

Introduction to the Petition-Lament Psalms

Psalms 42-43

General Description & Terminology

Lament, Petition, Complaint (protest)

Identifying Mark: Opening Direct Address (and cry for help)

***3:1** “O LORD, how many are my foes!”

***4:1** “Answer me when I call, O God of my righteousness!
You have given me relief when I was in distress.
Be gracious to me and hear my prayer!”

***5:1-2** “Give ear to my words, O LORD;
consider my groaning.
Give attention to the sound of my cry, my King and my God,
for to you do I pray

***6:1** “O LORD, rebuke me not in your anger,
nor discipline me in your wrath.”

***7:1** “O LORD my God, in you do I take refuge;
save me from all my pursuers and deliver me”

***10:1** “Why, O LORD, do you stand far away?”

***13:1-2** “How long, O LORD? Will you forget me forever?
How long will you hide your face from me?
² How long must I take counsel in my soul
and have sorrow in my heart all the day?
How long shall my enemy be exalted over me?”

***22:1** “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”

***80:1** “Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, you who lead Joseph like a flock.”

Usual Form / Components

Direct Address

“O LORD” / “O God”

Lament/Complaint

“How long?” / “Why, O LORD, do you stand far away?”

Confidence “But you, O LORD, are my shield”

God as deliverer, God as faithful, God who has helped in the past, etc.

Petition “Answer me when I call!” “Save me!”

Asking God to hear / help

Conclusion / Praise “The LORD has heard me ... I will praise.”

Often praise, vow to praise, renewed expression of confidence

Samples

*Psalm 5

*Superscript: A Psalm of David.

*Address with **Introductory Petition**

- 1 Give ear to my words, O LORD;
consider my groaning.
- 2 Give attention to the sound of my cry, my King and my God,
for to you do I pray.
- 3 O LORD, in the morning you hear my voice;
in the morning I prepare a sacrifice for you and watch.

***Confidence** with **Lament**

- 4 For you are not a God who delights in wickedness;
evil may not dwell with you.
- 5 The boastful shall not stand before your eyes;
you hate all evildoers.
- 6 You destroy those who speak lies;
the LORD abhors the bloodthirsty and deceitful man.

***Petition** with **Confidence**

- 7 But I, through the abundance of your steadfast love,
will enter your house.
I will bow down toward your holy temple
in the fear of you.
- 8 Lead me, O LORD, in your righteousness
because of my enemies;
make your way straight before me.”

***Petition** with **Confidence**

- 9 For there is no truth in their mouth;
their inmost self is destruction;
their throat is an open grave;
they flatter with their tongue.
- 10 Make them bear their guilt, O God;
let them fall by their own counsels;
because of the abundance of their transgressions cast them out,
for they have rebelled against you.

***Praise**

- 11 But let all who take refuge in you rejoice;
let them ever sing for joy,
and spread your protection over them,
that those who love your name may exult in you.
- 12 For you bless the righteous, O LORD;
you cover him with favor as with a shield.

*Postscript: “To the Choirmaster”

*Psalm 6

*Superscript: A Psalm of David.

*1-5 Direct Address & Petition

- 1 O LORD, rebuke me not in your anger,
nor discipline me in your wrath.
- 2 Be gracious to me, O LORD,
for I am languishing;
heal me, O LORD,
for my bones are troubled.
- 3 My soul also is greatly troubled.
But you, O LORD—how long?
- 4 Turn, O LORD, deliver my life;
save me for the sake of your steadfast love.
- 5 For in death there is no remembrance of you;
in Sheol who will give you praise?

*6-7 Lament

- 6 I am weary with my moaning;
every night I flood my bed with tears;
I drench my couch with my weeping.
- 7 My eye wastes away because of grief;
it grows weak because of all my foes.

*8-10 Confidence

- 8 Depart from me, all you workers of evil,
for the LORD has heard the sound of my weeping.
- 9 The LORD has heard my plea;
the LORD accepts my prayer.
- 10 All my enemies shall be ashamed and greatly troubled;
they shall turn back and be put to shame in a moment.

*Psalm 13

*Superscript: A Psalm of David.

*Direct Address & Lament

- 1 How long, O LORD? Will you forget me forever?
How long will you hide your face from me?
- 2 How long must I take counsel in my soul
and have sorrow in my heart all the day?
How long shall my enemy be exalted over me?

*Petition *3-4

- 3 Consider and answer me, O LORD my God;
light up my eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death,
- 4 lest my enemy say, "I have prevailed over him,"
lest my foes rejoice because I am shaken.

*Confidence *5

- 5 But I have trusted in your steadfast love;
my heart shall rejoice in your salvation.

*Vow to Praise *6

- 6 I will sing to the LORD,
because he has dealt bountifully with me.

*Postscript: To the choirmaster.

***Psalms 42-43**

Identifying the Components

Overview

***Pss. 42-43** a single psalm

*Three Stanzas, marked by refrain:

***42:1-5** (Stanza 1)

***42:6-11** (Stanza 2)

***43:1-5** (Stanza 3)

Survey Exposition