

Theme: The psalms of lament show God's people crying out to Him in distress, yet confident He will hear and respond.

I. Intro – The Importance of Genre

- A. We will now study various genres of Psalms
- B. What is a literary genre?
 - 1. R. Soulen
 - 2. Basic idea: texts that are similar
- C. Some examples of genre in literature
 - 1. Letter to editor, fairy tale
 - 2. We know how they work & end!
- D. Genre teaches us how to read a psalm

II. Key Features of Laments

- A. Seven basic elements
 - 1. Invocation – Lord
 - 2. Plea to God for help – help me Lord
 - 3. Complaints – Do you see? Being crushed!
 - 4. Confession of sin or assertion of innocence
 - 5. Curse of enemies – Destroy them God
 - 6. Confidence in God's response – I know you hear

7. Praise or blessing – Praise the Lord!

B. The general movement: grief to glory

- 1. Grief to glory
- 2. Plea to praise
- 3. Lamentation to exultation

III. Psalm 13: How Long O Lord

A. Three basic parts of Psalm 13

- 1. The cry
- 2. The plea
- 3. The praise

B. The Cry

- 1. The cry: How long?
 - a. Repeated 4 times – forever??!!
 - b. Where is God? (Forget; hide; enemy)
- 2. The struggle of faith
 - a. God is the solution
 - b. Where is He? Why no help?

C. The Plea

1. Three sources of trouble
 - a. God – He is absent (forget; hide)
 - b. Self – internal struggle (thoughts; sorrow)
 - c. Enemies – crush and rejoice (enemy; foes)
2. The solution: help me God!
 - a. Look on me – not away from me
 - b. Answer me – don't forget me
 - c. Deliver me – “light to my eyes”
 - d. You are my only hope! – death; enemies

D. The Praise

1. The statement of trust
 - a. I trust you – a statement of faith
 - b. In spite of circumstances – I cling to you
2. The basis of trust: God's יְהוָה
 - a. God's covenant, unfailing love
 - b. He is a covenant keeping God!
3. I will rejoice and sing!
 - a. God has been good (perfect tense)
 - b. I will sing (imperfect)

- c. Our response to His goodness

IV. The Christian and the Laments

- A. Laments teach us that life does have struggles
 1. These were real problems!
 2. Problems produce real emotions (Calvin)
 3. Don't ignore them; take to God in prayer!
- B. Laments teach us how to pray
 1. Be honest – don't hide your feelings
 2. Ask God for what you want
 3. Pray in faith – He is faithful!
- C. Jesus & the laments: You are not forsaken!
 1. Jesus cried the laments (Psalm 22:1)
 2. He was truly forsaken
 3. Because of Him, we will never be truly forsaken
 4. Praise His name!

Laments: God's People Sing the Blues

Psalm 13

November 23, 2003

Response: Congregational Prayer for Persecuted Church

Benediction: Numbers 6

Genre refers to “a group of texts which have important of distinguishing characteristics in common.”

R. Soulen

Seven basic elements

1. Invocation – Lord
2. Plea to God for help – help me Lord
3. Complaints – Do you see? Being crushed!
4. Confession of sin or assertion of innocence
5. Curse of enemies – Destroy them God
6. Confidence in God’s response – I know you hear
7. Praise or blessing – Praise the Lord!