



WRITING A PSALM OF LAMENT

PSALMS OF LAMENT

There are more psalms of lament than any other type of psalm in the Bible. The psalmists pour out their anger, grief, pain, raw emotions, and difficult circumstances to God, meeting Him in their lowest places, and their lament slowly grows into a beautiful expression of hope.

WRITING A PSALM OF LAMENT IN 5 STEPS

CRY OUT TO GOD – Cry out in pain, suffering, anger, or fear. Don't hold back. God already knows what is on your heart.

COMPLAINT – Be specific about what is causing you pain, fear, or anger.

TRUST – Wrestle with God, question Him, and tell Him if or where you doubt. God wants open communication and an honest conversation.

ASK – Ask God for help. Tell Him what you need.

PRAISE – Pause. Shift gears. Name what you're grateful for.

PSALM 13 - A BIBLICAL EXAMPLE

STEP	PSALM 13
Crying Out	How long, O Lord? Will you forget me forever?
Complaint	How long will you hide your face from me?
Complaint	How long must I wrestle with my thoughts and every day have sorrow in my heart?
Complaint	How long will my enemy triumph over me?
Ask	Look on me and answer, O Lord my God.
Ask	Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep in death; my enemy will say, "I have overcome him," and my foes will rejoice when I fall.



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STEP

Trust

Praise

Praise

PSALM 13

But I trust in your unfailing love;

my heart rejoices in your salvation.

I will sing to the Lord, for he has been good to me.

TIPS TO HELP YOU BEGIN

1. Write honestly. This is a personal conversation between you and God.
2. Express your pain and struggle. Pour out your emotion. You'll be following in the pen strokes of the psalmists.
3. Think descriptively. Try to:
 - describe an emotion without naming it
 - use color, shape, or texture to describe your pain
 - describe your anger as an animal, an attribute of weather, or as an object
 - use your senses (touch, taste, sight, smell, and hearing) to describe your anxiety or fear
 - describe your pain in metaphor (i.e., My pain is a roaring lion.)
 - describe your emotion in simile. (i.e., ...my bones burn like glowing embers.)
4. Write in phrases rather than sentences.
5. Give yourself time to process the experience. Reflect on what you've written. Read your lament slowly. Read it aloud if you can. Listen to the sounds as well as the meanings.
6. What are you grateful for? Name those things, then read through your lament again, adding new praises as they come to mind.
7. The length of your lament doesn't matter. Biblical psalms range from just two verses in Psalm 117 to 176 verses in Psalm 119.
8. Lament helps us praise God in our pain, even when our circumstances don't change.
9. Side-stepping lament only increases our isolation, separating us from God and from each other.

Lament is how we bring our sorrow to God ... Lament invites us to pray through our struggle ... Lament is a prayer in pain that leads to trust." (Mark Vroegop)

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