



LAMENT RESOURCES

For you, your family, or your church

1. Lament found in Scripture.
2. An outline guide for writing your own personal or community lament.
3. A kit for making a lament chain for group or personal reflection.
4. A lament worship service from REACH Labor Day Getaway Weekend 2025.
5. REACH's lament calling on the Church to reach out in love to people living with HIV/AIDS.

PSALM 41

A Psalm relevant to those living with HIV and their families.
[Emphasis added by REACH]

Blessed are those who have regard for the weak;
the Lord delivers them in times of trouble.
The Lord protects and preserves them—
they are counted among the blessed in the land—
he does not give them over to the desire of their
foes.

**The Lord sustains them on their sickbed
and restores them from their bed of illness.**

**I said, "Have mercy on me, Lord;
heal me, for I have sinned against you."
My enemies say of me in malice,
"When will he die and his name perish?"
When one of them comes to see me,
he speaks falsely, while his heart gathers
slander;
then he goes out and spreads it around.**

**All my enemies whisper together against me;
they imagine the worst for me, saying,
"A vile disease has afflicted him;
he will never get up from the place where he
lies."
Even my close friend,
someone I trusted,
one who shared my bread,
has turned against me.**

But may you have mercy on me, Lord;
raise me up, that I may repay them.
I know that you are pleased with me,
for my enemy does not triumph over me.
Because of my integrity you uphold me
and set me in your presence forever.

Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel,
from everlasting to everlasting.
Amen and Amen.

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Lament in Scripture

The four stages of lament: Many lament psalms follow a pattern of 1) addressing God, 2) voicing a complaint, 3) making a request for help, and 4) expressing trust in God.

Honest and raw feelings: It can include feelings of anger, bewilderment, fear, and bitterness, and does not need to be neat or tidy.

A way to move toward healing: By laying their pain before God, people can find healing, forgiveness, and a restored spirit.

Examples in the Bible (this is not an all-inclusive list):

- Ruth chapter 1: **Naomi** makes a raw, honest expression of grief, questioning why she has suffered so much, while also recognizing God is in control of her life.
- **The book of Job:** Job questions his existence and his suffering.
- **The book of Jeremiah:** The prophet calls for lamentation and mourning because of God's anger.
- **The Psalms:** Approximately 1/3 of the 150 Psalms are laments, including individual ones and communal ones.

Individual lament Psalms: 3, 5, 6, 7, 10, 12, 13, 17, 22, 25, 26, 27, 28, 31, 32, 35, 38, 39, 41, 42, 43, 51, 54, 55, 56, 57, 59, 61, 63, 64, 69, 70, 71, 77, 86, 88, 102, 109, 120, 130, 140, 141, 142, 143

Communal lament Psalms: 44, 60, 74, 79, 80, 83, 85, 89, 90, 137

- **The book of Lamentations:** The entire book serves as a national lament following Jerusalem's destruction.
- **Jesus's prayer** in the Garden of Gethsemane (Mt 26:36-44, Mk 14:32-41, Lk 22:39-44) and **cry to God** before his death on the cross (Mk 15:34): Jesus cries out to the Father in agony, yet submitting to God's will to be done.
- **Paul pleads** with God three times to remove the "thorn in my flesh" (2 Cor 12:7-10).
- **Revelation 21:4** offers a vision of a future without suffering.

My Personal Lament

Selecting a general category of your lament may help you get started:

Loss of loved one	Isolation	Hypocrisy	Neglect	Fear
Harassment	Money	Betrayal	Loneliness	Anguish
Prejudice	Relationship	Abandonment	Health	Another person's loss
Rejection	False accusation	Abuse	Life purpose	Other: _____

How I will address God: _____

Examples: My God, O Lord, Father God, Christ Jesus, God of Mercy, Abba, God of Justice, Lord Almighty, God of Healing, Divine Master, Dear Lord, Holy One, My Hope, My Deliverer, My Rock, Savior

Complaint:

Complaint, frustration, anxiety, struggle, doubt, fear.
Raw, honest, messy, embarrassing, yet humble and sincere.

Examples: Why? How? You promised _____, but why not/when?
"I know you are not cruel/hard-hearted/uncaring, but today it feels like you are."

Request:

Keeping in mind God's character, promises, sovereignty over all things, and unconditional love for you, boldly and confidently and expectantly express how God can help. What do you hope for? What is the present or future you long for?

