What do we *mean* by impetration? What do we *mean* by complaint? What is *going on* when we pray in these ways? But there is also a distinct question about the outputs of such praying. What do we think such prayer *does*? What does it produce?

One residual worry about the default option is that such a way of thinking reduces prayer to something *superstitious*, making of it a kind of magical formula or spell that ought to be efficacious given the right form of words.[23] That is surely a deformation of Christian practice in Winner's sense of the term. But God is not a Jinn, and prayer (whatever its particular form) is not an incantation. Although the two-way contingency approach to prayer need not end up in a deformation of this sort, it is certainly a real worry with such a conception of prayer—a kind of liability built into this conception. One of the benefits of the alternative I have been discussing here is that it does not have this consequence. Rather, prayers of impetration or complaint that presume prayer is fundamentally about bringing my own will into alignment with God's will foster a sense of dependence on God that, I suggest, better reflects the overall narrative of Scripture and common Christian practice.

[23] This issue is raised by D. Z. Phillips, in *The Concept of Prayer*, ch. 6.

6

Toward an Account of Lamenting Well

Kevin Timpe

Introduction

The primary goal of this chapter is to explore the nature of certain forms of lament as an acceptable object of analytic theology. Elizabeth Boase and Steve Taylor note the "surge of scholarship around lament in recent times";[1] while this surge can certainly be seen in biblical studies and theology, it has not yet spread to philosophy of religion or analytic theology. This chapter should be seen as attempting to call for greater reflection on lament by Christian philosophers and analytic theologians. While not all lament is Christian, there are a number of proper Christian expressions of lament. Starting with scriptural lament, particularly as found in the Psalms, I look at the nature of lament, explore its connection with hope, and suggest that lament often is inherently social. I then suggest that there is even a virtue of lamenting well. In many ways, this chapter should be thought of not as a final product within analytic theology but rather as an invitation to engage in analytic theological reflection on lament.

A Brief Sketch of the Nature, and Some Dangers, of Analytic Theology

A paper I published a few years ago, which drew heavily on the work of others, attempted to do three things:

[1] Elizabeth Boase and Steve Taylor, "Public Lament" in *Spiritual Complaint: The Theology and Practice of Lament*, ed. Miriam J. Bier and Tim Bulkeley (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2013), 205. In addition to the work cited there and later in this chapter, see also David W. Smith, *Stumbling Toward Zion: Recovering the Biblical Tradition of Lament in the Era of World Christianity* (Carlisle: Langham, 2020); Mark Vroegop, *Weep with Me: How Lament Opens a Door for Racial Reconciliation* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2020); and Scott Ellington, *Risking Truth: Reshaping the World through Prayers of Lament* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2008).

(i) to give an overview of a recent movement which goes by the name of "analytic theology,"

(ii) to locate that movement within the larger context of philosophy of religion, and

(iii) to identify some of the weaknesses and objections that analytic theology will need to address, moving forward.[2]

As Tom McCall writes in *An Invitation to Analytic Christian Theology*, what is "gathered under the label 'analytic theology' is both quite broad and very active... The meaning of the term analytic theology can vary in common parlance, and it is safe to say that there is no single, decisively settled meaning of the term when it is used as a name."[3] Nevertheless, like McCall (and Billy Abraham,[4] Oliver Crisp,[5] Michael C. Rea,[6] and others), I think that the difficulties involved in defining clear boundaries for what properly counts as analytic theology invalidate neither the usefulness of the term nor the appropriateness of such an approach to theology. For McCall, what is common across the range of uses is this: analytic theology signifies a commitment to employ the conceptual tools of analytic philosophy where those tools might be helpful in the work of constructive Christian theology.[7]

More recently, Oliver Crisp has characterized analytic theology as "a way of doing ST [systematic theology] that utilizes the tools and methods of contemporary analytic philosophy for the purposes of constructive Christian theology, paying attention to the Christian tradition and development of doctrine."[8] Crisp intends his description of analytic theology to include McCall's understanding of the same.

[2] Kevin Timpe, "On Analytic Theology," *Scientia et Fides* 3 (2015), 1–13.

[3] Thomas H. McCall, *An Invitation to Analytic Christian Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2015), 9–16. McCall's book unfortunately wasn't available when I wrote Timpe (2015), or else I would have drawn on it.

[4] William J. Abraham, "Systematic Theology as Analytic Theology" in *Analytic Theology: New Essays in the Philosophy of Theology*, ed. Oliver Crisp and Michael Rea (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 54–69. William J. Abraham, "Turning Philosophical Water into Theological Wine," *Journal of Analytic Theology* 1 (2013), 1–16.

[5] Oliver Crisp, "On Analytic Theology" in *Analytic Theology: New Essays in the Philosophy of Theology*, ed. Oliver Crisp and Michael Rea (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 33–53. Oliver Crisp, "Once More: Analytic Theology," unpublished.

[6] Michael Rea, "Introduction" in *Analytic Theology: New Essays in the Philosophy of Theology*, ed. Oliver Crisp and Michael Rea (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 1–30.

[7] McCall, *An Invitation to Analytic Christian Theology*, 16.

[8] Oliver Crisp, "Analytic Theology as Systematic Theology," *Open Theology* 3 (2017), 165.

Beyond this brief description, I don't want to rehash much of the debates about the nature of analytic theology as an enterprise, given that my primary goal in the present chapter is lament. But given that my approach to the topic of lament is shaped by my approach to theology, I do want to mention a number of objections some have raised against analytic theology. Ultimately, I don't think these objections are insurmountable, but I do think of them as challenges that practitioners of analytic theology need to take seriously. And they are challenges that I try to take seriously in my reflections on lament that follow.

In my earlier "On Analytic Theology," I specified a number of criticisms that have been leveled against analytic theology. These criticisms include:

1. a generally suspicious attitude, and sometimes even hostility, toward philosophy of religion within philosophy as a whole;[9]
2. a skepticism of analytic approaches to theological topics by those within theology and religion studies;[10]
3. the belief that analytic theology often takes an inappropriate approach to Scripture or other theological sources;[11]
4. the claim that analytic theology pays insufficient attention to Scripture;
5. the claim that analytic theology is insufficiently attentive to the historical nature of the Christian faith;[12] and

[9] See Thomas Lewis, *Why Philosophy Matters for the Study of Religion–and Vice Versa* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016) and Kevin Schilbrack, *Philosophy and the Study of Religions: A Manifesto* (Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2014).

