

## Psalms Session 3 - Laments

### Welcome/Prayer

#### Laments

Laments are prayers offered to God when the person or group is hurting – feeling upset, betrayed, or abandoned.

Read Psalm 13 as the focus scripture:

#### Questions for Reflection

1. When have you experienced significant change or transformation in your life following some trauma or trial?
2. Why do people avoid prayers of lament? How do prayers of lament call us to reclaim God's faithfulness?
3. What is the value of singing a lament as a community rather than as an individual?

#### Reading and Discussion

Select 2 to 3 of the psalms listed below.

- Communal laments (e.g., Psalms 12; 13; 44; 60; 74; 79; 80; 83; 85; 90; 126)
- Individual laments (e.g., Psalms 3; 5; 7; 17; 25-27; 38; 39; 56; 59; 62; 69; 88)

Read your selected psalm(s) aloud. Share your reactions to the selected psalm(s). You may wish to use the following questions as points of discussion for each psalm.

1. When in your life have you found the psalm most meaningful?
2. On what occasions has the language of the psalmists been your own personal prayer language?

#### Further Reflection

Laments expressed in the ancient Psalms are similar to community or individual the laments that might be expressed today. It is in the psalms of lament that Scripture often becomes most personal. Most of us have had experiences in which we have prayed for God to deliver us or someone we love from misfortune and pain. Most of us have struggled with the experience of prayers that either have not been answered or have been answered in ways that contradicted our hopes.

1. When have your own experiences of pain and loss driven you to lament to God?
2. What does it mean to you personally to know that God is willing and ready to hear from you, even when all you can express is grief, loss, fear, anger, or pain?
3. What trials of life have brought you into a closer relationship with God? How did you respond? How did you see God respond?

### Closing/Prayer