



I. The Book of Psalms in the Hebrew and English Bible:

Lk. 24:44 “And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the **law of Moses**, and in **the prophets**, and in **the psalms**, concerning me.”

The Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) is called the “TaNaKh” (Torah, Nevi’im, and Ketuvim).

Torah (meaning “*Teaching*”) – Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy (Pentateuch – five scrolls or books). The Pentateuch of Moses.

Nevi’im (meaning “*Prophets*”) – Joshua, Judges, Ruth, Samuel, Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the 12 Minor Prophets: Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi.

Ketuvim (meaning “*Writings*”) – **Psalms**, Proverbs, Job, Song of Solomon, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Ezra-Nehemiah, and Chronicles.

Lk. 11:51 “From the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the altar and the temple: verily I say unto you, It shall be required of this generation.” (Abel, Gen. 4:8; Zacharias, 2 Chr. 24:20-21). The Lord Jesus used the Hebrew Bible!

The English Bible (Old Testament) is arranged by content.

Pentateuch (five scrolls or books) – Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.

Historical books – Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 & 2 Samuel, 1 & 2 Kings, 1 & 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther.

Poetical books (Wisdom) – Job, **Psalms**, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon.

Prophetic books – (Major Prophets) Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel. (Minor Prophets) Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi.

II. An Introduction to the Book of Psalms:

1. The Poetical sections (Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecc., Song) are considered the “**heart**” of the Bible.
2. The Book of Psalms – **The Theological Song Book of the Bible**; reflecting the sorrows and praises and prayers of man, and the magnificence of God.
3. The Definition of the word “Psalms”:
 - From the Hebrew word “Tehill’im” (meaning praises). Neh. 12:46; Psa. 145 heading.
 - From the Greek LXX word “Psalmoi” (meaning hymns or songs of praise to be sung using (or plucking) a lyre or harp).
4. 150 “chapters” which makes this book the longest book in the Bible. (Isa. is second place, 66 chapters). The shortest Psalm is 117 (with only two verses). The longest, Ps. 119:1-176. The center verse of the entire English Bible is Ps. 118:8 “It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man.”

5. Psalms gives voice (or reflection) to the Divine and Human life experience.
 - A. Divine
 - a) God's Names and Attributes – LORD (700X); God (Elohim, 325X; El, 73X; Eloah, 4X); (Adonai, 53X – Ps. 2:4); Almighty (Shaddai, 2X – Ps. 68:14; 91:1)
 - b) God's Help and Condemnation
 - B. Human
 - a) Man's praises and adoration
 - b) Man's pains and affliction
 - C. A Biblical Theology of the Book of Psalms: (developed by your own personal study)
 - a) Bibliology (Ps. 12:6-7; 119:9)
 - b) Theology (Ps. 89:18; 95:3; 100:5) (the Holy Spirit's role in the OT, Ps. 51:11- dispensation) (The Son is God – Ps. 45:6-7)
 - c) Angelology (Ps. 34:7; 68:17; 78:49; 103:20)
 - d) Anthropology (Ps. 8:5; 144:4)
 - e) Soteriology (Ps. 3:8)
 - f) Ecclesiology (limited in here BUT there is the Theology of Worship) (Ps. 22:22; Heb. 2:12)
 - g) Eschatology (Ps. 10:18 – the Antichrist)

6. The Beauty and Magnificence of Psalms:
 - A. A Poetic Book
 - B. A Prayer Book
 - C. A Praise Book
 - D. A Prescriptive Book
 - E. A Prophetic Book

7. The Authorship of Psalms: - The Holy Spirit is the author, and a few men were the writers:
 - A. **David** – “The sweet psalmist of Israel” (2 Sam. 23:1) [79 Psalms clearly attributed to him; about 53% of the book of Psalms]
 - a) The Lord Jesus attributed the Book of Psalms to David (Lk. 20:42 and Acts 1:16-20)
 - b) 73 Psalms are attributed to David according to the inspired headings. 116 Psalms bears inspired headings of the 150 (approx. 70%).
 - c) 6 other Psalms are attributed to David according to the Bible itself.
 - 1) Psalm 2 (Acts 4:25)
 - 2) Psalm 95 (Heb. 4:7)
 - 3) Psalm 96 (esp. vv.7-9, cf. 1 Chr. 16:28-29)
 - 4) Psalm 105 (cf. 1 Chr. 16:7-22)
 - 5) Psalm 72 – written by David, v.20 – “FOR Solomon.”
 - 6) Psalm 127 – another Psalm written “FOR Solomon” (default to David). [Total of 79 Psalms attributed to David: (approx. 53%)]
 - d) Many Bible teachers, preachers, commentators attribute the rest of the Psalms which bare no human writer to either David or Ezra (the compiler of the book of Psalms). The “**anonymous**” Psalms. [50 make up 33.3%]
 - B. **Solomon** – son of David; wrote two Psalms (72; 127) (if 128 is a continuation then this would be his third Psalm). [1.3%]
 - C. **Asaph** – a priest and the chief musician (1 Chr. 16:4-7); he was also called “seer” in 2 Chr. 29:30. He wrote 12 Psalms which are attributed to him (Ps. 50; Ps. 73-83). [8%]
 - D. “**For the sons of Korah**” – Levites whose father rebelled against Moses (Num. 16:1) – they were appointed over the service and were workers of the Tabernacle and later of the Temple. They were written about in 10 Psalms (Ps. 42; 44-49; 84-85; 87). [6.6%]

