
PSALMS OF LAMENT

(FROM CHAPTER 2)

The lament psalms encompass everything from grief to suffering and from cries for deliverance from enemies to calls for justice for the oppressed. If there is hurt, loss, or pain, there is a lament psalm for it. This is not an exhaustive list of the lament psalms but rather a starting point.

PSALM 3

PSALM 10

PSALM 13

PSALM 17

PSALM 22

PSALM 25

PSALM 31

PSALM 42

PSALM 43

PSALM 44

PSALM 60

PSALM 69

PSALM 73

PSALM 79

PSALM 80

PSALM 86

PSALM 88

PSALM 94

PSALM 102



PRAY GOD'S PROMISES

(FROM CHAPTER 2)

When the uncertainty of life is overwhelming and you're in desperate need of a stable place to rest, pray toward believing God's promises. Pray that you'll have greater belief and confidence in who God says he is and what he says he'll do (or has already done). Ask the Holy Spirit for wisdom and discernment as you search the Scriptures. Below are a few promises you may want to consider.

* * *

"You will search for the LORD your God, and you will find him when you seek him with all your heart and all your soul" (Deut. 4:29, CSB).

God, I want to find you. I believe that I'm seeking you with all my heart and soul. Would you make yourself known?

"Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good;
his love endures forever" (1 Chron. 16:34).

Lord, your love endures forever, but I'm struggling to see your goodness right now. Remind me of your goodness so that I may one day sing your praises.

"Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil,
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff,
they comfort me" (Ps. 23:4, ESV).

God, I'm walking through painful loss right now, and I'm fearful. I cannot perceive you, yet you are with me. Would you comfort me like a good shepherd?

"I remain confident of this:
I will see the goodness of the LORD
in the land of the living" (Ps. 27:13).

Lord, I don't feel confident in this truth yet, but I want to be. Would you show me your goodness in my life and increase my faith?



“The LORD is close to the brokenhearted
and saves those who are crushed in spirit” (Ps. 34:18).

Lord, I am crushed and brokenhearted, but you already knew that. Would you reveal your nearness to me? I need your comfort to permeate my sorrow.

“I lift up my eyes to the mountains—
where does my help come from?
My help comes from the LORD,
the Maker of heaven and earth” (Ps. 121:1-2).

Lord, you are my Maker. When I look to other people and things for strength, rescue, or help, remind me that you are my ultimate hope and the source of all help. I need your help, but most importantly, I need you.

“The LORD longs to be gracious to you;
therefore he will rise up to show you compassion.
For the LORD is a God of justice.
Blessed are all who wait for him!” (Isa. 30:18).

God, I'm crying out and waiting for you to move. You are a gracious and compassionate God. Would you bring your perfect justice to this situation?

“I have made you and I will carry you;
I will sustain you and I will rescue you” (Isa. 46:4).

Remind me of who you are: Creator, Sustainer, and Rescuer. And remind me of who I am: a beloved child carried through the dark.

“I have loved you with an everlasting love;
therefore, I have continued to extend faithful love to you” (Jer. 31:3, CSB).

You love me with an everlasting love? It sounds too good to be true! May my heart rejoice in your faithful love and my head meditate on the beauty of this truth.

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light” (Matt. 11:28-30).

Jesus, I need rest, true rest. My soul is weary and burdened with the load I'm carrying. May I give it to you and receive your promised guidance and rest?

mourning GOD



“Surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matt. 28:20).

Jesus, you are always with me, no matter what may come. Yet I often doubt your presence with me. Engrave this truth on my heart: I am never alone.

“A thief is only there to steal and kill and destroy. I came so they can have real and eternal life, more and better life than they ever dreamed of” (John 10:10, MSG).

God, in the midst of death, it's hard to dream of life. Yet you have come that I might enjoy abundant life right now and eternal life with you. Would your life invade all the dead and broken places of my life and bring about true restoration?

“I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world” (John 16:33).

Lord Jesus, my troubles seem to multiply. But by your death and resurrection, you have overcome the grave. And because of your victory, I can have peace knowing loss is not the end. Grant me an eternal perspective.

“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ” (Eph. 1:3).

Father, when you see me, you see your Son. I can't believe I've been given every spiritual blessing in Christ! I am dearly loved. May I live in light of that truth.

“My God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 4:19).

