



## Praying with the Psalms

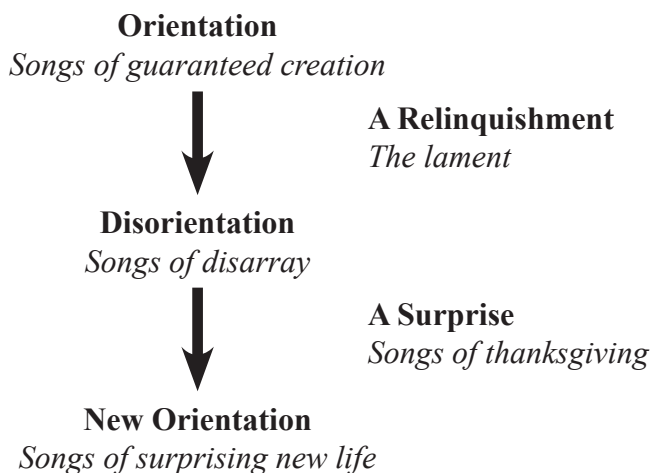
Moses Falco - July 1, 2018

The Psalms reflect the vast spectrum of experience and emotions we live through. These 150 songs and poems were used individually and communally to sing, pray and worship. The Psalms offer us a framework by which we can enter into honest and open dialogue with God.

Our challenge is to spend time in the Psalms, to understand them, learn their historical context, and incorporate them in our own prayer lives as a community and individuals. May the Psalms give us words and prayers when we are at a loss for words and may they give us room to articulate our deepest emotions before God.

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Walter Brueggemann, in *The Message of the Psalms*, offers us a way to read and use the Psalms through our different stages of life. These stages are describes as *orientation*, *disorientation* and *new orientation*. In the midst of these we find the transitions that guide us through these times.



## **Orientation - Songs of guaranteed creation**

“Human life consists in satisfied seasons of well-being that evoke gratitude for the constancy of blessing. ‘Psalms of orientation’... articulate joy, delight, goodness, coherence, and reliability of God, God’s creation, God’s governing law.”

### ***Psalms:***

Creation - 8, 33, 104, 145

Torah (God’s law) - 1, 15, 24, 119

Wisdom - 37, 14

Retribution - 112

Well-being - 131, 133

## **Disorientation - Songs of disarray**

“Human life consists in anguished seasons of hurt, alienation, suffering, and death. These evoke rage, resentment, self-pity, and hatred. ‘Psalms of orientation’...match the season in its ragged, painful disarray. This speech, the lament, has a recognizable shape that permits the extravagance, hyperbole, and abrasiveness needed for the experience.”

### ***Psalms:***

Personal Lament - 13, 35, 86

Communal Lament - 74, 79, 137

Problems - 88, 109

Trouble in Relationship - 32, 50, 51, 81, 130, 143

Submission - 49, 73, 90

## **New Orientation - Songs of surprising new life**

“Human life consists in turns of surprise when we are overwhelmed with the new gifts of God, when joy breaks through despair. Where there has only been darkness, there is light. ‘Psalms of new orientation’... speak boldly about a new gift from God, a fresh intrusion that makes all things new. These psalms affirm a sovereign God who puts humankind in a new situation.”

### ***Psalms:***

Thanksgiving - 30, 34, 40, 138

Community Thanksgiving - 65, 66, 124,

Victory - 29, 47, 93, 96, 97, 98, 99, 114,

Confidence - 23, 27, 91

Praise - 100, 103, 113, 117, 135, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150