

UNCERTAINTY, SUFFERING, AND A SOVEREIGN GOD

"Responding to Suffering with Lament"



Job 3:24-26

²⁴ For sighing has become my daily food; my groans pour out like water. ²⁵ What I feared has come upon me; what I dreaded has happened to me.



Job 3:24-26

²⁶ I have no peace, no quietness; I have no rest, but only turmoil."





Lament:

a form of prayer with the intent of drawing close to God in times of great suffering and pain



Learning to Lament





¹ "I loathe my very life; therefore I will give free rein to my complaint and speak out in the bitterness of my soul.



² I say to God: Do not declare me guilty, but tell me what charges you have against me.



³ Does it please you to oppress me, to spurn the work of your hands, while you smile on the plans of the wicked?



⁴ Do you have eyes of flesh? Do you see as a mortal sees?



⁵ Are your days like those of a mortal or your years like those of a strong man, ⁶ that you must search out my faults and probe after my sin—

⁷ though you know that I am not guilty and that no one can rescue me from your hand?



 ⁸ "Your hands shaped me and made me. Will you now turn and destroy me?
⁹ Remember that you molded me like clay. Will you now turn me to dust again?

¹⁰ Did you not pour me out like milk and curdle me like cheese, ¹¹ clothe me with skin and flesh and knit me together with bones and sinews?



¹² You gave me life and showed me kindness, and in your providence watched over my spirit.



 ¹³ "But this is what you concealed in your heart, and I know that this was in your mind:
¹⁴ If I sinned, you would be watching me and would not let my offense go unpunished.

¹⁵ If I am guilty—woe to me! Even if I am innocent, I cannot lift my head, for I am full of shame and drowned in my affliction.



¹⁶ If I hold my head high, you stalk me like a lion and again display your awesome power against me.



¹⁷ You bring new witnesses against me and increase your anger toward me; your forces come against me wave upon wave.



¹⁸ "Why then did you bring me out of the womb? I wish I had died before any eye saw me.



¹⁹ If only I had never come into being, or had been carried straight from the womb to the grave!



²⁰ Are not my few days almost over? Turn away from me so I can have a moment's joy ²¹ before I go to the place of no return,



to the land of gloom and utter darkness, ²² to the land of deepest night, of utter darkness and disorder, where even the light is like darkness."





The Pattern of Laments: 1. Address to God



The Pattern of Laments:

Address to God
Complaint



The Pattern of Laments: 1. Address to God 2. Complaint 3. Request



The Pattern of Laments: 1. Address to God 2. Complaint 3. Request 4. Expression of trust and/or praise



Job 19:23-27

 ²³ "Oh, that my words were recorded, that they were written on a scroll,
²⁴ that they were inscribed with an iron tool on lead, or engraved in rock forever!

Job 19:23-27

²⁵ I know that my redeemer lives,
and that in the end he will stand on the earth.
²⁶ And after my skin has been destroyed,
yet in my flesh I will see God;

Job 19:23-27

²⁷ I myself will see him with my own eyes— I, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!





Learning from Lament





1. Lament is a form of praise. 2. Lament is a proof of the relationship. 3. Lament is a participation in the pain of others.

4. Lament awakens us to God's grace.



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