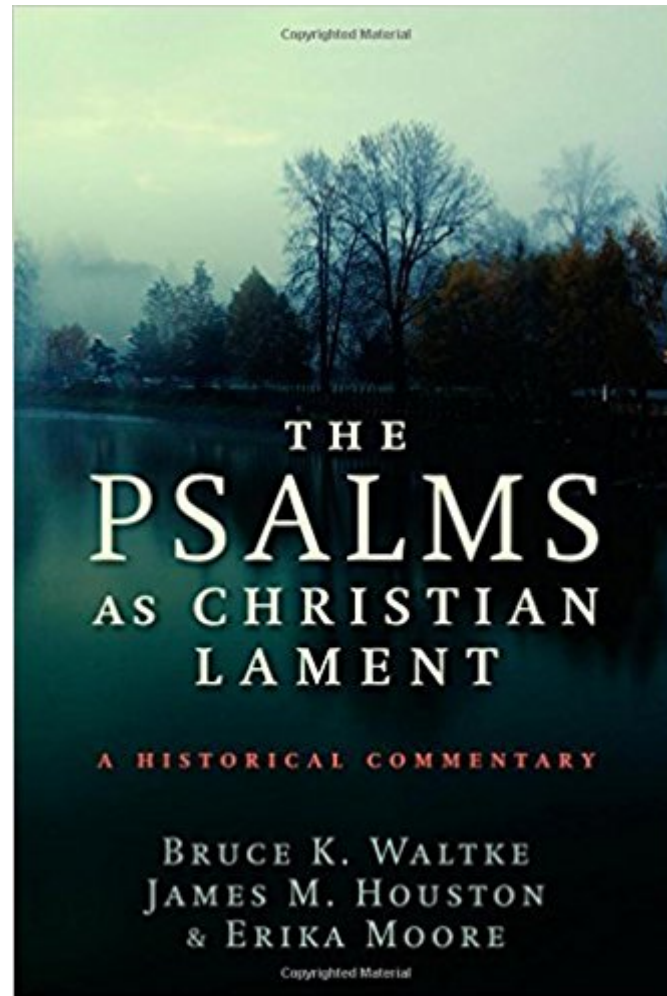




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# **The Psalms As Christian Lament**



## Synopsis

The Psalms as Christian Lament, a companion volume to The Psalms as Christian Worship, uniquely blends verse-by-verse commentary with a history of Psalms interpretation in the church from the time of the apostles to the present. Bruce Waltke, James Houston, and Erika Moore examine ten lament psalms, including six of the seven traditional penitential psalms, covering Psalms 5, 6, 7, 32, 38, 39, 44, 102, 130, and 143. The authors -- experts in the subject area -- skillfully establish the meaning of the Hebrew text through careful exegesis and trace the church's historical interpretation and use of these psalms, highlighting their deep spiritual significance to Christians through the ages. Though C. S. Lewis called the "imprecatory" psalms "contemptible," Waltke, Houston, and Moore show that they too are profitable for sound doctrine and so for spiritual health, demonstrating that lament is an important aspect of the Christian life.

## Book Information

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Stone-Campbell Journal "Excellent resource for graduate students and pastors."Review of Biblical Literature "What is striking is that the authors draw out of each psalm unique pastoral and philosophical insights into lament, so that one might garner enough insights from this commentary to begin building a comprehensive biblical theology of lament. . . . Serves both academy and church well."John Walton [Wheaton College](#) "The poignant lament psalms have often given voice to the confession and penitence of God's people through the centuries, but these psalms have also at times been a source of confusion. . . . Readers will find in this volume a treasure trove of

