



Title: Probing the Book of Psalms – Introduction (part 3)

I. The “Titled” Psalms

- A. The “Titled” Psalms – or Superscripts (above the texts) or the Subscripts (below the number). [116 Psalms contain a title] [77.3% of the Psalms include a divine heading]
- B. The title is part of the Masoretic Texts and therefore are inspired “headings.” The A.V. 1611 had them in the same size as the texts themselves – because they acknowledged the titles to be part of the text. Most modern-day Evangelicals and Fundamentalists do not consider the “titles” as inspired text. But we do.
- C. The “Title” or “Superscript” or “Subscript” or “Heading” tells us a variety of information:
 - 1) Human Authorship. (Review the previous lesson)
 - 2) Historical Information. (ex. 14 Psalms relate directly to David’s life – Ps. 3, 7, 18, 30, 34, 51, 52, 54, 56, 57, 59, 60, 63, 142). A background of David’s life can be studied in 1 Sam. 16-31; 2 Samuel; 1 Chron.).
 - 3) Poetic Titles – These are terms that indicate the nature of the poetry used by the psalmist.
 - a) Maschil – (13 Psalms) – meaning “understanding” or “teaching” - a skillful psalm and public instructions. (Ps. 32, 42, 44, 45, 52, 53, 54, 55, 74, 78, 88, 89, 142).
 - b) Michtam – (6 Psalms) – from the verb katham meaning “to cover” – psalms of private meditation while the mouth is covered or closed. (Ps. 16, 56-60).
 - c) Mizmor – (57 Psalms) – “A Psalm” sung with instrumental accompaniment. (Ps. 6-5; 8-9; 12-13, 15; 19-24; 29-31; 38-41; 47-51; 62-68; 73, 75-77, 79; 80, 82-85, 87-88; 92,98; 100-101, 108-110; 139; 141, 143).
 - d) Shiggaion – (1 Psalm, Ps. 7) also occurs in Hab. 3:1. Meaning “to cry aloud.”
 - e) Shir – (31 Psalms) – meaning song.
 - f) Tehillah – (1 Psalm) meaning “praise” (Ps. 145).
 - g) Tephillah – (5 Psalms) translated “prayer.” (Ps. 17, 86, 90, 102, 142).
 - 4) Musical or Instrumental Titles – (55 Psalms “to the chief musician” - choirmaster) – Some of the Levites was to sing and play instruments in the Temple (cf. 1 Chron. 15:16; Neh. 12:45-47).
 - a) Ajeleth Shahar – (1 time) – meaning “the hind of the morning” or “the day dawn.” – a great Messianic Psalm fulfilled by Christ in Matt. 27:46ff). (Ps. 22).
 - b) Alamoth – (1 time) meaning “relating to maidens” – a song for the sopranos. (Ps. 46).
 - c) Altaschith – (4 times) – meaning “destroy not.” (Ps. 57, 58, 59, 75). David pleads to God for his life and/or deliverance from his enemies.
 - d) Gittith – (3 times) meaning “the winepress” – a reference to the Feast of the Tabernacles (harvest time; public worship) (Ps. 8, 81, 84).
 - e) Jeduthun – (3 times) – a personal name of one of the chief musicians (1 Chron. 16:41-43). For a special choir. (Ps. 39, 62, 77)
 - f) Jonathelemrechokim – (1 time) – meaning “the dove of the distant terebinth trees.” (Ps. 56). [Jonath-elem-rehokim]
 - g) Mahalath – (1 time) – related to “sickness.” (Ps. 53)
 - h) Mahalath Leannoth – (1 time) – leannoth “looking down.” (Ps. 88).
 - i) Muthlabben – (1 time) – meaning “the death of a son” – a lamentation. (Ps. 9).
 - j) Neginoth – (7 times) meaning “smitings” – songs to be played on stringed instruments. (Ps. 4, 6, 54, 55, 61, 67, 76).
 - k) Nehiloth – (1 time) meaning “the great inheritance” – a song to be played to wind instruments. (Ps. 5).
 - l) Selah – (71 times) – meaning “to pause or to exalt or lift up.”
 - m) Sheminith – (2 times) meaning “the eighth” – an eight stringed instrument or a musical octave. (Ps. 6, 12).
 - n) Shoshannim – (2 times) – meaning “lilies.” (Psalms used for public worship) (Ps. 45, 69).

- o) Shoshannimeduth – (1 time) – meaning “upon the lillies of the testimony” – some reference to spring festivals. (Ps. 80).
- p) Shushaneduth – (1 time) – meaning “upon the lily of the testimony” – some reference to the Passover. Also, invading enemies are mentioned. (Ps. 60).

5) Liturgical or Worship Titles.

- a) Psalm 30 - A Psalm and Song at the dedication of the house of David
- b) Psalm 38 & 70 - A Psalm of David, to bring to remembrance.
- c) Psalm 60 - To the chief Musician upon Shushaneduth, Michtam of David, to teach; when he strove with Aramnaharaim and with Aramzobah, when Joab returned, and smote of Edom in the valley of salt twelve thousand.
- d) Psalm 92 - A Psalm or Song for the sabbath day.
- e) Psalm 100 - A Psalm of praise.
- f) Psalm 120 - A Song of degrees.

II. The “Untitled” Psalms – (34 Psalms) are untitled. [22.6% of the Psalms do not have a divine heading].

III. The Outline to the Book of Psalms:

BOOK 1	BOOK 2	BOOK 3	BOOK 4	BOOK 5
1 - 41	42-72	73-89	90 - 106	107 - 150
(41:13)	(72:18-19)	(89:52)	(106:48)	(150:6)