God, my needs are many, especially in grief. Yet where I see lack and scarcity, you see an opportunity to shower me with abundance in Christ. I thank you in advance for your generous provision. May I be quick to declare all that you have done for me.

“Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need” (Heb. 4:16).

Who am I to find mercy and grace from the King of kings, who is seated on his throne? But you bid me come and invite me to ask for all that I need. And so I'm asking with confidence, knowing that my presence is welcome and my requests are heard. Thank you, God.



INTRODUCTION TO LENT

(FROM CHAPTER 3)

WHAT IS LENT?

“Lent occurs in the spring, beginning with Ash Wednesday and concluding with Holy Saturday. Usually about six and half weeks long, Lent is a forty-day season (excluding Sundays) that prepares us for and leads up to Easter.

“While not mentioned or observed in the Bible, Lent originally began in the second century as a three-day preparation period of instruction, fasting, prayer, and reflection for those wanting to be baptized on Easter Sunday. By 325 CE, the church was celebrating Lent for a full forty days in remembrance of Jesus’ forty days of fasting in the wilderness (Matt. 4:1-11; Mark 1:12-13; Luke 4:1-13). During these forty days, Jesus fasted from all food and was tempted by the devil. Coming out of this physical wilderness, Jesus then entered into his ministry, which ultimately culminated in his death and resurrection.

“Accordingly, the season of Lent is celebrated as a season of reflection, repentance, and renewal. Since the intention and goal of the season is to respond to Jesus’ invitation to know him more deeply, simplicity, meditation on God’s Word, self-reflection, prayer, fasting, and charitable giving often characterize this period.”¹

HOLY WEEK

DAY	COMMEMORATES
Palm Sunday	Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem
Maundy Thursday	Passover supper and Jesus’ arrest
Good Friday	Jesus’ mock trial and crucifixion
Holy Saturday	Jesus in the tomb
Easter Sunday	Jesus’ resurrection

¹Tiffany Stein, *Lent* (Wheat and Honey Co., 2019), 8.



LECTIO DIVINA

(FROM CHAPTER 7)

Lectio divina, Latin for “sacred reading,” is a way to intentionally slow down and savor God’s Word as you meditate on it.

There’s nothing magical about lectio divina, and there are no guarantees that God will discernibly speak to you via this exercise. It’s simply a way to be attentive to God’s Word and to listen intently for the promptings of the Holy Spirit within you, should he choose to speak. You may be suspicious, nervous, doubtful, or hopeful about this exercise. That’s okay. Try to bring your full self to this moment and just be present.

* * *

INSTRUCTIONS:

You will be meditating on John 11:25-26, which is printed below. You can either read this passage each time or use a Bible app and have the passage read over you.

"I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?" (John 11:25-26).

Try to find a quiet place free of distraction. Comfortably position your body, but don’t get so comfortable that you’ll fall asleep. Close your eyes, and consider laying your hands open, palms up, as a physical reminder that you’re seeking God and open to receiving what he may have for you.

Begin with a short prayer: *Jesus, I invite you to meet me here. Should you choose to speak, give me ears to listen and the courage to respond. Amen.*

"READ: There is no agenda in the first reading. Read or listen to the words to know where the passage is heading.

REFLECT: As the passage is read a second time, ask the Holy Spirit to draw your attention to a word or phrase.

The word or phrase my attention was drawn to is: _____

Spend a few moments reflecting on how this connects to your life right now. Journal any thoughts that come to mind.



RESPOND: As the passage is read a third time, notice the word or phrase again and then respond to God however you feel he is leading you to respond. It could be confession and repentance, remembering a truth about God or you, a step you need to take, or something else. Journal your prayer and response below.

REST: As the passage is read one last time, rest in God's goodness and love for you.²¹

* * *

If you felt the prompting of the Holy Spirit or experienced God's tangible presence, what a gift. Praise and thank God for that.

If you felt or experienced nothing, that's okay too. You didn't do anything wrong. This exercise was still valuable because you meditated on God's Word, and that never returns empty (Isa. 55:11).

²¹Jodie Niznik, *Scripture Meditation Journal: With an Introduction to Lectio Divina* (Creating Space for God, 2023), 1.



A CORPORATE PRAYER FOR YOUR JOURNEY

(FROM CHAPTER 8)

Oh God of restoration, redemption, and renewal,

You are the God of Job, the one who spoke out of the whirlwind.