wisdom from reliable scholars who know the obstacles inherent in the Hebrew text but also have long experience distilling biblical insights for the benefit of the church. . . . Drink deeply and find hope as you join with the psalmists in their intense interactions with God and their expressions of dependence on him."Gordon Wenham [↗](#) •Trinity College Bristol "Often neglected, the lament psalms are some of the most pastorally valuable parts of Scripture. This great commentary on ten of these psalms unpacks their riches by drawing on the interpretations of early Church Fathers and leading Reformers and coupling their insights with a detailed modern exegesis of the Hebrew text. Students of the psalms, preachers, and worship leaders will find this a splendid resource."Tremper Longman III [↗](#) •Westmont College "Too many Christians, including ministers, ignore the crucial spiritual resources of the lament psalms. As a result, the church does not know how to pray in the midst of suffering. *The Psalms as Christian Lament* helps rectify this lack by careful analysis of significant psalms read in the light of the interpretation of the early church. I highly recommend this book to all who love the psalms, but I hope ministers in particular will read this book and preach on the lament psalms to the benefit of the church."J. I. Packer [↗](#) •Regent College "In this volume Bruce Waltke, James Houston, and Erika Moore cover a selection of psalms that strikingly combine sadness and sorrow with faith and hope. . . . Masterful exegesis here blends with luminous theological perspectives and pastoral insights."Haddon Robinson [↗](#) •Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary "If you plan to preach on these hymns of hurt and confusion, this book is a good place to begin. Each psalm is translated in a helpful way, which is vital for preaching these psalms well."Richard S. Hess [↗](#) •Denver Seminary "Here is the finest of guides to laments in the book of Psalms. The authors recover a cogent interpretation of personal sin that forms the basis of the need for God's redemption. The cry of lament begins in the heart of the psalmist -- and of his readers -- and proceeds to express complete dependence on God. Journey on this ancient path of laments that bring us into God's presence as no other texts of Scripture do."Books at a Glance "A fascinating meeting ground between biblical commentary and Church history. . . . The amount of historical and biblical data alone certainly qualifies *PACL* as a go-to volume for anyone studying the interpretation of the select psalms. *PACL* also makes significant strides toward a Christian theology of lament by recovering for us the diverse, lamenting 'Voice of the Church.'"Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society "The Psalms as Christian Lament" admirably mixes history of interpretation with exegesis. Every interpreter is situated in place and time, and thus studying history of interpretation uncovers blind spots for modern interpreters. In addition to Houston's helpful history of interpretation sections, Waltke's and Moore's exegetical work helpfully

describes and interprets the Hebrew Psalms. . . . This work will serve pastors who want to think critically about the text and how the text has been used through the centuries, as well as interested readers who want to understand the Psalms and their use of lament."Haddington House Journal "Old Testament scholar Bruce Waltke brings to the table over six decades of Hebrew exegetical expertise. Combined with James Houston's specialties of spiritual and historical theology, this distinctive commentary provides the best of current exegesis with the often-ignored voices of the Church's ancient heritage. . . . Serious expositors should consider adding The Psalms as Christian Lament to their collection, as it embodies the most up-to-date biblical scholarship by world-class specialists from an evangelical, devotional perspective."Bible Today "Uncovers the importance of the laments in the spirituality of contemporary Christians."Expository Times "Through its focus on the psalms of lament and the innovative approach to the topic of lamentation, this book is worthwhile for all those interested in the Book of Psalms, the value of early and modern lament to God, and what early and modern commentators think about all that."Preaching "One way we evidence our lack of immersion in the Psalms is our lack of familiarity with lament, our lack of practice in doing it well and in being comfortable with others lamenting. This book is a wonderful help in that direction. . . . This is a beautiful example of reading the Bible along with the church through the ages."Mission Today "As you read this commentary, you are likely to agree that the threesome have succeeded to an admirable degree in reinforcing our interest in lament psalms. . . . Readers will agree that it is a great aid to trustful prayer in times of pain and distress. The book will open your eyes to see that laments can to some extent reveal your very identity."Euangelion "The Psalms as Christian Lament is a valuable addition to the bookshelf of any pastor, preacher, or theological student."Churchman "This book is a treat."Journal for the Evangelical Study of the Old Testament "A welcome addition to the growing literature on the book of Psalms, particularly those focused on lament."Spirit & Life "Bruce Waltke, James Houston, and Erika Moore examine ten lament psalms, including six of the seven traditional penitential psalms. Each chapter includes insights from the Fathers of the Church and other interpreters, the text of the psalm, a detailed exegesis, and a conclusion. . . . Although scholarly, the book is relatively easy to read and should prove helpful to many who pray the psalms."Sharing the Practice "A needed resource for ministers in guiding their congregations in learning how to voice honest prayers in times of suffering, pain, grief and death. . . . This volume is a readable and clear interpretation for ministers to follow."

Bruce K. Waltke is Distinguished Professor of Old Testament at Knox Theological Seminary, Fort

Lauderdale, and professor emeritus of biblical studies at Regent College, Vancouver. James M. Houston is founding principal and former chancellor of Regent College and was the college's first professor of spiritual theology. Erika Moore is professor of Old Testament and Hebrew at Trinity School for Ministry, Ambridge, Pennsylvania.

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