Examples:

"Arise, O Lord"

"Remember your covenant"

"Restore me"

"Grant me help"

"Don't remember my sins"

"Don't be silent; listen to me"

"Let justice be done; vindicate me"

"Deliver me"

"Teach me"

Expression of Trust:

Lament leads us to this step of choosing to trust God; how to live between a hard life and God's promises.

Examples:

I know you love me and walk with me; you are not far off.

You are a merciful and gracious God.

God, I choose to trust you today.

I call to you.

You are greater than anything I face.

You are my rock and my salvation; my shield and my deliverer.

You are holy.

I'm going to walk by faith today in your ability to help me.

Lord, I'm trusting you to keep me trusting.

My prayer is in you.

I praise you.

You know what I'm feeling.

I'm going to keep my eyes on you.

I will hope continually.

Our Community Lament

Selecting a general category of your lament may help you get started:

Loss of loved one	Isolation	Hypocrisy	Neglect	Fear
Harassment	Money	Betrayal	Loneliness	Anguish
Prejudice	Relationship	Abandonment	Health	Another person's loss
Rejection	False accusation	Abuse	Life purpose	Other: _____

How we will address God: _____

Examples: Our God, O Lord, Father God, Christ Jesus, God of Mercy, Abba, God of Justice, Lord Almighty, God of Healing, Divine Master, Dear Lord, Holy One, Our Hope, Our Deliverer, Our Rock, Savior

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You are our rock and our salvation; our shield and our deliverer.

We're going to walk by faith today in your ability to help us.

Our prayer is in you.

You know what we're feeling.

We will hope continually.

Lament Chain Instruction Sheet

The Practice of Lament: Finding Hope Through Honesty

What Is Lament?

Lament is the sacred practice of telling the truth about pain while holding on to hope.

It gives us space to grieve losses, name injustice, and trust that healing can come through honesty and community.

Lament is not the opposite of faith—it is faith in motion.

What You'll Need

- Paper or cardstock strips (1" x 8")
 - Pens or markers
 - Glue stick or tape
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Step 1: Reflect

Begin with a few quiet moments.

You may read a short passage such as **Psalm 13** or simply ask:

“What burdens are we carrying as a community or as individuals?”

Step 2: Write

Each person takes a few strips and writes one lament per strip.

These may express sorrow, loss, injustice, or longing.

Encourage honesty—no need to make it sound perfect.

Use the starter phrases in your kit or begin your own:

“God, we grieve...”

“We lament that...”

“We hope for...”

“We remember...”

Step 3: Link

Loop each strip into a chain, connecting one to the next with glue or tape.

As you link them, notice how shared lament brings connection and empathy.

Each link represents a voice, a story, a step toward healing.

Step 4: Pray or Reflect Together

Close by reading the **Lament Prayer Template** aloud or offering a simple prayer together.

If preferred, take turns reading from your own strips, or spend a moment in silence.

“We bring our sorrows and our hopes together,
trusting that what is broken can be made whole.”

Step 5: Display or Share

Hang your chain somewhere visible or bring it to a future gathering.

Let it remind you that healing comes from God and with honest lament shared in community.

“Lament allows us to see pain, name it, and trust that hope still holds.”



Lament Starter Phrases

Use these to begin each strip on your lament chain.
Write honestly—each link holds a story.

- God, we grieve _____.
- We lament that _____.
- We ache for _____.
- We long to see _____.
- We remember _____.
- We trust you to _____.
- We hope for _____.
- We give thanks for _____.
- We confess that _____.
- We feel forgotten when _____.
- We cry out because _____.
- We don't understand why _____.
- We wait for healing in _____.
- We ask for strength to _____.



Tip: Use one phrase per strip as you build your chain.
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Group Reflection Prompts

Use these before or after making your chain.
Share as a group or reflect quietly.

- What burdens or losses are we carrying right now?
- Where have we seen hope begin to grow again?
- How might we walk with someone else in their lament?
- What does resilience mean to us today?
- How has God (or community) met us in pain before?
- What are we learning about compassion through sorrow?
- What would it look like to create space for lament in our church?
- What part of the world or community do we lament for today?
- When have we felt heard or comforted in our grief?
- How can lament move us toward action or healing?

There is strength in shared sorrow—and hope in being heard.