[10] Here see especially Harriet Harris and Christopher Insole, "Verdicts on Analytic Philosophy of Religion" in *Faith and Philosophical Analysis: The Impact of Analytic Philosophy on the Philosophy of Religion*, ed. Harriet A. Harris and Christopher J. Insole (Farnham: Ashgate, 2005), 1–20 and Nick Trakakis, *The End of Philosophy of Religion* (New York: Continuum, 2008) and Timothy Knepper, "The End of Philosophy of Religion?" *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 82 (2014), 120–49.

[11] See, for instance, Marc Cortez, "As Much as Possible: Essentially Contested Concepts and Analytic Theology: A Response to William J. Abraham," *Journal of Analytic Theology* 1 (2013),17–24. See also the discussion in Kevin Timpe and Blake Hereth, *The Lost Sheep in Philosophy of Religion* (New York: Routledge, 2019), 1–27.

[12] Thomas McCall has put this worry very well when he writes that analytic theology is often "naive with respect to the history of doctrine," particularly regarding an awareness of and sensitivity to the social and intellectual context of particular doctrines. McCall, *An Invitation to Analytic Christian Theology*, 27. This criticism strikes McCall, and myself, as "a legitimate concern, and it is one that analytic theologians would do well to hear and heed" (28). But McCall also notes that this criticism isn't only true of analytic theology, but is also true of much systematic theology as well. Second, he also points out that this danger isn't unavoidable: "I see no reason to conclude that this problem must be either essential or endemic to analytic theology. Surely more progress can be made in this area, but I see no reasons to think that such progress cannot happen. Finally, it is worth nothing that such progress in fact *is* being made" (29). I hope that the present chapter contributes to this progress.

6. the claim that analytic theology tends toward a hyperintellectualism that doesn't sufficiently connect with the Church's commitment to spiritual formation and worship.[13]

This list was not intended to be exhaustive, but rather was presented as "some of the major issues facing analytic theology as it goes forward."[14]

I mention these criticisms not to refute them here but because, in what follows, I want to take them very seriously. In thinking about lament in the context of the present chapter, I've had a number of these criticisms specifically in mind and have tried to proceed in a way that rightfully respects their concerns. Consider, for instance, (6), which claims that there's a disconnect between the goods that analytic theology might achieve and the full range of goods at which theology aims. McCall understands this objection (again, without necessarily endorsing it) as including the claim that "analytic theology isn't spiritually edifying."[15] I'm willing to grant that perhaps not all individuals who read analytic theology receive spiritual nourishment from doing so (though I'm also not saying that this can't and doesn't happen). But I don't know what could be more edifying than a careful, sustained, and "from the inside" treatment of lament. "Genuine theology, in short, is praxis, one deeply woven together with a Christian life of prayer, virtue, and participation in the sacraments."[16]

Consider also criticism (3), part of which attributes to analytic theology a failure to approach Scripture properly and part of which attributes to it a failure to draw on the full range of theological sources. One way of further understanding this objection is that good theology needs to take seriously more than one theological subdiscipline. Again to quote McCall:

> Recognizing that 'theologians routinely draw upon a wide range of disciplines and apply them to a complex set of loci,' Marc Cortez underscores the nature of this challenge. Warning us not to 'kid ourselves into thinking that even professional theologians have acquired any significant mastery of the many areas and disciplines involved,' Cortez notes that we all tend to specialize in different areas and then rely on the work of other specialists where needed.

[13] For an articulation of and reply to this worry, see Crisp, "Analytic Theology as Systematic Theology," 165.

[14] Timpe, "On Analytic Theology," 7.

[15] McCall, *An Invitation to Analytic Christian Theology*, 32. William Wood raises a similar worry, again without endorsing it, that much analytic theology is "spiritually sterile." William Wood, "Analytic Theology as a Way of Life," *Journal of Analytic Theology* 2 (2014), 44.

[16] McCall, *An Invitation to Analytic Christian Theology*, 32.

> But this is, he rightly points out, a 'problem with the nature of academic specialization as it is practiced in the academy today.' Cortez argues that 'given the disciplinary breadth of theology, such academic ghettoization needs to stop.'[17]

I in no way claim to be an expert in a number of the fields on which I'll draw in what follows. But I am intentionally drawing on a wide set of the relevant disciplines because I think that's what good analytic theology requires. I'm trying to get out of my "academic ghetto," as Cortez calls it. And I intend the rest of this chapter not as a completed work of analytic theology, but instead as an invitation to engage in analytic theology communally.

The Nature of Lament

The previous section was intended as a kind of "stage-setting," a prolegomenon if you will. Now, I turn directly to the subject of lament.

As an analytic philosopher, my initial tendency in trying to get clear about a concept is to look (rightly or wrongly) for necessary and jointly sufficient conditions for the concept in question. Here, I'm reminded of a criticism of analytic philosophy (and I think, by extension, analytic theology) raised by Eleonore Stump:

> [T]he Anglo-American tradition [of analytic philosophy] has tended to leave to one side the messy and complicated issues involved in relations among persons…It is therefore misleadingly imprecise, I think, to diagnose the weakness of analytic philosophy as its narrowness. Its cognitive hemianopia is its problem. Its intellectual vision is occluded or obscured for the right half of the cognitive field, especially for the part of reality [like lament and the relationships in which lament arises] that includes the complex, nuanced thought, behavior, and relations of persons.[18]

In his book on analytic theology I've already engaged, McCall suggests that this approach to the nature of analytic theology (that is, focusing primarily on necessary and jointly sufficient conditions) is not the most helpful way

[17] McCall, *An Invitation to Analytic Christian Theology*, 165. Here McCall is citing Cortez, "As Much as Possible," 22.

