

BOOK OF PSALMS

LESSON 1

Generally, it is believed that Psalms is the most widely read and most highly treasured of all the books in the Old Testament. It is a collection of poems, hymns, and prayers that express the religious feelings of Jews throughout the various periods of their national history.

Psalms was written over a period of a thousand years!!!

- A. Cries in the Midst of Despair
- B. Praise of His Provider and Comforter
- C. Confession from Within the Soul
- D. Celebration and Joy

“The psalms lead us through the valleys and peaks of human experience, but in the end, they guide us to the praise of our Creator.”

COMPOSERS OF THE PSALMS

- A. David—the psalmist of Israel
- B. Ethan—wise man who Solomon was compared to
- C. Heman—grandson of Samuel/seer for David/son of Joel—a Korahite
- D. Asaph—musician—son of Berechiah—father of Zechariah
- E. Solomon
- F. Moses
- G. Sons of Korah (family of priests)
- H. Deborah—prophetess and only female judge mentioned in the Bible
- I. Hannah—barren—wife of Elkanah
- J. Anonymous

STRUCTURE OF PSALMS

- A. Book One—Psalm 1-41
- B. Book Two—Psalm 42-72
- C. Book Three—Psalm 73-89
- D. Book Four—Psalm 90-106
- E. Book Five—Psalm 107-150

Books One and Two contain primarily psalms written by David.

Book Three includes the psalms of Asaph (73-83) and the psalms of the sons of Korah (84-88).

Books Four and Five include anonymous psalms, along with a few by David and others.

CATEGORIES OF THE PSALMS

Categories are determined by the themes of the psalms.

A. Royal Psalms

They emphasize God as King, often using the words “the LORD reigns.” These psalms speak of His rule as Creator, as Savior of Israel, and as the Coming One. Royal psalms often point to the coming rule of the Savior King, the Lord Jesus.

B. Wisdom Psalms

They tend to focus on the same issues or topics as the book of Proverbs; these psalms present a sharp contrast between the righteous and the wicked and also address God’s blessing and cursing, while focusing on righteous living.

1. Torah—focus on the beauty, truth, and sufficiency of the Law of God
2. History—recounts the history of Israel and asks for a renewed commitment to God

C. Lament Psalms

Penitential—They include confession of sins; ask for and receive forgiveness; then praise God for the renewed relationship that God’s forgiveness provides.

D. Praise Psalms

These psalms focus on Jerusalem, often using its endearing name Zion. With delight and great enthusiasm, the people speak of the Holy City referred to as Zion.

E. Thanksgiving Psalms

These psalms speak of trusting God—joy found in God—praise of God.

F. Imprecatory Psalms

They include some of the most troubling psalms, as they contain prayers asking God to curse the wicked.

G. Hallel Psalms

These psalms praise God for His character and saving work.

WHAT ATTRACTS OR DRAWS US TO PSALMS?

LIFE