Psalm 42 Psalms of Lament

Suggested Resource: Into the Psalms by Rolan Monje [www.ipibooks.com](http://www.ipibooks.com)

150 Psalms

73 attributed to David

12 to Asaph, who was David’s chief musician

11 Psalms attributed to the “Sons of Korah.”

Solomon 2 Ethan 1 Heman 1 50 unattributed.

Some were written as late as after the Restoration—ie Psalm 136 a lament. in the 400s BC

All are poetry

We interpret the Psalms differently than Leviticus or Isaiah or 1,2 Samuel or Romans.

In the Psalms, humans are speaking to God.

We do not generally seek doctrine in the Psalms.

This is “Wisdom Literature.

Ex: Psalm 51 “Against you only have I sinned” or “.”Surely I was sinful at birth.”

The principle (but definitely not only) use of Psalms is to help us in our relationship with God.

Ex: David is “A man after God’s own heart.” (1 Samuel 13:4)

Yet David was a deeply flawed person who committed grievous sins.

It is amazing that such an imperfect man is the one (more that Joseph or Daniel or Elijah) who was a person after God’s heart.

In the Psalms we see the heart of God and we see a person with a great heart for God in the Psalms.

In Psalms we learn how to feel about ourselves, about others, and, most importantly, about God.

Psalms gives us permission to feel some emotions that some Christians might suggest we should not have!

The Psalms were poetry and they were songs. They are meant to be sung!!!

We will break out a couple of Psalm/songs the next few weeks.

The poetry of the Psalms is not like English-language poetry, with its rhyming and its rhythms.

Types of Psalms

1. Psalms of lament (complaint)

A call to God for Help in times of struggle.

A psalmist is feeling fear, loss, sorrow

To be used in our personal devotions.

Ex Psalm 13, Psalm 73, Psalm 42

2. Imprecatory Psalms Calls for God to come to our aid and to judge his enemies. Psalms of vengeance (surprising)

Psalm 35 Psalm 69 Psalm 109 Useful in our personal prayer life.

3. Psalms of Praise: A call to praise God. Used in worship.

Psalm 19 Psalm 100 Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth. Psalm 147-148

4. Psalms of Confession. Also good for public worship.

Psalm 51 & 32

5. Historical Psalms

Psalmist remembers the great deeds of God. Psalm 78 He parted the Red Sea… Psalm 105-106

Good for studying theology, for learning about God. (unlike other Psalms)

6. Wisdom Psalms Psalms like Proverbs.

Psalm 1 Blessed is the one who does not walk with the wicked.

Psalm 37 Psalm 112 Psalm 127-128

7. Royal Psalms and Messianic Psalms

Psalm 22 Messiah to be crucified. Psalm 110 Messiah a priest of the order of Melchizedek. Psalm 118 Messiah the stone over whom the Jews who reject him will stumble but He will be God’s capstone.

Today: Psalm 42 A lament.

Pattern:

a. A complaint/lament

b. A petition—request to God

c. A statement of confidence in God.

d. A vow to praise and thank God.

Psalm 42:1-2

A “maskil” is a particular kind of song (like a ballad or march or a dance song…)

The “Sons of Korah” were musicians, like Asaph.

As a deer pants for streams of water.

Deer in the Middle East were like deer in a desert. Distant oases.

A deer panting for water is someone who has to go to the bathroom really badly.

You can think of nothing else.

It is like a teenage boy who is hungry.

Like my friend Sasha in Moscow…

A question for you: Do you thirst for God—for the living God.

v. 2 He adds—for the living God—This God is real and he is waiting for us to come to him. He is the ever-present God who does not go to sleep.

For the God who is waiting for us to come to him to drink.

Like a deer panting for water.

Like Sasha counting—looking for food.

Where can I go and meet with God.

The Psalmist, while driving around Merced is not looking for a great restaurant. Hey, did you hear they have a new Canes? Did you hear they are opening a Chik Fil-A? Did you hear about restaurant XXXXX They have big serving!

No! he is looking for a great place to have a quiet time.

When he sees a golf course, he does not think—when can I get back on the links—no—he things of a great place for a prayer walk.

When he looks at the mountains, he does not think “what a great hike”—no—he things “what a great place to go and be with God.”

Q: Is that you?

A: It is not me!!!! Certainly not lately.

This brings us to this question: Are we a church which is characterized by our amazing, heartsy and faithful prayers?

But… How do I MAKE myself be like the son of Korah? Were they always like this?

He is, like David, a “man after God’s own heart,” right? (1 Sam 13:14)

No, not really… It was a struggle for him. This is a lament.

Psalm 42:3-11

Korah’s son thought he was doing great.

He was having a good year.

He went to church every week and had a quiet time most days. He even shared his faith at times. He brought food to Bible talk. He served in the worship.

But, he was disconnected from God. He was not a thirsty/panting deer for sure!

Then Covid hit. He lost his job, his wife died, his grandfather died, a friend betrayed him. and his world is falling apart. He is overwhelmed. He feels like he is drowning. His surfacy “Christianity” is being revealed for what it is.

I wasn’t as deep as I thought!!!

v. 3 My tears have been my food all day long.

v. 3 People have been saying (and he began to believe it!) Where is your God?

 He almost decides to give up.

Spiritual disaster, right!!! No

v. 7 Deep calls to deep.

Waves were sweeping over him. A lot of noise. The world is a noisy place. He was feeling overwhelmed.

Work, budget, house a mess, homework needs to be done, bills need to be paid…

v. 9 He felt abandoned by God.

v. 10 He was despairing of life. He was depressed. Where is God?

Spiritual disaster right? No.

This might happen to you this year!!!

It might be in your studies. Right, Mulero?

It might be in family tragedy. Right Noe?

It might be in marriage struggles or a relationship break-up

But… v. 5 His struggles forced him to his knees. They forced him back to his God

He asked himself: “Why, my soul, are you downcast?”

But then he realizes that God is behind the situation—that God is trying to get his attention.

He remembers. He remembers why he fell in love with God. His love is renewed. He is thirsty for God.

Q: Where do you go?????

v. 5 He puts his hope in God.

This is what makes him a man after God’s own heart.

What about you? Where do you go when you face trials?

v. 8 At night, as he lay on his bed, depressed, he says the breath prayer.

Breathe in: A trait or quality of God or of his Son Jesus

Jesus Christ is the Prince of Peace

Breathe out: Therefore…

I will rely on him.

The Lord is my shepherd

I shall not want

God is a faithful God

I will put my faith in him.

v. 11 Why am I downcast? I will put my hope in God. He renews his relationship with God.

I need some God-time.

This is what we learned from Job. It is through suffering that we come to really know Christ.

It is then that “My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.

Can I make a suggestion?

Psalm 46:10 “Be still and know that I am God.”

Let us stop and smell the coffee. Let us quiet the noise.

Let us make the resolution TODAY to Be still…

Let us remember Psalm 84:10-12 Better is one day in your courts than a thousand elsewhere.

Let’s resolve to be a doorkeeper

Let’s resolve not to dwell in the tents of the wicked.

Let’s spend more time with God and less time on video games, watching sports and shows that do not build us up.

A question for you: Who is your sun and shield?

Is it your credit card company? Is it your nice car? Is it your Starbucks coffee?

Can any of those bestow favor and honor?

Get the picture.

This year you will trust in God.

This year you will have those moments—not every day. Let us be real.

We will have those moments like the Son of Korah had.

We will trust in God. We will thirst for God and we will meet with God.