[18] Eleonore Stump, *Wandering in Darkness* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 25.

forward on many topics. Oliver Crisp takes a more clear-cut position: "There are no necessary and sufficient conditions for analytic philosophy, any more than there are such conditions for...AT [i.e., analytic theology]."[19] Similarly, in his recent analysis of the nature of emotion, Aaron Ben-Ze'ev writes that "the very complexity of emotions has made attempts to define them [in terms of necessary and jointly sufficient conditions] notoriously problematic...In light of the complexity of emotions, I believe that no single mental element can adequately define emotions."[20] Ben-Ze'ev's preferred approached is to focus on prototype categories. In the present section, I want to follow a similar strategy. I'm going to take Scriptural lament—and the lament Psalms in particular—as a prototype.[21] I will also periodically discuss, in passing, other kinds of lament that share relevant features with these prototypes. But I will not try and delineate exact boundaries for lament. Proceeding in this way will result in "some sacrifice of sharp and visible orderliness" and will instead be "softer and more rambling, with the bones of the thought beneath the surface."[22]

Even focusing on biblical lament, such a strict demarcation would be difficult. As Rebekah Eklund writes in her excellent treatment of Jesus' use of lament in the New Testament:

> Old Testament scholars, New Testament scholars, and theologians do not always use these terms [lament as both noun and verb] in a uniform way. Lament can mean complaint, an expression of grief, the ritual act of mourning, a dirge for the dead, a cry for help, an accusation directed to God, a public protest over injustice, or wordless wailing...On Old Testament terms, however, lament is a form of prayer in the midst of trouble: A cry for help to a particular God—one who has saved before.[23]

[19] Crisp, "Analytic Theology as Systematic Theology," 164.

[20] Aaron Ben-Ze'ev, "The Thing Called Emotion" in *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Emotion*, ed. Peter Goldie (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 56.

[21] Lament isn't found only in the Jewish and Christian traditions, even though that will be my focus here. For more on this, Carleen Mandolfo, "Language of Lament in the Psalms" in *The Oxford Handbook of the Psalms*, ed. William P. Brown (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 114–30.

[22] Stump, *Wandering in Darkness*, 27. See also the discussion of analytic theology as a "centered group" in Crisp, "Analytic Theology as Systematic Theology," 164. In conversation, Aaron Cobb suggests that instead of providing an analysis of lament, one could offer a syndrome analysis such that one describes the characteristic patterns of emotions, feelings, thoughts, expressions, and behaviors emerging in lamentable circumstances. I think that such an approach has significant overlap with my approach in what follows; an explicit approach to lament along these lines strikes me as worth pursuing in future work.

[23] Rebekah Eklund, *Jesus Wept: The Significance of Jesus' Laments in the New Testament* (London: Bloomsbury, 2015), 4.

So in what follows it will be important to keep in mind that even within the context of Scripture, the exact boundaries of what counts as lament will sometimes be contested.

Scriptural Lament

This section explores the use of lament within the Bible, and the Psalms in particular, as a prototype (but not the only kind) of appropriate lament. In doing so, I draw substantively on the work of Brent Strawn, though in no way do I think he's the only biblical scholar worth engaging in this context. It's my hope that by beginning here I'll help avoid the criticism of analytic theology as "armchair theology."[24] I draw on Scripture as a resource for my reflection on lament in the next section. As McCall notes, if "engagement with Scripture is of vital importance for Christian theologians,"[25] then this might be a good beginning point even for analytic theology.

While we often seem to prefer our Scripture to be tamed and domesticated (qualities that don't neatly characterize heartfelt lament), lament is found throughout the canon. "Lament is such a key element of the Old Testament that it is hard to read any book without finding an example of it...In fact, Old Testament texts describe this form of prayer as constitutive of God's identity...and of Israel's identity."[26] But lament isn't found only there; it's also found in the New Testament, even being uttered by the Incarnate Son at key moments in his life. As Eklund's examination of lament in the New Testament has shown, "lament in the New Testament depends on lament in the Old. That is, the laments of Israel, especially in the Psalms, provide the essential

[24] See McCall, *An Invitation to Analytic Christian Theology*, 38. Soong-Chan Rah's recent book on lament is also worthwhile. There, Rah writes that "lament in the Bible is a liturgical response to the reality of suffering and engages God in the context of pain and trouble." Soong-Chan Rah, *Prophetic Lament: A Call for Justice in Troubled Times* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2015), 21.

[25] McCall, *An Invitation to Analytic Christian Theology*, 175.

[26] Eklund, *Jesus Wept*, 1. For a discussion of lament elsewhere in the Old Testament in addition to the Psalms, see Bernhard Anderson and Steven Bishop, *Out of the Depths: The Psalms Speak for Us Today* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2000), 50ff.; Tim Bulkeley, "Does Jeremiah Confess, Lament, or Complain? Three Attitudes Towards Wrong" in *Spiritual Complaint: The Theology and Practice of Lament*, ed. Miriam J. Bier and Tim Bulkeley (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2013), 5–17; Miriam Bier, "The Unique Contribution of Lamentations 4 in the Book of Lamentations: Metaphor and the Transition from Individual to Communal" in *Spiritual Complaint: The Theology and Practice of Lament*, ed. Miriam J. Bier and Tim Bulkeley (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2013), 18–33; Elizabeth Boase, "Blurring the Boundaries" in *Spiritual Complaint: The Theology and Practice of Lament*, ed. Miriam J. Bier and Tim Bulkeley (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2013), 71–87; Lena-Sofia Tiemeyer, "The Doubtful Gain of Penitence: The Fine Line between Lament and Penitential Prayer" in *Spiritual Complaint: The Theology and Practice of Lament*, ed. Miriam J. Bier and Tim Bulkeley (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2013), 102–21.

foundation for the role that lament plays in the New Testament."[27] She also argues that lament in both testaments follows the same basic pattern.[28]

Given that the prototype lament in the Old and New Testaments can be found in the Psalms, I want to focus our attention there. At its core, biblical lament is "a cry for help to God from within a situation of distress, arising from trust that God is faithful to hear and respond to cries."[29] (I return to the centrality of trust for proper lament shortly.) In his influential *Psalms for Preaching and Worship*, biblical scholar Brent Strawn suggests that the Psalms are perhaps "the most important part of the Old Testament for Christian faith,"[30] even though their nature and proper use are "under known."[31] Strawn thinks that contemporary Christian faith and reflection are often underdeveloped because

> it seems that one of the most neglected aspects of psalmic faith, which is only recently being rediscovered, is the Psalter's special attention to the dark side of life and faith, especially via the many laments found in its pages. Perhaps the intense honesty of these poems, which can run as close to blasphemy as one can imagine within the context of prayer, is what has led many Christians to distance themselves from the Psalms, respecting them only in a sterilized and sanitized sort of way.[32]

Strawn builds off the work of the early twentieth-century scholars Hermann Gunkel and Walter Brueggemann in laying out different types (or forms) of Psalms, and different functions. Gunkel differentiated five main types of Psalms:

1. Hymns of Praise
2. Individual Songs of Thanksgiving

[27] Eklund, *Jesus Wept*, 4.

