

PREACHING, PERUSING AND PONDERING THE PSALMS INTRODUCTION # 2:

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“Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. 2 But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. 3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. (150) 1. Praise ye the LORD. Praise God in his sanctuary: praise him in the firmament of his power. 2 Praise him for his mighty acts: praise him according to his excellent greatness. Let every thing that hath breath praise the LORD. Praise ye the LORD.” Psalms 1:1-3; 150:1, 2 & 6.

We continue our introduction into the Book of Psalms this evening. We have seen:

- I. The Outline of the Book of Psalms:**
- II. Types and Titles of the Book of Psalms:**
- III. The Spiritual Application of the Book of Psalms:**

Just a reminder that this book of the Psalms is perhaps the most loved and revered book in the Bible. No doubt it has been a bedrock of immense consolation, yea a tower of fortitude for every experience a saint has gone through. From the heights of glorious praise to broken heart in the depths of despair and despondency. In other words all of our vacillating feelings and emotions are captured in this blessed Psalms. When cast down and depressed these Psalms can uplift us to the praise and worship of the most High God. In this precious book we find glorious and passionate devotion to God by all the authors of the Psalms. All who read these Psalms are no doubt encouraged and built up in the most holy faith! Consider for a moment some of the unique features that are found in this book:

- As we saw last week, these Psalms comprise the largest book in the Bible as it contains 150 chapters.
- It also has the longest chapter in the Bible, Psalm 119 which has 176 verses.
- In contrast to the longest chapter in the Bible, Psalms also has the shortest chapter in the Bible, Psalm 117 which has only 2 verses.
- Interesting to note that Psalm 117 is also the middle chapter of the whole Bible from Genesis to Revelation. (1,189 chapters in the whole Bible)
- Interesting also that between Psalm 117 and Psalm 119 is Psalm 118 and in verse 8, *“It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man.”* This verse is the very middle

verse contained in Scripture. It is the absolute center of 31,173 verses.

- Psalms is also the most quoted Old Testament book in the New Testament, it is quoted 112 times.
- Psalms is also written by more authors than all the other books in the Bible.
- Psalms also took the longest time to complete as it took about 1,000 years to finish it.

The title on name of this book, 'PSALMS' comes from the Hebrew word "**Zmr**," which means to pluck. As a matter of fact the word Psalms also come from the Greek word, "**Psalmos**" which means the plucking of the strings. When you combine these 2 words it means to pluck by taking hold of the strings of an instrument with the fingers, therefore indicating that the Psalms were originally composed to be accompanied by a stringed instrument. Thus, Psalms is a collection of worship songs to be sung to the MOST HIGH GOD! One of the key verses is found in Psalm 95:1 - 7, "*O come, let us sing unto the LORD: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation. 2 Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms. 3 For the LORD is a great God, and a great King above all gods. 4 In his hand are the deep places of the earth: the strength of the hills is his also. 5 The sea is his, and he made it: and his hands formed the dry land. 6 O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our maker. 7 For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand...*" As one writer put it, "*The collection of these 150 Psalms into one book served as the first hymnbook for God's people, written and compiled to assist them in their worship of God.*" Let us know look at the authorship of this book:

IV. The Authors of the Book of Psalms.

We know that most of the book in the Bible are written by one person, but there are a few book that do claim multiple authors. For example the book of Proverbs is such an example. The book of Psalms is written by multiple author which of course David being the most famous for he was also called the Sweet Psalmist of Israel. 2 Samuel 23:1, "*Now these be the last words of David. **David** the son of Jesse said, and the man who was raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and **the sweet psalmist of Israel...***"

- David is the chief author of the Psalms and is credited with writing 75 of the 150 Psalms, that is; half of the Psalms. 3-32; 34-41; 51-65; 68-70; 86; 101; 103; 108-110; 122; 124; 131; 133; 138-145. Some of the untitled Psalms like Ps. 2 & 119 are attributed to David. The New Testament gives credit to David for a number of Psalms:
 - (1). Consider Acts 4:25 & 13:33 with Psalm 2:7.
 - (2). Consider Acts 2:25-28 and 13:34-37 with Psalm 16:9 & 10.
 - (3). Compare Romans 4:6-8 with Psalm 32:1 & 2.

- (4). Compare Acts 1:16-20 & Romans 11:9 with Psalm 69:22-26.
- (5). Compare Acts 1:20b with Psalm 109:8
- (6). Compare Matthew 22:42 ff; Mark 12:35ff; Luke 20:41-44 & Acts 2:34-35 with Psalm 110:1.
- (7). Compare Hebrews 3:7 & 8; 4:7 with Psalm 95:7 & 8.