The one whose breath brought all creation into being.

We do not thank you for the sorrows of life, but we thank you for the beauty you are fashioning from them.

Do your work in us.

We thank you for the joys of life, the glimpses of what is good, true, and beautiful.

May we slow down enough to see and savor them, relishing your good gifts.

We thank you for making your love known in Christian community.

Where there is lack, may there be plenty. Where there is hurt, may there be healing. Where there is abundance, may there be gratitude. Fan the flames of love so that your people shine brightly in a dark world.

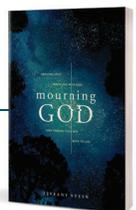
Please form us into the very community we long for: friends who love unfailingly.

We confess that we have an imperfect understanding of your perfect love and have often failed to be such friends. May your Spirit empower us to shoulder one another's burdens (Gal. 6:2), express tender empathy for those who mourn, and meet those who rejoice with fistfuls of confetti and shouts of "Hooray!" (Rom. 12:15).

And would you grant us the courage to persist in love, even when it hurts?

For you are the God whose Son hung on a tree, proving once and for all that at the junction of death and life is suffering love. Drive us into your cruciform love.

IF DESIRED, THE BOLD TEXT CAN BE READ BY THE PRAYER LEADER,
AND THE NONBOLD TEXT CAN BE READ BY THE GROUP.



I WANT TO SEE: IMAGINATIVE PRAYER

(FROM CHAPTER 10)

As we conclude part 3 (“Light”) and look ahead to part 4 (“Life”), we’re going to practice imaginative prayer, an “active way of praying that engages the mind and heart and stirs up thoughts and emotions.”ⁱ

As you engage, please remember that you can’t command or force your eyes to see. God alone gifts spiritual sight and understanding (John 9:32-33, 39; Acts 9:17-19). Your role is to be willing, wait, and act as an eager participant in God’s work.

INSTRUCTIONS:

You will be meditating on Mark 10:46-52 and Luke 18:43, which are printed below. You can either read these passages or use a Bible app and have the passages read over you. When you’re ready, invite the Holy Spirit to speak to you and to your present circumstances. As you read (or listen) to the verses below, “visualize the event as if you were making a movie. Pay attention to the details: sights, sounds, tastes, smells, and feelings of the event. . . . At some point, place yourself in the scene.”ⁱⁱ

Continue reading over the verses several times, and ask yourself these questions:

- Which character am I in this story (Bartimaeus, one of the disciples, a member of the large crowd, a rebuker, Jesus, one of those who praised God, etc.)?
- What sensory details do I notice?
- What am I thinking, feeling, and experiencing (both as the character in this story and in my own person)?
- Do I see Jesus? Does Jesus see me?
- Does Jesus speak to me? If so, what does he say?

MARK 10:46-52

Then they came to Jericho. As Jesus and his disciples, together with a large crowd, were leaving the city, a blind man, Bartimaeus (which means “son of Timaeus”), was sitting by the roadside begging. When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!”

Many rebuked him and told him to be quiet, but he shouted all the more, “Son of David, have mercy on me!”



Jesus stopped and said, “Call him.”

So they called to the blind man, “Cheer up! On your feet! He’s calling you.” Throwing his cloak aside, he jumped to his feet and came to Jesus.

“What do you want me to do for you?” Jesus asked him.

The blind man said, “Rabbi, I want to see.”

“Go,” said Jesus, “your faith has healed you.” Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus along the road.

LUKE 18:43

Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus, praising God. When all the people saw it, they also praised God.

* * *

Reflect on your experience with God through this exercise and then respond. Offer back to him any doubts, areas of confusion, disappointments, hesitations, or lingering questions. Praise God for any insights or understandings he may have brought and thank him for any experiences of his love or presence.

Whatever your experience with God via imaginative prayer, I’m praying Ephesians 1:17-21 over you:

I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come.

May you come to truly *see* that Jesus is with you always.

¹Kevin O'Brien, SJ, "Ignatian Contemplation: Imaginative Prayer," accessed December 27, 2025, <https://www.ignatianspirituality.com/ignatian-prayer/the-spiritual-exercises/ignatian-contemplation-imaginative-prayer>.

²O'Brien, "Ignatian Contemplation."

