can I go and meet with God?

³ My tears have been my food
day and night,
while people say to me all day long,
“Where is your God?”

Psalm 42:4-5 NIV

These things I remember
as I pour out my soul:
how I used to go to the house of God
under the protection of the Mighty One
with shouts of joy and praise
among the festive throng.

⁵ Why, my soul, are you downcast?
Why so disturbed within me?
Put your hope in God,
for I will yet praise him,
my Savior and my God.

Psalm 42:6-9 NIV

My soul is downcast within me;
therefore I will remember you
from the land of the Jordan,
the heights of Hermon—from Mount Mizar.

⁷ Deep calls to deep
in the roar of your waterfalls;
all your waves and breakers
have swept over me.

⁸ By day the LORD directs his love,
at night his song is with me—
a prayer to the God of my life.

⁹ I say to God my Rock,
“Why have you forgotten me?
Why must I go about mourning,
oppressed by the enemy?”

Psalm 42:10-11 NIV

My bones suffer mortal agony
as my foes taunt me,
saying to me all day long,
“Where is your God?”

¹¹ Why, my soul, are you downcast?
Why so disturbed within me?
Put your hope in God,
for I will yet praise him,
my Savior and my God.

Psalm 43:1-3 NIV

Vindicate me, my God,
and plead my cause
against an unfaithful nation.
Rescue me from those who are
deceitful and wicked.

² You are God my stronghold.
Why have you rejected me?
Why must I go about mourning,
oppressed by the enemy?

³ Send me your light and your faithful care,
let them lead me;
let them bring me to your holy mountain,
to the place where you dwell.

Psalm 43:4-5 NIV

Then I will go to the altar of God,
to God, my joy and my delight.
I will praise you with the lyre,
O God, my God.

⁵Why, my soul, are you downcast?
Why so disturbed within me?
Put your hope in God,
for I will yet praise him,
my Savior and my God.

Philippians 4:6-7 NIV

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

The Psalms of Lament invite us to
boldly bring our pain to God.

How to *complain* well

1. Name the source of your pain.
2. Name what you are feeling.
3. Actively remember with gratitude who God is and what He has done.
4. Tell God what you would like for Him to do.
5. Actively trust Him with the outcome
(or at least ask Him to help you to trust).

What *loss, grief, or complaint* do you have from this year?

- Job loss
- Financial strain
- Loss of a loved one
- Illness
- Personal betrayal
- Family or relational strife
- Unprocessed trauma
- End of a season
- Unfulfilled hope or dream

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