- Asaph who was a priest who served also as a leader in their worship wrote 12 Psalms: Psalms 50; 73-83.
- The Sons of Korah compose 10 Psalms: Ps.42; 44-49; 84; 85 & 87.
- Solomon, David's son wrote 2 Psalms; 72 & 127.
- Moses wrote Psalm 90.
- Heman an Ezrahite and a son of Korah wrote Psalm 88.
- Ethan also an Ezrahite wrote Psalm 89.
- Anonymous authors are attributed for the remaining 48 Psalms.
- Ezra the scribe and priest of Israel is also thought to be the author of some of the anonymous Psalms.

V. The Musical Terms Used in the Psalms

Understand the musical terms used in many of the psalms. (Copied from POSB)
 These terms give instructions on the performance and purpose of the psalm. They are listed below, along with a brief explanation of each and an example of where it appears. Where deemed to be helpful, terms are discussed in more detail in the commentary.

- . *To the chief musician*—indicates that it was to be used in temple worship (Ps. 4)
- . *Al-taschith*—literally means *do not destroy*; how it applied to the performance of the song is unknown. The term may have been the name of a popular tune to which the psalm was to be performed (Ps. 57)
- . *Alamoith*—to be sung by female or high-pitched voices (Ps. 46)
- . *Gittith*—literally means *winepresses*; how it applied to the performance of the song is unknown. It may mean that the song was to be performed in the autumn of the year at the Feast of Tabernacles, or it may also have been a stringed instrument (Ps. 8)
- . *Mahalath*—the meaning of this term is unclear. It may refer to a musical instrument, a popular tune to which the psalm was to be performed, or a direction to the way the psalm was to be performed

- . *Maschil* or *maskil*—for instruction or teaching (Ps. 32)
- . *Michtam* or *miktam*—meaning unknown; thought to be a meditation worthy of remembrance or a song of atonement (Ps. 16)
- . *Mizmor*—to be accompanied by musical instruments; usually translated as a *psalm* in the headings (Ps. 3)
- . *Neginoth*—to be accompanied by string instruments (Ps. 4)
- . *Nehiloth*—to be accompanied by wind instruments or flutes (Ps. 5)
- . *Selah*—a musical interlude for the purpose of meditation (Ps. 3)
- . *Sheminith*—means *the eighth* and probably refers to the octave in which it was to be performed. It may also refer to an eight-stringed instrument. Some scholars believe it is a term of contrast to *alamoth* and means that the psalm is to be sung by male or low-pitched voices (Ps. 6)
- . *Shiggaion*—to be sung with intense emotion; a song with an irregular rhythm (Ps. 7)
- . *Shir*—common Hebrew word for song; usually translated as song (Ps. 18:1)
- . *Shoshannim*—literally means lilies; how it applied to the performance of the song is unknown. It may mean that the song was to be performed in the spring of the year at the Feast of Passover (Ps. 45)
- . *Tehillah*—a song of praise; usually translated as praise (Ps. 145)
- . *Tephillah*—a prayer; usually translated as *prayer* (Ps. 86)

VI. The Purpose of the book of Psalms.

- A. The main purpose of the book of Psalms was to provide song and hymns for Israel to use in their worship.
1. They were written to provide God's children with spiritual direction in our every experience that our hearts would always be constantly towards God, that is, that our heart, mind and souls would be focus on God.
 2. They were written to provide spiritual strength and support when God's children are up or down, whether soaring, struggling or suffering. The Psalms will affect every part of the heart: (The following are not in any particular order.)
 - a. Faithfulness.
 - b. Failure.

- c. Love.
- d. Cold Heart.
- e. Discouragement.
- f. Unbelief.
- g. Revealing sin.
- h. Confessing sin.
- i. Mortifying sin.
- j. Fear.
- k. Anger.
- l. Anxiety.
- m. Grief.
- n. Sorrow.
- o. Despair.
- p. Hope.
- q. Encouragement.
- r. Joy.
- s. Victory.
- t. Defeat.
- u. Triumph.
- v. Trouble.
- w. Blessings.
- x. Burdens.
- y. The Psalms will affect every emotion and part of the heart.
- z. The Psalms will also meet every need necessary for the believer in every aspect of life and to also prepare him to meet God in the next life. Ps.17:15. (I had more but I ran out of the alphabet.)

- 3. They were written to provide spiritual instruction and faithfulness for all believers. By providing:
 - a. Spiritual Devotion.
 - b. Prayer.
 - c. Praise.
 - d. Worship.
- 4. These Psalms were compiled for the purpose of teaching us to praise and give thanks to God in every situation.
- 5. They were written to provide worship for the people of God wherever they were, both geographically or spiritually.

- B. These Psalms were written to also show the sovereignty, power, justice, mercy, faithfulness, longsuffering, righteousness, majesty, greatness and judgement of God. Which also includes:
 - 1. His covenant.
 - 2. His creation.

3. His dealings with man.
4. Angels.
5. Redemption and Salvation.
6. God's Word.
7. His Son.
8. His Kingdom.
9. His Rule.
10. The Second coming of Christ and the future.