- E. **Heman** (Ps. 88) – A singer; grandson of Samuel the prophet (1 Chr. 6:23; 15:16-22; 35:15). He wrote one, Psalm 88. [0.6%]
 - F. **Ethan** (Ps. 89) – wrote one, Psalm 89. He was the brother of Heman (1 Kings 4:31; 1 Chr. 2:6) [0.6%]
 - G. **Moses** (Ps. 90) – wrote one, Ps. 90. [0.6%]
 - H. **Hezekiah** – the Song of Degrees (10) (cf. Isa. 38:8, 20) (Ps. 120, 121, 123, 125, 126, 128, 129, 130, 132, and 134). [6.6%]
8. The time of writing: From the time of Moses till the Babylonian Captivity; Most were written during the lifetime of David. And perhaps compiled by Ezra (post-exilic period). The final Psalm written is Ps. 126.
9. The Psalms can be categorized according to themes:
- A. Collective Psalms:
 - 1) Davidic Psalms
 - 2) Asaph Psalms
 - 3) For the sons of Korah Psalms
 - 4) Hezekiah Psalms
 - B. Thematic Psalms:
 - 1) Wisdom Psalms (1, 33, 37, 119)
 - 2) Messianic Psalms (2, 18, 20, 21, 45, 47, 68, 72, 89, 101, 110, 118, 132, 144)
 - 3) Lament Psalms (3-7, 12-13, 22, 25-28, 35, 38-40, 42-44, 51, 54-57, 59-61, 63-64, 69-71, 74, 79-80, 83, 85-86, 88, 90, 102, 109, 120, 123, 130, 140-143)
 - 4) Imprecatory Psalms (7, 35, 40, 55, 58-59, 69, 79, 109, 137, 139, 144)
 - 5) Thanksgiving Psalms (8, 18-19, 29-30, 32-34, 36, 40, 41, 66, 103-106, 111, 113, 117, 124, 129, 135, 136, 138, 139, 146-148, 150)
 - 6) Pilgrimage Psalms (43, 46, 48, 76, 84, 87, 120-134)
 - 7) God's Kingship (Enthronement) Psalms (48, 93, 93-100)
 - 8) Praise Psalms (103-107; 111-113; 113-118; 146-150)
 - C. Present Collection: The Book of Psalms is divided into five books:
 - 1) BOOK 1 (Ps. 1-41) – each division ends with a doxology: 41:13
 - 2) BOOK 2 (Ps. 42-72) - 72:18-19
 - 3) BOOK 3 (Ps. 73-89) - 89:52
 - 4) BOOK 4 (Ps. 90-106) – 106:48
 - 5) BOOK 5 (Ps. 107-150) – all of 150 (the last five Psalms begins and ends with praise – Hallelujah).
10. The Psalms are poetic – vs. prose; even as they describe afflictions there is orderliness of poetic expression and patterns. It was written carefully, with thought and creativity, as a reflection of trials, sorrows, and aspirations.
11. The Psalms were to be sung – vs. read. It was used in regular worship services, and on special services.
12. The Psalms gave expression to Jonah when he was in “the belly of hell” (Jon. 2) (v. 2 =Ps. 42:7; 65:2; 88:6; 120:1; 130:1; 142:1); (v.3 = Ps. 142:7; 88:6); (v.4 = Ps. 31:22); (v.5 = Ps. 69:1); (v.6 = Ps. 16:10); (v.7 = Ps. 18:6); (v.8 = Ps. 31:6); (v.9 = Ps. 3:8; 50:14, 23; 116:17-18).
13. The Psalm expression of blessedness was used by the Lord Jesus in His Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5:5 = Ps. 37:11; 5:7 = Ps. 41:1; 5:8 = Ps. 15:2; 24:4). He left the upper room having sung a hymn (a song of praise to God; most likely a Psalm), and on the cross itself (Matt. 26:23 = Ps. 41:9; v.24 = Ps. 22:1-31).

Christ used the Psalms in preaching:

Psalm 6:8 Matthew 7:23; Luke 13:27

Psalm 8:2 Matthew 21:16
 Psalm 22:1 Matthew 27:46; Mark 15:34
 Psalm 31:5a Luke 23:46
 Psalm 37:11a Matthew 5:5
 Psalm 41:9 John 13:18
 Psalm 42:5 Matthew 26:38; Mark 14:34
 Psalm 48:2 Matthew 5:35
 Psalm 62:12 Matthew 16:27
 Psalm 69:4 John 15:25

14. The Five Books Division of Psalms could represent the Five Books of Moses. (E.W. Bullinger) – Someone called it “the Pentateuch of David.”

