

ROCK SOLID: The God of the Psalms

"The God Who Invites You to Wrestle" Psalm 13

July 17-18, 2021

This provides about one hour of focused reading and discussion following the points of Pastor Brent Cunningham's message. Feel free to use the portions you find most helpful.

1. We live somewhere between our **theology** and our **biography**.

- I know God intends the best for me (ideal), but I face challenges and struggles in life (reality). The tension that is created between them is where **lament** arises.
- What do you do with those feelings? While it is common for people to either bury them or allow those feelings to control them, God offers a better model in the Psalms. Typically, how do you handle difficult times?
- Read **Psalm 6:6-10, Romans 8:24, Hebrews 11:1 and 13, Psalm 30:4-5**. What ideas from these passages really stand out?

2. Through the Psalms God offers us a third way of processing the emotional confusion of life- **lament**.

- Background: Psalms are written from three perspectives in life, according to theologian Walter Brueggemann: orientation (all's good), disorientation (what's going on?) or new orientation (God's deliverance and a new understanding). Read **Psalm 13**.
- Lament psalms typically show a process: **lament - request - praise**, though Psalm 88 and Psalm 44 never resolve. God understands that we will experience times of real lamentation and he encourages honesty when we cry out to him.
- Read **2 Corinthians 4:16-18**. How can we prepare for the inevitable challenges ahead, so that we can walk through them without losing our faith?

3. The power of lament psalms is in their ability to create **space** between you and your situation.

- By rationally examining things, we can understand that we *feel* emotions, but we ourselves *are not* those emotions. How does realizing this help us deal with emotionally challenging times?
- Discuss what these passages reveal: **Psalm 139:23-24, Psalm 19:12-14, 1 Corinthians 13:12, and 1 John 3:19-20**.

4. Somehow, frustrated people's words to **God** have become God's Word to frustrated **people**.

- Read **Ephesians 5:19-20**. An immersion in Psalms gives us language to process our pain. Which passages in Psalms have been especially helpful to you during difficult times?

5. We can **praise** God only when we are willing to trust him with our **laments**.

- Honest lament leads to faith that God will sort out the issues we face. Read **Psalm 30:4-5** and **Romans 5:3-5**. How are faith and hope connected to the process of lament-request-praise?

6. While **lament** may fill much of our sufferings, **joy** has the last word.

- Jesus, at the Cross, experienced great lament (**Psalm 22:24-28**) and absorbed the things that cause lament in our lives. Read **Romans 4:25**, **Hebrews 12:2**, **Isaiah 32:17**, and **Psalm 51:10-12**.
- What wisdom can we embrace from these passages, knowing that we will face difficulties again?
- Our adversity is part of the journey, but it is not the destiny. Our destiny is glory.

Close with **2 Corinthians 4:8-12** and one of the theme-related songs:

- "Hope Has A Name" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DohShCMjvXI>
- "Lord of Eternity" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u-ZAQwXZ7YQ&list=RDU-ZAQwXZ7YQ&start_radio=1

If you have a prayer need, ask a friend or two here to pray with you and to support you in prayer this week.