

Guided Meditation 2: Lamenting with the Psalmists.

As you approach this guided meditation practice, you may struggle to speak to God in prayer, which may be your regular way of starting Christian reflection. Even if this is the case, collect your pen and paper, and the Scripture, then settle yourself in a place where you feel quite steady, and spend the time with the practice – the process is your conversation with God today.

Part A

The Psalms are an assurance to us that when we pray and worship, we are not expected to censure or deny the deepness of our own human pilgrimage." Walter Brueggemann, Praying the Psalms p.19

Can I invite you to remember where you were when you heard the news that the PCQ was 'in trouble'? Bring that time in your recent life to your mind and there seek the answers to these questions.....

What were you thinking at the time in response to this?

What was your reaction to the information that had been given?

I wonder if there was anyone around when you heard? What was the conversation like with that/those persons? What struggles did you notice or hear in THEM?

Do you remember what your body experience was like? Physical? Emotional?

Though as yet the full situation for PCQ and the future may be unclear for us as congregations and individuals, there still may be similar experiences occurring as you reflect on the situation, or if you meet someone affected by the situation.

Emotional states will vary and saying the name of that state is helpful as we come to God honestly crying out to him (Some persons may feel anger, or some persons- sadness, others may be thinking of a change that will result in their future ...Or maybe other experiences that are hard to name – disgust, mistrust, betrayal, grief. *Use the list of emotions attached if you need help identifying how you feel.*

Since that first time of hearing, what other states of mind/emotions have occurred for you?

Now, collect these reflection thoughts, write them down and be willing to explore them in the following Lament writing.

In *Lament* psalms in the Scriptures, what stands out very clearly is **that the thinking and the internal experience of sufferers are stated so overtly** as they attempt to approach the God who hears. (El Shama/Ishmael). As we learned in Guided Meditation 1, these psalms have poignant and raw moments recorded for us to reflect on and learn from.

'In essence, lamentation is much like the "ouch" we utter when something hurts us physically, only it's directed toward God'

** Christianity.com (praying the Lament Psalms) Jessica Brodie*

God asks us to Lament, individually and corporately, and the Psalms model for us an exceptional way of bringing the whole OUCH to our God.

In this meditation, we read Psalm 13 which shows us a way to do this by:

- writing out OUR psalm as we express the OUCH, and then
- remembering Who it is that is LISTENING! Then
- we can express our confidence that **this** God will bring salvation and restoration.

Part B

READ PSALM 13 out aloud now as you sit having reflected on your current internal experience.

Part C

Can I invite you now to take your collected reflection notes and get ready now to write the **OUCH** that has occurred as you consider the current situation? Use the format on the final page of this reflection (either printed out or on a fresh sheet of paper)

1. As you do this, remember we are like the psalmists who sought the Lord honestly and brokenly.... 'How many are my foes? ...' 'How Long O Lord?' ... 'Oh Lord why do you stand far off?' ... 'Give me relief from my distress?' ... 'I am worn out from groaning!' ... 'I flood my bed with weeping'.

Be specific and express your internal and external reality.

Start to write out this OUCH in the first part of the page: The Problem that you are experiencing in your own words.

2. Now remember what the writer of Psalm 13 DOES next! The psalmist turns to God for answers, and almost demands that He LOOK ON THEM in their suffering. There is a tentative state in many of us as we consider these stories of Step 1.... It may be hard to turn to God when such an OUCH has occurred. However, the clear invitation, and yes, a command, of the Listening God is to TURN, and to acknowledge that He loves us and we can trust HIM.

Write out the second part of the Lament from your heart: As you can, write what you know of God, and petition HIM in His character, to Look on YOU.

3. It may be now or later, however, the psalmist encourages (indeed models for us), the praise for God who IS and WILL be, good to us.

Can you write out YOUR praise, from your Heart which is hurting, as you bring this lament to God?

4. Finally: **Read the psalm out aloud to yourself, and then when you can, bring to mind the relationship you have had with God, and speak it to Him who cares for you, and Listens to you.**
5. Future: **In the next weeks, look for His response as you continue to speak these Meditations, Listening for His Word, and especially noticing the way He searches your heart as you spend time with HIM.**

As occurred with the first 'Hymnbook', - the Hebrew Songbook - together we can walk toward Zion and sing our Psalms as we journey forward, just as His people did as they went up to Jerusalem?

