

Grief That Goes Somewhere

The Psalms of Lament: Psalms 42-43

I. Introduction: When God Feels Distant

II. Stanza 1 (Ps 42:1-5)

- v. 1 Condition of the soul
- vv. 2-4 Reflections, lament, and searing questions
- v. 5 Refrain

III. Stanza 2 (Ps 42:6-11)

- vv. 6-8 Condition of the soul
- vv. 9-10 Reflections and more searing questions
- v. 11 Refrain

IV. Stanza 3 (Ps 43:1-5)

- v. 1 Initial plea
- v. 2 More searing questions
- v. 3 Another plea
- v. 4. A glimmer of hope
- v. 5 Refrain

A few observations:

1. Grief that goes somewhere rarely follows a straight path!
2. Grief is a whole-body experience.
3. Grief often surfaces when we begin to recognize and acknowledge our deepest longings.
4. Grief over God's absence is still an acknowledgment of God's presence.

Some verses on thirst and longing:

Ps 63:1-2

¹ You, God, are my God, earnestly I seek you;
I thirst for you, my whole being longs for you,
in a dry and parched land where there is no water.
² I have seen you in the sanctuary and beheld your power and your glory.

Isa 55:1

Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters.

Matt 5:6

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

John 4:14

Whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life.

John 6:35

Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty."

Rev 21:6

He said to me: "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To the thirsty I will give water without cost from the spring of the water of life."