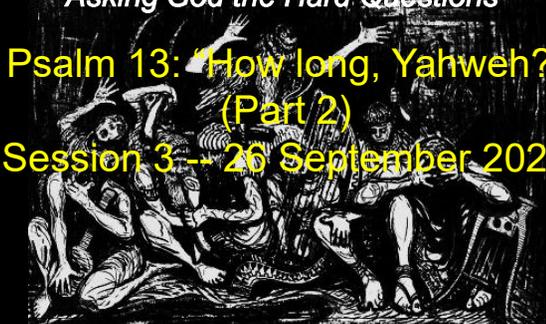


Lament Psalms

Asking God the Hard Questions

Psalm 13: "How long, Yahweh?"
(Part 2)

Session 3 -- 26 September 2021



1st Baptist Church – Regina, SK L4L Fall 2021
Instructor: Kelvin Friebel

"By the Rivers of Babylon We Sat and Wept" (1938) by Moshe Rynecki
<https://rynecki.org/wp-content/themes/rynecki/images/npl1938nr32-e1418056288987.jpg>

Reading OT Psalm Poetry

► Distinguish between

"Experiential Language"
& **"Metaphysical Language"**

- how one **Experiences Reality** that is occurring around one's self
- Reality as defined by Science, or Philosophy, or Theology

"Experiential Language"

Psalm 13 (KGF translation)

1 How long, Yahweh, will you forget me – forever?
How long will you hide your face from me?

- Psalmist is only describing how he is experiencing Yahweh (the psalmist's perception of how God seems to be relating to him), not trying to theologically affirm whether Yahweh can actually "forget" or "hide his face"
- Even though the description may not be "Theologically Accurate", we must never dismiss "Experiential" Language, because the Experience of Yahweh's Lack of Attention & Lack of Action is a very real, overwhelming & accurate **Feeling** (a "Theological" Refutation will probably not effectively Alleviate the Feeling)

Psalm 13 (KGF)

Thematic Structure

A. vv. 1-4: How God is Relating to the Psalmist: Yahweh → Psalmist		COMPLAINT
1	How long, Yahweh, will you forget me – forever? How long will you hide your face from me?	
2	How long must I bear pain within myself, (and) have sorrow in my heart every day? How long will my enemy be exalted over me?	Petition
3	Look! Answer me, Yahweh, my God! Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep (in) death. or my enemy will say, "I have overcome him", (or) my foes will rejoice because/when I am shaken.	
B. vv. 5-6 How Psalmist is Relating to God: Psalmist → Yahweh		
TRUST	5a And I, in your steadfast love, I have trusted.	
Commitment to Praise	5b My heart will rejoice in your deliverance. 6 I will sing to / for Yahweh, when/because he has dealt bountifully with me.	

Actual Experience of the Psalmist	Literary Shift within the Psalm	Purpose & Function for Subsequent Users
 <p>https://therconfines.files.wordpress.com/2018/01/david-laments.jpg</p> <p>► External:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prophetic / Priestly Oracle Affirmation comes from God (through Scripture; word spoken by friend) Some change of Circumstances <p>► Internal Transformation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Process, developmental emotional progression Simultaneity of conflicting feelings that fluctuate Conscious Commitment of the Will to Trust Conscious "Remembering" of Divine Help in the Past 	<p>Psalm 13 For the director of music. A psalm of David.</p> <p>¹How long, O Lord? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me? ²How long must I wrestle with my thoughts and every day have sorrow in my heart? How long will my enemy triumph over me?²</p> <p>https://yimg.com/vig/1_eko/Vul/maree/default.jpg</p> <p>► Ps 13, reflects a Movement from Complaint/Petition → Confidence/Praise</p> <p>► Also reflects that Trust is co-existent, to some degree, with Complaint, but in the Literary Movement, Trust dominates at the end</p> <p>► Gives no explanation of the transition (thus, what is important is not HOW it occurs, but that it DOES occur)</p>	 <p>https://www.shutterstock.com/image-vector/young-man-sitting-ground-2019-01-14-146149788-146149788</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instructive that such a movement & transition to Confidence/Praise can be part of lament Reminder to maintain our trust & confidence in God in midst of lament & believe that He will answer Other Lament psalms reflect different Movements

	Yahweh	Psalmist	Enemies
Present Reality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inactivity & Lack of Attention 1 How long, Yahweh, will you forget me – forever? How long will you hide your face from me? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suffering 2a-b How long must I bear pain within myself, (and) have sorrow in my heart every day? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exalting Over 2c How long will my enemy be exalted over me?
Potential Future		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Death 3b Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep (in) death. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rejoice 4 or my enemy will say, "I have overcome him", (or) my foes will rejoice because/when I am shaken.
Expected Future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action 5b your deliverance 6b when /because he has dealt bountifully with me. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rejoice 5b My heart will rejoice – 6 I will sing to /for Yahweh.