As with the previous Guided Meditation instructions, We would like to use a collection of psalms of lament written by members of our denomination for a state wide service being organised. You are invited to email you psalm of lament to peter.evans@pcq.org.au by **7th June 2021**.

WRITING YOUR OWN PRAYER FROM

Psalm Thirteen

Problem

»—————«
»—————«
»—————«
»—————«
»—————«
»—————«

Petition

»—————«
»—————«
»—————«
»—————«
»—————«
»—————«

Praise

»—————«
»—————«
»—————«
»—————«
»—————«
»—————«

Amen .

Feelings List

Accepting / Open

Calm
Centered
Content
Fulfilled
Patient
Peaceful
Present
Relaxed
Serene
Trusting

Aliveness / Joy

Amazed
Awe
Bliss
Delighted
Eager
Ecstatic
Enchanted
Energized
Engaged
Enthusiastic
Excited
Free
Happy
Inspired
Invigorated
Lively
Passionate
Playful
Radiant
Refreshed
Rejuvenated
Renewed
Satisfied
Thrilled
Vibrant

Angry / Annoyed

Agitated
Aggravated
Bitter
Contempt
Cynical
Disdain
Disgruntled
Disturbed
Edgy
Exasperated
Frustrated
Furious
Grouchy
Hostile
Impatient
Irritated
Irate
Moody
On edge
Outraged
Pissed
Resentful
Upset
Vindictive

Courageous / Powerful

Adventurous
Brave
Capable
Confident
Daring
Determined
Free
Grounded
Proud
Strong
Worthy
Valiant

Connected / Loving

Accepting
Affectionate
Caring
Compassion
Empathy
Fulfilled
Present
Safe
Warm
Worthy
Curious
Engaged
Exploring
Fascinated
Interested
Intrigued
Involved
Stimulated

Despair / Sad

Anguish
Depressed
Despondent
Disappointed
Discouraged
Forlorn
Gloomy
Grief
Heartbroken
Hopeless
Lonely
Longing
Melancholy
Sorrow
Tearful
Unhappy
Upset
Weary
Yearning

Disconnected / Numb

Aloof
Bored
Confused
Distant
Empty
Indifferent
Isolated
Lethargic
Listless
Removed
Resistant
Shut Down
Uneasy
Withdrawn

Embarrassed / Shame

Ashamed
Humiliated
Inhibited
Mortified
Self-conscious
Useless
Weak
Worthless

Fear

Afraid
Anxious
Apprehensive
Frightened
Hesitant
Nervous
Panic
Paralyzed
Scared
Terrified
Worried

Fragile

Helpless
Sensitive

Grateful

Appreciative
Blessed
Delighted
Fortunate
Grace
Humbled
Lucky
Moved
Thankful
Touched

Guilt

Regret
Remorseful
Sorry

Hopeful

Encouraged
Expectant
Optimistic
Trusting

Powerless

Impotent
Incapable
Resigned
Trapped
Victim

Tender

Calm
Caring
Loving
Reflective
Self-loving
Serene
Vulnerable
Warm

Stressed / Tense

Anxious
Burned out
Cranky
Depleted
Edgy
Exhausted
Frazzled
Overwhelm
Rattled
Rejecting
Restless
Shaken
Tight
Weary
Worn out

Unsettled / Doubt

Apprehensive
Concerned
Dissatisfied
Disturbed
Grouchy
Hesitant
Inhibited
Perplexed
Questioning
Rejecting
Reluctant
Shocked
Skeptical
Suspicious
Ungrounded
Unsure
Worried

Body Sensations

Achy
Airy
Blocked
Breathless
Bruised
Burning
Buzzy
Clammy
Clenched
Cold
Constricted
Contained

Contracted
Dizzy
Drained
Dull
Electric
Empty
Expanded
Flowing
Fluid
Fluttery
Frozen
Full

Gentle
Hard
Heavy
Hollow
Hot
Icy
Itchy
Jumpy
Knotted
Light
Loose
Nauseous

Numb
Pain
Pounding
Prickly
Pulsing
Queasy
Radiating
Relaxed
Releasing
Rigid
Sensitive
Settled

Shaky
Shivery
Slow
Smooth
Soft
Sore
Spacey
Spacious
Sparkly
Stiff
Still
Suffocated

Sweaty
Tender
Tense
Throbbing
Tight
Tingling
Trembly
Twitchy
Vibrating
Warm
Wobbly
Wooden