BOOK DIVISIONS	Moses’ Books	Contents	Notes
Book 1 (Ps. 1-41) [no groupings]	Genesis	Concerning Man	Man’s attempt at obedience (Ps. 1) Man’s failure (Ps. 2) Man’s Saviour – the Son of Man (Ps. 8)
Book 2 (Ps. 42-72) Psalms of the sons of Korah (42-49) Michtam Psalms (16, 56-60) – Michtam is a musical term meaning, a poem.	Exodus	Concerning Israel as a Nation	Israel’s ruin, Redeemer, and redemption (Ps. 68:4). Begins with a cry for deliverance and ends with Israel’s King reigning over them.
Book 3 (Ps. 73-89) Psalms of Asaph, (73-83)	Leviticus	Concerning the Sanctuary	Terms like Sanctuary, Congregation, Assembly, Zion are frequently used.
Book 4 (Ps. 90-106) [no groupings]	Numbers	Concerning Israel and the Nations	Begins with Moses the man of the wilderness (Ps. 90) and ends with Israel’s rebellion in the wilderness (Ps. 106)
Book 5 (Ps. 107-150) Hallel Psalms (113-118) – Hallel means praise. Songs of Degrees (120-134) (Pilgrim songs) Psalms of Thanksgiving (135-139) Psalms for Protection (140-143) Hallelujah Psalms (146-150)	Deuteronomy	Concerning God and His Word	Ps. 7:20; Ps. 119.

15. Musical Notations:

A. Public worship – Gittith, Shoshannim.

- B. Special purposes – Muthlabben, Mahalath, Nehiloth, Altashheth.
- C. Topic – Aijeleth Shahar, Jonathelemrechokim.
- D. Special choirs – Sheminith, Alamothe, Jeduthun.
- E. To be played on stringed instruments – Neginoth.
- F. To be played on wind instruments – Nehiloth.
- G. Destroy not - Altaschith, (David’s plea when his life was threatened: Ps. 57, 58, 59, 75).
- H. Pause, rest, think about it – Selah.

16. Literary Styles and Devices of Hebrew Poetry:

A. Poetic Parallelism:

- A.1. Synonymous parallelism: the first line is repeated in the second line. (Ps. 2:1; 3:1; 24:2)
- A.2. Antithetical parallelism: a truth in the second line is contrasted with the first line. (“but”) (Ps. 1:6; 19:2; 37:9)
- A.3. Synthetic parallelism: the second line develops or advances the central idea of the first line. (Ps. 1:1-3; 19:7-9).
- A.4. Emblematic parallelism: (simile – “like” or “as”) (Ps. 42:1; 129:5-6)
- A.5. Climactic parallelism: idea or truth mentioned in the first line is developed and brought to a climax. (Ps. 29:1-2)
- A.6. Alternate parallelism: The third line repeats the idea/truth of the first line, and the fourth repeats the second line. (A-B-A-B pattern) (Ps. 103:11, 12)
- A.7. Chiastic parallelism: The second line advances the first line, then restates the second line in the third, and finally returns to the truth of the first line. (A-B-B-A pattern) (Ps. 1:1-2; Ps. 5:7)

B. Figures of Speech:

- B.1. Acrostic – First letter of the line opening with a different and succeeding letter of the Hebrew Alphabet. (Ps. 25, 34, 37, 111, 112, 119, and 145). Ps. 9-10 are incomplete acrostics linked together.
- B.2. Allegory – Extended metaphor built around a central theme. (Ps. 80:8-16)
- B.3. Alliteration – the first sound or letter of a word is repeated in succeeding words or lines. (A,A,A,B,B,B). (Ps. 6:8, 27:7 and 119:1-8, etc.).
- B.4. Anthropomorphism – Speaking of God in human-like ways to convey truth (Ps. 10:12).
- B.5. Apostrophe – turning aside. (Ps. 2:9-10; 27:13).
- B.6. Ellipsis – an omission, added words to supply understanding. (Ps.12:3).
- B.7. Hyperbole – an exaggerated statement for dramatic effect. (Ps. 6:6).
- B.8. Metaphor – comparing two things and declaring one like the other without using the word “like” or “as.” (Ps. 23:1; Ps. 84:11).
- B.9. Metonym – A thing is substituted for the thing it represents. (Ps. 73:9; Ps. 127:2).
- B.10. Paronomasia – Hebrew puns (only in Hebrew) (Ps. 18:7; 39:11; 40:3; 56:8).
- B.11. Personification – assigning personality to inanimate objects. (Ps. 35:10).
- B.12. Simile – “like” or “as” – (Ps. 1:3-4).
- B.13. Synecdoche – part of something to represent the whole. (Ps. 52:4).

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