► Movement from Yahweh's Lack of Attention Inactivity (Non-Action) to → Deliverance (Action)

- is predicated on & motivated by Yahweh's character of "steadfast love" (v. 5a)
- Deliverance is solely Yahweh's action (Deliverance will not occur **if** Yahweh does not act)

► Human Motivation that moves Yahweh from Non-Action → Action

is (a) the Psalmist's Crying out to Yahweh in Lament Prayer

(b) the Psalmist's Trust in the Covenant Character of Yahweh

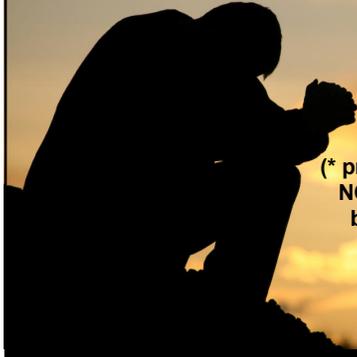
◆ Yahweh's Non-Action is addressed through Lament

◆ Yahweh's Action (deliverance) is Responded to through Praise

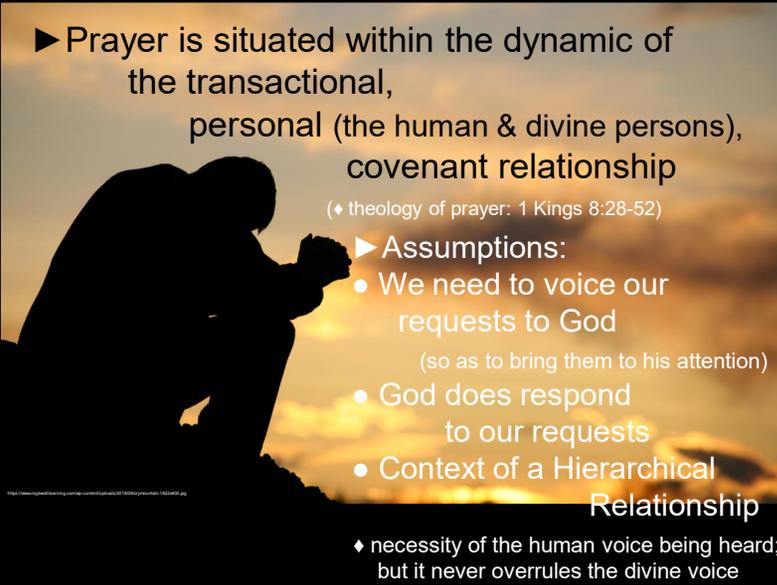
► Prayer Changes us, the Pray-ers

- Do our Prayers of Lament Change* God?

(* producing a "change" NOT in WHO God is, but in WHAT God does --God will always act out of full consistency with his character)



<https://www.myowlteaching.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/cyrus-1423d00.jpg>



▶ Prayer is situated within the dynamic of the transactional, personal (the human & divine persons), covenant relationship

(♦ theology of prayer: 1 Kings 8:28-52)

▶ Assumptions:

- We need to voice our requests to God
(so as to bring them to his attention)
- God does respond to our requests
- Context of a Hierarchical Relationship

♦ necessity of the human voice being heard; but it never overrules the divine voice

Psalm 13 (KGF translation)
[Heb v. 1] *For (to / of) the Leader. A Psalm of (to / for) David.*

[Heb 2] 1a How long, **Yahweh**, will **you** forget me – forever?
 b How long will **you** hide **your** face from me?

[Heb 3] 2a How long must I bear pain [or, “take counsel”] within myself,
 b (and) have sorrow in my heart every day?
 c How long will my enemy be exalted over me?

[Heb 4] 3a **Look! Answer me, Yahweh, my God!**
 b **Give light** to my eyes, **Addressed to Yahweh**
 c or I will sleep (in) death. **In 2nd person**

[Heb 5] 4a or my enemy will say,
 “I have overcome him”,
 b (or) my foes will rejoice
 c because/when I am shaken.

[Heb 6a] 5a And I, in **your** steadfast love, I have trusted.
 b My heart will rejoice in **your** deliverance.

[Heb 6b] 6a I will sing to / for **Yahweh**, **Yahweh spoken of**
 b when/because **he** has dealt bountifully with me. **in 3rd person**

▶ Change of Addressee / Audience (v. 6):
 (Audience is most probably the congregation/community)

- Lament Psalms are spoken publically,
 in the midst of the congregation
 --although they are “individual / private” prayers,
 the context of voicing them is corporate worship
- Specifically the Commitment to Praise is
 a public declaration,
 thus, a type of public vow
- Context of the Thankful Praise,
 when God has Delivered,
 will also be public, within the congregation,
 not merely a private song of thanks
 (such may be reflected if the connotation is
 “I will sing **for** Yahweh”)