

Psalms of Lament

There are a large number of psalms in the Bible which are Psalms of Lament. They express hurt, anger, disappointment, despair and of feeling abandoned by God. Why is God ignoring me and why do my prayers go unanswered?

Yet these psalms also move beyond complaint to pleading with God and a renewed confidence in him.

They can help us be honest with God, and enable us to move from despair to hope.

They often follow the following pattern:

Address
Complaint
Request
Motivation
Confidence

Let's take a closer look at this in Psalm 22

Psalm 22

Address	v 1	'My God'
Complaint	v 1-18	Expresses a sense of abandonment by God
Request	v 19-21a	A specific request from God
Motivation	v 21b-22	Often a defiant statement of resistance and trust
Confidence	v 23 – end	A statement of God's goodness, often worship

In your own time:

- Look at Psalm 26 and Psalm 109. Can you identify the pattern in those psalms?
- How honest are you with God? Do you express to him how you are feeling – even how angry you might be with him for not answering your prayers as you had hoped?
- How might you use the words of the psalms as a channel for your hurt and pain, or could you write your own psalms of lament?