[28] See ibid., 12. She does say that this pattern occurs "within a somewhat different philosophical and theological context" in the New Testament, one that is shaped by the hope of the resurrection. For more on the connection of lament and hope, see the section on 'Lament and Hope' later in this chapter.

[29] Eklund, *Jesus Wept*, 7.

[30] Brent Strawn, "The Psalms: Types, Functions, and Poetics for Proclamation" in *Psalms for Preaching and Worship: A Lectionary Commentary*, ed. Roger E. Van Harn and Brent A. Strawn (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2009), 3.

[31] Ibid., 4.

[32] Ibid., 4f. See also Brenda Salter McNeil's comment in the foreword to Rah : "The church has lost its ability to lament!" Rah, *Prophetic Lament*, 9. Commenting on an earlier version of this chapter, Aaron Cobb has suggested that the distancing from the lament psalms mentioned in this passage might be unique to the Christian West, and not be an apt description of Christian communities in other cultural contexts. I think this may be correct; an intercultural examination of the use of lament psalms would be interesting on this and other scores.

3. Individual Laments
4. Communal Laments
5. Royal Psalms.[33]

Strawn admits that scholars since Gunkel have continued both to revise and to challenge Gunkel's typology, but particularly in light of what I have said about lament not being uniform, I'm not interested into wading into that debate here (though it might be worth wading into at another time). Rather, I simply want to draw attention to the fact that lament is a central form of Jewish (and, later, Christian) worship as recorded in the Psalms. In fact, lament psalms (and individual laments in particular) are the most common type of Psalm; lament is what Strawn refers to as the "backbone" of the Psalter.[34]

Strawn outlines the typical form of a lament psalm as follows, though he stresses that the exact placement and even inclusion of these elements within the psalm is "somewhat flexible."[35]

1. Address
2. Complaint
3. Petition
4. Confession of Trust
5. Praise

Given the fifth element, it is stressed by a number of biblical scholars that laments are usually, even if not uniformly, "a form of praise to God and an expression of trust in his promises."[36] Brueggemann writes that the typical move from "plea to praise" is related to the fact that most end in hope: "The situation and/or attitude of the speaker is transformed, and...the lament is

[33] Strawn, "The Psalms," 7. Despite the great work by Gunkel, Strawn, Brueggemann, Westermann, and others, Bruegemmann notes that "scholars have only walked around the edges of the theological significance of the lament psalm." Walter Brueggemann, "The Costly Loss of Lament" in *The Psalms: The Life of Faith*, ed. Patrick D. Miller (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1995), 101.

[34] Strawn, "The Psalms," 9.

[35] Ibid. See also Mandolfo, "Language of Lament in the Psalms," 115f. For a slightly different categorization of the typical form of lament, see Eklund, *Jesus Wept*, 6.

[36] Todd Billings, *Rejoicing in Lament: Wrestling with Incurable Cancer & Life in Christ* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2015), 45. See also Bernhard Anderson and Steven Bishop, *Out of the Depths*; Tim Bulkeley, "Does Jeremiah Confess, Lament, or Complain?," 8; and Rebekah Eklund, *Jesus Wept*, 16. Similarly, Rah writes that "both the internal . . . content of the lament psalm and its external structure and arrangement reveal an expectation of trust and hope that leads to praise following the presentation of a plea rising out of lament." Rah, *Prophetic Lament: A Call for Justice in Troubled Times*, 66.

resolved by and corresponds to the song of thanksgiving."[37] Hope here should be understood as the theological virtue of hope, and thus is a thick notion that I don't have time to unpack here. But as Billings notes, the mere fact of lamenting toward God presupposes some degree of hope: "Total despair would not invoke God's presence. Total despair—with no hope at all—does not pray."[38] So if one can still pray, despair is not total; there is at least a glimmer of hope.[39] Rah writes that "lament presents an appropriate response to suffering, but lament must also correspond to the recognition that God is in control."[40] I think it's too strong to say that Biblical lament must end in such a recognition or explicit affirmation of hope, though I think it usually should (and usually does).[41] But even if it did, that wouldn't mean that lament *per se* always has to.[42] A lament can model a disposition to hope (more on this later in the chapter) even if it doesn't explicitly invoke that hope.[43]

The Character of Lament

In light of the foregoing discussion of the form that lament takes in the Psalms,[44] I want to focus in this section on paradigmatic elements of lament. In line with what I said earlier, these shouldn't be seen as necessary and jointly sufficient conditions, but rather those features that are characteristic of prototypical Biblical lament.

[37] Walter Brueggemann, "The Costly Loss of Lament," 99. See also Anderson and Bishop, *Out of the Depths*; Bulkeley, "Does Jeremiah Confess, Lament, or Complain?," 8; and Eklund, *Jesus Wept*, 60ff. For a dissenting view that biblical lament need not always end in an affirmation of hope, see Mandolfo, "Language of Lament in the Psalms," 126: "The language of reassurance and that of complaint sit side by side in the lament psalms without either getting the final say."

[38] Billings, *Rejoicing in Lament*, 49.

[39] Here I have in mind the vice of despair—that vice that is contrary to the theological virtue of hope. It might also be that natural hope is sufficient to move one to pray, even if one lacks the theological virtues of faith and hope. But in such a situation, such hope will be vulnerable and unstable. Relatedly, I think that lament is compatible with feelings of despair, in part because I think the theological virtues of faith and hope are compatible with feelings of despair. Rah's discussion of Lamentations contains a wonderful discussion of how that Biblical text "recognizes that hope can arise in the midst of suffering because of God's faithfulness." Rah, *Prophetic Lament: A Call for Justice in Troubled Times*, 106.

[40] Ibid., 77.

[41] See, for instance, Psalm 88, which Strawn describes as a prayer "*in* the depths" rather than "*out of* the depths." Strawn, "The Psalms," 12.