C. These Psalms were also written to make reference to Jesus Christ, the Son of God, in other words, some Psalms were written as Messianic Psalms. Brother Pat Horner makes this very important statement regarding the Messianic Psalms:

1. "Though some Psalms are obviously Messianic and are therefore a reference to Jesus Christ, yet, when they were penned they were a blessing to the psalmist without his understanding their messianic nature."
2. "They, too, may meet the needs of today's believer as they did for their original writer. I say this because there is an attempt today to take away from the believer those promises and assurances found in the Word of God. Some have taught that the Messianic psalms refer only to Jesus Christ and it would therefore be blasphemous to take them for your own comfort and instruction. See Psalm 16 for an example of this. Psalm 16:10, *"For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption."* We know that this Psalm is Messianic. Should we discard the whole Psalm and its benefits to our soul because we now know of its Messianic character? Should we disregard the promises and assurance in verses 5-8, *"The LORD is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup: thou maintainest my lot. 6 The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage. 7 I will bless the LORD, who hath given me counsel: my reins also instruct me in the night seasons. 8 I have set the LORD always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved."* now that we know that the psalm is Messianic?"
3. Again, some Psalms are no doubt Christological and or Christ-centered. As a reminder after Christ's resurrection in Luke 24 He opened their understanding to the things which were written of Him. Luke 24:44-46, *"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.** 45 Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, 46 And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day."* The Psalms abound with glorious prophecies and writings of our Lord

Jesus Christ as they referred to His Deity, His life, His prayers, His reign, His death, His resurrection, His ascension, His 3 offices of Prophet, Priest and King and of His Lordship. 6 key Messianic Psalms are:

- a. Psalm 2 which speaks of His Rule and Judgment.
- b. Psalm 16 which speaks of His Resurrection.
- c. Psalm 22 which speaks of our blessed Lord's death.
- d. Psalm 24 which speaks of His ascension to King of Glory.
- e. Psalm 69 which speaks of His Humiliation and Suffering.
- f. Psalm 110 which speaks of His Kingship and Priesthood.

D. Special Features: (The following is copied verbatim from POSB)

1. *Psalms* is "The Great Book of Praise to God." As previously mentioned, the Hebrew title of the book means *praises*. It teaches how to praise God in every circumstance of life. Every psalm, in some way, offers praise to God, but other psalms are for the exclusive purpose of praising God. Each of the five books that comprise *Psalms* ends with a doxology; that is, a direct expression of praise (41:13; 72:18-19; 89:52; 106:48; 150:1-6).
2. *Psalms* is "The Great Book of Desperate Pleas to God." In many of the psalms, especially those of David, the author cries out to God in desperate need (3:1-8; 4:1-8; 5:1-12; 13:1-6; 22:1-31; 39:1-13; 40:1-17). These cries of distress are honest, blunt, and often unrestrained, teaching us that we can speak to the Lord freely and without fear. In times of trouble, we can—and should—turn to God.
3. *Psalms* is "The Great Book That Teaches Us to Trust—Take Refuge—in the Lord" (5:11-12; 7:1; 11:1-7; 16:1-5; 31:1-24; 36:7; 37:3-6). In every troubling situation of life, we can find shelter, safety, and security in God.
4. *Psalms* is "The Great Book That Reveals the Excruciatingly Painful Consequences of Sin" (31:9-12; 32:1-5; 38:1-22; 41:1-451:8). The broken heart and body of David—broken due to his sin—are seen in several of his psalms. His agony and anguish are displayed to remind us that sin carries a painful price.
5. *Psalms* is "The Great Book That Shows Us How to Approach God in Times of Agonizing Suffering" (22:1-31; 38:1-22). Throughout *Psalms*, we are not only exposed to David's suffering in the various circumstances of life, but also to the future suffering of Christ—in vivid prophetic detail.
6. *Psalms* is "The Great Book That Gives Us Hope in Life's Darkest

Hours” (16:9; 31:24; 30:5; 33:22; 38:15; 39:7).

7. *Psalms* is “The Great Book That Teaches Us How To Trust God When Facing Opposition and Enemies” (3:1-8; 5:8-12; 7:1-17; 9:1-20; 17:1-15; 18:1-50; 27:1-14; 35:1-28; 41:1-13).
8. *Psalms* is “The Great Book That Includes the Best-Loved Chapter of the Bible” (23:1-6). Throughout the generations, the Twenty-Third Psalm has been turned to for comfort more than any other portion of God’s Word.
9. *Psalms* is “The Great Book Most Frequently Quoted or Referred to by Jesus Christ” (Mt. 5:35; 7:23; 13:35; 21:16, 42; 23:37; 27:46; Lk. 2:49; 23:46; 24:44; Jn. 10:34).