

After Lament: Psalms for Learning to Trust Again

Session III

Which way do we go?

*Answer #2 – The **Book** of Psalms*

Recap: Session I

1. Lament sets the form for language within crisis
2. Language within Lament establishes/strengthens relationship with God. This relationship establishes a foundation for moving beyond Lament.
3. Like a concrete foundation, we need to give Lament time to “set-up” (harden) for it to be a strong foundation.
4. The first move beyond Lament: Trust (not thanksgiving)

Recap: Session II

What comes after lament? *It all depends... the “Wheel of Lament”*

1. Psalms of Trust
2. Psalms of Thanksgiving
3. Psalms of New Praise
4. Psalms of Joy/Rejoicing
5. Psalms of Instruction
6. Psalms of Broken Hope

Session III: What comes after lament? *Does the Book of Psalms answer the question?*

- a. Is there a Book of Psalms? Or is the Book of Psalms a haphazard collection of Psalms?
- b. Evidence: Working at the “Seams” of the Psalter
 - i. Psalms 1-2: Introduction to the Psalter (Key Themes)
 1. Key Theme #1: The Blessing of the Righteous/Curse of the Wicked (promises made)
 2. Key Theme #2: The Lord’s Anointed One (promises made)

ii. Book One: Pss 3-41

1. Beginnings: Psalm 3 (the adversity of the Lord's anointed one - - and the Lord's deliverance of the king)
2. Middle:
 - a. Praises: 3
 - b. Laments: 19
 - c. Thanks/Trust: 12
3. Endings: Psalm 41 (I know you are pleased with me)
4. Doxology: 41:13

iii. Book Two: Pss 42-72

1. Beginnings: Psalm 42-43 (longing for the Lord from separation)
2. Middle
 - a. Praises: 3
 - b. Laments: 19
 - c. Thanks/Trust: 4
3. Endings: Psalm 72 (prayer for the king)
4. Doxology: 72:18-19 (20)

iv. Book Three: Pss 73-89

1. Beginnings: Psalm 73 (I had almost forgotten: the wicked face downfall)
2. Middle:
 - a. Praises: 4
 - b. Laments: 9
 - c. Thanks/Trust: 1
3. Endings: Psalms 88-89 (The nation collapses - the anointed one, Psalm 2 - rejected)
4. Doxology: 89:52 - "Blessed be the Lord forever. Amen and Amen."

- v. Book Four: Pss 90-106
 - 1. Beginnings: Psalm 90 (Lament for the death of the nation)
 - 2. Middle: Psalm 93-99 (The Lord Reigns)
 - a. Praises: 10
 - b. Laments: 2
 - c. Thanks/Trust: 3
 - 3. Endings: Psalm 105-106 (105: The Lord's Faithfulness to Covenant; 106: Confession of Israel's sin)
 - 4. Doxology: 106:48

- vi. Book Five: Pss 107-150
 - 1. Beginnings: Psalm 107 (Thanksgiving for Deliverance)
 - 2. Middle:
 - a. Praises: 20
 - b. Laments: 11
 - c. Thanks/Trust: 8
 - 3. Ending: Pss 145-149 (Praise)
 - 4. Doxology: Ps 150

- c. What difference does it make? What is the difference between preaching a psalm within the context of the Book of Psalms and preaching a psalm without a literary context? (Test Cases)

- i. Psalm 23
 - 1. Alone
 - 2. Within its literary context:
 - a. Psalm 22
 - b. Psalm 23
 - c. Psalm 24

- ii. Psalm 121
 - 1. Alone
 - 2. Within its literary context #1
 - a. Psalm 120
 - b. Psalm 121
 - c. Psalm 122
 - 3. Within its literary context #2
 - a. Psalms 120-134: The Songs of Ascent
 - b. Psalm 121

- iii. Psalm 91
 - 1. Alone
 - 2. Within its literary context:
 - a. Psalm 90
 - b. Psalm 91
 - c. Psalm 92
 - d. (Psalm 93-99)

Bibliography:

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Nancy L. deClaisse-Walford, *Reading From the Beginning: The Shaping of the Hebrew Psalter* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1997).

J. Clinton McCann, ed., *The Shape and Shaping of the Psalter*, JSOTSup 159 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993).