[42] To be clear, I don't think that Billings and Rah are concerned with lament *per se*, but rather focused on Biblical lament. I'm inclined to side with those who even think that Biblical lament need not always end in hope (in part because I hold that hope is an infused virtue).

[43] Thanks to Aaron Cobb for pressing me to make this point explicit.

[44] And, if Eklund is right, elsewhere in the canon as well; see Eklund, *Jesus Wept*.

First, I think it's clear that lament is not dispassionate. It's not simply an intellectual accounting of what is wrong with the world; it is instead "deeply felt. It is not simply a conscious, cognitive exercise."[45] Lament could here perhaps be understood as what Robert C. Roberts refers to as "concern-based construals": the agent's understanding of the situation, as something that they are personally invested in, produces an affective response that calls for action.[46] The object of the concern that gives rise to lament can be either a past event, a present trouble, or a looming but still future event, "an anticipation of the coming loss."[47] Brueggemann highlights the prophet Jeremiah as an instance of this: "He weeps not because he is an emotional wreck, but because he already sees clearly the coming disaster that will not be averted."[48] Lament is a cry, sometimes a command for God to do something to fix the wrong which has spurred the lament. In lament one cries "this should not be." Lament is so impassioned that it often leads one to call out God concerning his absence, his inaction, his silence.[49] In lament, one "take[s] initiative" with God.[50] One does not do this without *thumos*. In lament, one dares to call for or even enter the divine audience with an agenda.

While the cry to God in lament is not dispassionate, neither is it generic. Lament "challenges the notion of an abstract relationship with God."[51] The God to whom the lament is offered is a particular God, and presupposes a particular view of God's character, His commitments, His care, as well as a particular view of what justice demands of God.[52] Eklund puts this point as follows:

> Lament thus depends on the idea that attacks from enemies, illness, and so forth are not merely wrong in a general sense, but that they violate something about this relationship with this particular God; suffering disrupts God's promises to be a faithful God to this people and to bring salvation to them.[53]

[45] Rah, *Prophetic Lament*, 56.

[46] See Robert Roberts, *Spiritual Emotions: A Psychology of Christian Virtues* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2007), particularly chapter 1.

[47] Brueggemann, "The Costly Loss of Lament," 58.

[48] Ibid., 59.

[49] For a good discussion of God's silence in the face of lament, and one which directly engages the Psalms, see Nicholas Wolterstorff, "The Silence of the God Who Speaks" in *Divine Hiddenness: New Essays*, ed. Daniel Howard-Snyder and Paul Moser (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 215–28.

[50] Brueggemann, "The Costly Loss of Lament," 103.

[51] Rah, *Prophetic Lament*, 178.

[52] Mandolfo writes that "the relationship between suffering, God, and justice is more or less explicit throughout every lament psalm...Lament language might be considered one of humanity's earliest attempts to grapple with the conundrum of God's role in suffering." Mandolfo, "Language of Lament in the Psalms," 125.

[53] Eklund, *Jesus Wept*, 8.

Eklund differentiates two major strands of lament: protest and penitence. Protest laments call "on God to account for the ways things are wrong in the world, and [demand] that God listen and respond—to set right what is wrong, mend what is broken, and bring light to the darkness."[54] Consider, in this context, Wolterstorff's words on the importance of protest, which could easily be seen in the context of lament:

> We shall join with God himself in keeping alive the protest against... unredemptive suffering. Till breath dies within us we shall insist that this must not be. We shall reject all consolation that comes in the form of...urging us to be content with unredemptive suffering...We shall keep the memory alive so as to keep the protest alive. And in the stories we tell of our own lives, we shall not disown the suffering but own it.[55]

Lament often helps us protest with such an agenda.

According to Eklund, the second major strand of lament, the penitential laments, focuses on confession and requests for mercy. She acknowledges that these two forms "often overlap and occur simultaneously, or are interwoven."[56] Eklund thinks that New Testament laments, and their role in Christian liturgy, have focused on penitence more than protest, though it is not clear to me that anything normative follows from this.[57] Recognizing that Jesus' laments have no sin of his own to be penitential for gives us further reason to see protest (or at least nonpersonal penitence) as completely appropriate.[58] Furthermore, one might also see penitence as a subcategory of protest, since the state of affairs that one laments as wrong is not external but internal (i.e., penitence might involve protesting against some problematic feature of one's own character or actions). In calling on God to help transform the penitential

[54] Ibid., 10. For more on the connection between lament and protest, see also Billings, *Rejoicing in Lament*, 11, 19f.

[55] Wolterstorff, "The Silence of the God Who Speaks," 227. Wolterstorff continues, in a way that is important for us to remember: "There will be more to our stories than that; but there will be at least that."

[56] Eklund, *Jesus Wept*, 10. See also Donald Moffat, "The Profit and Loss of Lament: Rethinking Aspects of the Relationship between Lament and Penitential Prayer" in *Spiritual Complaint: The Theology and Practice of Lament*, ed. Miriam J. Bier and Tim Bulkeley (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2013) and Tiemeyer, "The Doubtful Gain of Penitence" for more on the relationship between lament and penitence.

[57] As Mike Rea has pointed out to me in conversation, this increased focus on penitence in the New Testament is likely connected with the more exalted conception of God that is at work there than is found in parts of the Old Testament.

[58] See Eklund, *Jesus Wept*, 14.

heart, one still implores God to act, in light of His character, to address and change what is wrong.

At this point, let me summarize then what I think is paradigmatic of lament, even if these various components are not intended to demarcate all cases of lament from what fails to be lament:

> Lament is an impassioned—a lived and live—prayer or cry of sorrow or mourning or grief, in the face of what is perceived to be injustice or other wrongness in the world, aimed at God and from within a particular communal understanding of God's nature and promise to individuals; in which because of their hope the petitioner feels able to raise her concerns and even perceived inaction on God's part and yet does so within the context that God is, in fact, faithful. The petitioner thus resides in hope that God, who is faithful, will respond appropriately.

In the next two subsections, I explore more fully two aspects of the above characterization that, while hinted at in the earlier discussion, bear more elaboration. In the final section of the chapter, I begin to characterize how we can lament well—that is, what the virtue of proper lament might look like.

Lament and Hope

In the foregoing, I indicated my belief that not all lament needs to end in an explicit affirmation of trust in God or hope in His providential control in order to qualify as hope.[59] Nevertheless, Christian lament is typically understood as closely connected with the theological virtue of hope. The virtue of hope has historically been understood as a reaching toward the ultimate goodness of our perfect union with God. Insofar as a person laments some state of affairs, they believe they don't have the perfection of that union. Aquinas's account of the nature of hope includes the following two characteristics:

> Hope looks toward the future, for a person never hopes for what he or she already possesses. Hope seeks a good object that still lies in the future; the

[59] See William C. Mattison III, "Hope" in *Being Good: Christian Virtues for Everyday Life*, ed. Michael W. Austin and R. Douglas Geivett (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2012), 107–25 and Romanus Cessario, O. P., "The Theological Virtue of Hope (IIa IIae, qq.17–22)" in *The Ethics of Aquinas*, ed. Stephen J. Pope (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2002), 232–43.

> person who presently and actually realizes the attachment of something desired reacts with joy [rather than hope]...One speaks of hoping only when the attainment of the good, future object involves some difficulty or an element of arduousness.[60]

Hope enables us to adhere to God's promises toward us, and ultimately toward God as the source from where we shall derive perfect goodness. That is, in hope we trust in God for obtaining of perfect happiness, a state in which lament will no longer be appropriate. But insofar as hope is for a future good, this is an achievement which the one who hopes doesn't presently possess.

For Aquinas, one of the vices opposed to the theological virtue of hope is the vice of despair.[61] Despair understood as a vice involves a fixed commitment of the will against the possibility of achieving that good at which hope aims. Lament can thus be a sign that hope is not lost, that despair has not yet set in. One would not lament and thereby call on God to do something that one despaired that God would not do. Hope then involves a trust in and commitment to the loving God, a trust that the object of one's lament will be made right.[62] Ultimately, the "difficult but possible future good," that hope aims at our perfect union with God in love, with hope (like faith) pointing toward the greatest theological virtue: love. Love so understood is a kind of "participation" in the life of God in which we align with God and all the goods that God seeks to promote. Lament can then help orient us toward those goods that are not yet possessed, and to actively live into a life aimed at securing those goods that God ultimately intends for us.

Lament as Communal

As mentioned earlier, the lament psalms are typically divided between individual laments and communal laments.[63] In his recent book *Rejoicing in Lament*, one of Billings's central themes is that prayer in general, and praying the Psalms in particular, is always a communal act.[64] Even if one offers a prayer as an indiyidual, it is a prayer offered by a member of the Body of Christ, and thus offered within the context of the Church. Just as one laments to God as understood in a particular context, one always prays from within the framework provided by one's community. No act is in isolation from its larger context.

Furthermore, even for the individual laments, a leading understanding is that the confession of trust and praise that typically completes the lament may have been uttered by the officiating priest in the temple as a response of communal faith once the lament had been prayed by an individual or group.[65] In his book, which is a reflection on Biblical lament through the lens of his own cancer diagnosis, Billings ties prayer to the body of Christ. He talks about how sometimes during his cancer treatment and as he was coming to terms with his diagnosis, he felt "too weak to hope, too tired and despairing to even lament."[66] It is in such a case that the community can hope and lament on one's behalf.[67]

The fact that lament not only can but should be communal should not surprise us, and for at least two reasons:

1. The Christian life is inherently communal; what it means to be a part of the Body of Christ is to live as a member of that larger body. We are to rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn;[68] and lament with those who lament.
2. As with most things in life, particularly those things that are hard, doing this well doesn't come naturally.

If, in addition to there being right or appropriate ways to lament, there are also inappropriate ways, then the community can help us learn what it means to lament in the right ways. This realization leads us directly into the last point

[60] Ibid., 233.

[61] William C. Mattison III, "Hope," 113. As indicated above in footnote 39, the vice of despair is distinct from the emotion of despair. Not all instances of the latter are rooted in the former. The vice of presumption is also opposed to the theological virtue of hope, but those situations that lead to lament make despair more likely than presumption.

[62] Two excellent treatments of the connections between hope and trust are Victoria McGeer, "Trust, Hope, and Empowerment," *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 86 (2008), 237–54 and Adrienne Martin, *Hope We Hope: A Moral Psychology* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2016), particularly chapter 5. Aaron D. Cobb and Adam Green, "The Theological Virtue of Hope as a Social Virtue," *Journal of Analytic Theology* 5 (2017), 230–50) is an excellent discussion of how the theological virtue of hope is itself social.

[63] See Anderson and Bishop, *Out of the Depths*, 55ff. and Bier, "The Unique Contribution of Lamentations 4 in the Book of Lamentations," 18–33.

[64] See, among other places, Billings, *Rejoicing in Lament*, 51f. For a discussion of the ways in which Israel used Scriptural laments in communal worship and how that practice could inform Christian communal worship, see Robin Parry, "Wrestling with Lamentations in Christian Worship" in *Spiritual Complaint: The Theology and Practice of Lament*, ed. Miriam J. Bier and Tim Bulkeley (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2013), 125–52.

[65] See Strawn, "The Psalms," 11 and the materials cited there in footnote 19.

[66] Billings, *Rejoicing in Lament*, 89.

[67] For discussions of how one's community can help one both lament and have hope, see Aaron Cobb, *Loving Samuel: Suffering, Dependence, and the Calling of Love* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2014), chapter 23 and Rah, *Prophetic Lament*, 120.

[68] Romans 12: 15.

that I want to make about lament, and that is that we can learn what it means to lament well, to lament excellently, to lament virtuously.[69]

The Virtue of Lament

I want to end the chapter in this last section with a few words about what we might think of as the virtue of lamenting well.[70] Here, as elsewhere, I approach ethics from within the broadly virtue theoretic family of views that is associated with (among others) Aristotle, Aquinas, and—more recently—Anscombe, Foot, MacIntyre, and Roberts.[71] On this family of views, the moral virtues are rationally informed dispositions to feel, desire, or act appropriately given the details of a particular situation, and to take proper pleasure or pain in doing so, in a way that contributes to the good of the individual and her community. Insofar as they are informed by right reason, the moral virtues depend upon the intellectual virtue of prudence. The agent's taking the proper pleasure or pain is needed to differentiate virtue from mere continence. And most virtues will be paired with two opposing vices, one a vice of excess and one a vice of deficiency.

Within this framework, we might think that a person is virtuous to the degree that she, guided by right reason, laments about the proper things at appropriate times, and feels the proper pain (in the object of lament) and pleasure (in the hope within which the lament is framed). It will probably be easy for us to imagine a case where an individual laments inappropriately—perhaps, for

[69] For a discussion of the roles that lament can and should play in specifically communal liturgy, see Parry, "Wrestling with Lamentations in Christian Worship," and Colin Buchanan, "Liturgy and Lament," also in *Spiritual Complaint: The Theology and Practice of Lament*, ed. Miriam J. Bier and Tim Bulkeley (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2013), 153–69.

[70] In personal correspondence, Aaron Cobb has suggested that there might not be *a* virtue of lamenting well, but rather a number of virtues involved, or even a number of particular virtues that govern lamenting well (much as both generosity and magnificence, for Aristotle, govern giving well of one's wealth). While I think this is an important question, I'm less interested here in the number of virtues involved in lamenting well, but what lamenting well would involve. For an excellent paper on individuating virtues, though with a focus on virtues that are excellences with respect to emotion, see Ryan West, "Anger and the Virtues: A Critical Study in Virtue Individuation," *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 46 (2016), 877–97.

Furthermore, one might be inclined to ask exactly what kind of virtue is it—that is, is it a moral virtue or a theological question? I think that's a great question, and my answer is tentative. I'm inclined to think that the virtue (or virtues) of lamenting well are moral rather than theological, both since I think one could lament excellently even if there is no independent reason to think that the individual has been infused with the theological virtue of faith and since I think that lament doesn't require hope. Nevertheless, given the complex relationship that holds between the moral and theological virtues in general, much more needs to be said on this matter.

[71] See, for instance, Kevin Timpe and Craig Boyd, "Introduction" in *Virtues and Their Vices*, ed. Kevin Timpe and Craig A. Boyd (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 1–34.

instance, she calls into question God's goodness and faithfulness because her preferred sportsball team fails to win the big game (or match or whatever). Lament can be excessive when it overvalues the importance or nature of the good whose loss or uncertainty one is lamenting. One could also lament falsely if one laments over a state of affairs which didn't obtain.[72] However, I want to suggest that there's also a disposition, both in individuals and communities, to not lament enough—that is, that there is conceptual space (and I think reason to believe that this space is actually populated) for people or communities being disposed toward too little lament.

My hope is that the earlier discussion of biblical lament has already helped establish that there is such a thing as proper lament—that is, that there are some things that it is "meet and right" for us to lament. Often, the Church has an obligation to help the marginalized, the oppressed, and the sorrowful find their voice. If that's the case, then failing to lament those things appropriately will also be problematic. Simply put, given its present sinfulness, we ought to be led to engage in lament by various things in our world.[73] Billings suggests that the Psalms can play a role in our seeing what it might mean to lament properly. He writes: "The Psalms are given to us as a divine pedagogy for our affections—God's way of reshaping our desires and perceptions so that they learn to lament in the right things and take joy in the right things."[74]

If there is a virtue (or virtues) of lamenting well then it, like all virtues, will be good for its possessor and, in turn, for the community or communities to which the individual belongs.[75] How so? Let me suggest a number of ways.

First, as Brueggemann notes, in lament, the importance and legitimacy of the petitioning party is "legitimated."[76] Lament gives a voice to those who have been oppressed, harmed, or otherwise treated unjustly, ensuring "that their plight is neither ignored nor minimized."[77] Brueggemann notes two

[72] I don't mean to suggest that all such lament would be vicious, insofar as not all epistemic failures are indicative of personal failures. For some of the complexities involved in understanding culpable versus inculpable ignorance, see Kevin Timpe, "Tracing and the Epistemic Condition on Moral Responsibility," *The Modern Schoolman* 88 (2011), 5–28.

[73] See, for instance, Billings, *Rejoicing in Lament*, 76.

[74] Ibid., 38.

[75] This will be at least true as a general rule. I leave it for another time to explore whether virtues are always good for the individual and the community, or if it is possible for the two to be in tension or even conflict.

[76] Brueggemann, "The Costly Loss of Lament," 101. In the remainder of this article, Brueggemann explores the role that lament has in "redistributing power," and the costs to the Christian community when this particular kind of speech act is silenced or eliminated. Relatedly, Rah writes that "part of the important work in ministries of justice for the marginalized is the empowering of those who suffer to find their voice" (Rah, *Prophetic Lament*, 179).

[77] Jeanette Mathews, "Framing Lament: Providing a Context for the Expression of Pain" in *Spiritual Complaint: The Theology and Practice of Lament*, ed. Miriam J. Bier and Tim Bulkeley (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2013), 193.

goods that are lost when communities do not allow for the proper expression of lament. The first "loss that results from the absence of lament is the loss of genuine covenant interaction, since the second party of the covenant (the petitioner) has become voiceless or has a voice that is permitted to speak only praise and doxology."[78] In other words, the honest appraisal of life—a truth that virtue ought to aim at—is skewed when only positive emotions and prayers are permitted. The lack of lament can be seen as a kind of silencing, which has social implications.[79]

Virtuous lament, it seems to me, shares a number of features in this context with virtuous anger. In an excellent recent treatment of the emotion of anger, Zac Cogley suggests that anger has three functions:

1. an appraisal of wrongdoing,
2. its role as a motivating force, and
3. its communicative function.

According to Cogley, all three of these functions are crucial to virtuous anger: "possessing excellence with respect to only one of anger's functions is…insufficient for virtue."[80] Lament plausibly has parallel functions and, like anger, will involve a proper appreciation of and desire to speak against wrongdoing. Lament not only involves the appraisal that the world is not as it should be but also motivates the individual to a number of actions (not just prayer, but solidarity with those who are being treated unjustly) and can communicate the wrongness of the present situation to both God and others.[81]

The second way in which the loss of proper lament can harm the community of faith that Brueggemann mentions "is the stifling of the question of

[78] Brueggemann, "The Costly Loss of Lament," 102.

[79] For another discussion of how failure to participate in communal lament can harm the worshiping community, see Nicholas Wolterstorff, *Acting Liturgically: Philosophical Reflections on Religious Practice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), particularly chapter 3.

[80] Zac Cogley, "A Study of Virtuous and Vicious Anger" in *Virtues and Their Vices*, ed. Kevin Timpe and Craig A. Boyd (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 199. See also Rebecca DeYoung, "What Are You Guarding? Virtuous Anger and Lifelong Practice" in *Becoming Good: New Philosophical Essays in Aid of Virtue Formation*, ed. Scott Cleveland and Adam Pelser (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021), ch. 8.

[81] See Terence Cuneo, *Ritualized Faith: Essays on the Philosophy of Liturgy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), particularly chapters 1 and 2, for a discussion of solidarity in worship. In personal correspondence, Aaron Cobb suggests that the expression of proper lament might be an activity rooted in virtues connected with the relevant emotion type. So, for laments that are connected with injustice and the anger this promotes, lamenting well involves an expression of proper anger. For laments connected with misfortune/suffering and the sorrow this promotes, lamenting well involves an expression of proper sadness.

theodicy. I do not refer to some esoteric question of God's coping with ontological evil. Rather, I mean the capacity to raise and legitimate questions of justice in terms of social goods, social access, and social power."[82] I particularly like how Brueggemann connects theodicy here with the need to speak prophetically and take action against those social structures that lead to suffering.

Learning how to lament well has a formative element. By routinely engaging in a practice, we can come to shape our orientation to the practice of lament. Robin Parry sees this as a part of spiritual formation involving habituation, a "learning by doing."[83] He writes:

> Engaging in the stories of the community in communal worship and Christian practice shapes us into a certain kind of people—people of Christian character. Clearly on this understanding of being formed into a Christian disciple there is an important place for engaging communally in practices that we might not fully understand and which might not express how we currently feel. But the ongoing participation in such practices is essential for founded spiritual formation. So liturgical engagement with Lamentations [and scriptural lament more generally] can, in principle, play a role in the training of Christian emotions—not simply expressing how we currently feel but training us to see and to feel in certain kinds of ways.[84]

By recovering the practice of lament, the Church could actually participate in the formation of its members.

Worship, like spiritual formation more broadly, can involve not just the love of God but also love of those one worships with. The process of helping them form virtue is one way of loving them.[85] We can love others by helping them learn how to lament properly. Failing to lament well, and failing to help others do the same, can thus be an indication of disordered love, or of lax

[82] Brueggemann, "The Costly Loss of Lament," 104. See also Moffat, "The Profit and Loss of Lament," 90. Relatedly, Rah writes that "acts of justice and racial reconciliation require a deeper engagement with the other—an engagement that acknowledges suffering rather than glosses over it." Rah, *Prophetic Lament*, 21.

[83] Parry, "Wrestling with Lamentations in Christian Worship," 149. For other discussions of worship, see James K. A. Smith, *You Are What You Love: The Spiritual Power of Habit* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2016), particularly chapters 1 and 2 and Wolterstorff, *Acting Liturgically*.

[84] Parry, "Wrestling with Lamentations in Christian Worship," 149.

[85] Here I'm thinking not primarily of the theological virtue of love, which takes God as its proper object, but the virtue of rightly being oriented to the good of other humans and being willing to work toward their good as one is able.

love—i.e., of sloth.[86] To fail to lament with others is to fail to satisfy the demands of love. Insofar as we are called to unite with those we love in their suffering, we are called to lament with them. The disordering of love leads to the disordering of lament; and the disordering of lament can contribute to the disordering of love.[87]

The virtue of loving well will be closely connected with a number of other virtues. (If there's not a single virtue involved in loving well but rather a cluster, it may be that some of these associated virtues are actually themselves virtues of loving well.[88]) Other virtues that will also be connected here are consolation, mercy (misericordia), compassion (literally, the virtue which rightly disposes one to suffer with others[89]), and solidarity with others in their suffering.[90] One of my hopes regarding analytic reflection on lament is that we'll be better able to think about these connections in the future.[91]

Conclusion

Rah refers to lament as "the proper response to a broken world."[92] Part of what I've done in this chapter is to give an initial account of what can be proper and fitting about lament. I realize that many of the ideas I've introduced are merely exploratory rather than completely worked out. As I said in the first section, I intend this chapter not as a work of completed analytic theology but as an opportunity for us to engage in the process together. There are a number of connections that need to be developed beyond even those that I've mentioned here. There's further work to be done, for instance, on the connection between lament and the problems of divine silence and divine hiddenness,[93] as well as the need to localize appropriate lament practices. Furthermore, there's certainly space for more substantive reflection on how

[86] An excellent treatment of sloth as "lax love" and "a vice marked by resistance to the transforming demands of God's love," see Rebecca Konyndyk DeYoung, *Glittering Vices: A New Look at the Seven Deadly Sins and Their Remedies* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2009), 91.

[87] Thanks to Craig Boyd for encouraging me to flesh out some of the ideas in this paragraph more fully.

[88] See Stump, *Wandering in Darkness*, 25 and Cobb, *Loving Samuel.*

[89] See ibid., 15f., 23–5, and especially the poem on page 46.

[90] I owe a number of these connections to Aaron Cobb.

[91] The discussion of the role of hope also illustrates how having one virtue can make it easier to develop and exemplify another. The stronger one's grounding in the theological virtue of hope, the more prepared one may be emotionally to confront directly the situations that lead to lament, rather than feeling the need to pass over them in silence or deny their impact on one's life and faith.

[92] Rah, *Prophetic Lament*, 43.

[93] See, for instance, Eklund, *Jesus Wept*, 9 and Cobb, *Loving Samuel.*

lament can contribute to spiritual practice, showing that analytic theology need not be "spiritually sterile," but can actively contribute to the good of the Church.[94] But I hope that the present treatment can provide a useful resource for those future investigations.[95]

[94] Here I'm again thinking of the excellent discussion in William Wood, "Analytic Theology as a Way of Life," *Journal of Analytic Theology* 2 (2014), 43–60.

[95] Previous versions of this chapter benefited from the constructive and useful feedback of Aaron Cobb, Mike Rea, Tom McCall, Katilyn Eekhoff, Craig Boyd, David McNaughton, James Arcadi, and a number of participants in the Analytic Theology seminar at Fuller Theological Seminary.

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