

Glorify God and Enjoy His Hymns Forever

This lecture can be watched on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MWqli2rUHFA>

INTRODUCTION TO POETRY AND THE PSALMS

- A. Man's chief end is to glorify God and _____ Him forever.
- B. The poetry of the Psalms is _____.
- C. "Introduction to Poetry" by Billy Collins.

HEBREW POETRY

- A. "Hebrew poetry is a type of literature that communicates with terse lines employing _____ and _____ in high frequency" (Mark Futato, *Interpreting the Psalms*, 24).
- B. The more you appreciate the *poetry* of the psalms, the more you will:

IMAGERY

- A. Images in Psalm 104:1-4:
 - 1. _____
 - 2. _____
 - 3. _____
 - 4. _____
 - 5. _____
 - 6. _____
 - 7. _____
 - 8. _____
- B. Do you have favorite images from the Psalms?

EXAMPLES OF THE REPETITION OF WORDS

What is the predominant repetition in Psalm 136?

What is the idea conveyed in Psalm 136?

What is the repetition in Psalm 37?

What is the repetition in Psalm 62? Why does the Apostle Paul quote Psalm 62 in Romans 2:5-6?

Psalm 119 repeats eight synonyms for God's Word in all 176 verses with four exceptions (vv.3, 37, 90, 122).

Law (תּוֹרָה [torah]) occurs 25x in Psalm 119 (vv.1, 18, 29, 34, 44, 51, 53, 55, 61, 70, 72, 77, 85, 92, 97, 109, 113, 126, 136, 142, 150, 153, 163, 165, 174).

Testimonies/stipulations (עֵדָה [edah]) occurs 23x in Psalm 119 (vv.2, 14, 22, 24, 31,36, 46, 59, 79, 88,95, 99, 111, 119, 125, 129,138, 144,146, 152, 157, 167, 168).

Precepts/regulation (פְּקֻדָּה [piqud]) occurs 21x in Psalm 119 (vv.4, 15, 27, 40, 45, 56, 63, 69, 78, 87, 93, 94, 100, 104, 110, 128, 134, 141, 159, 168, 173).

Statutes (חֹק [choq]) occurs 22x in Psalm 119 (vv.5, 8, 12, 16, 23, 26, 33, 48, 54, 64, 68, 71, 80, 83, 112, 117, 118, 124, 135, 145, 155, 171).

Commandments (מִצְוָה [mitsvah]) occurs 22x in Psalm 119 (vv.6, 10, 19, 21, 32, 35, 47, 48, 60, 66, 73, 86, 96, 98, 115, 127, 131, 143, 151, 166, 172, 176).

Judgments/ordinances (מִשְׁפָּט [mishpat]) occurs 23x in Psalm 119 (vv. 7, 13, 20, 30, 39, 43, 52, 62, 75, 84, 91, 102, 106, 108, 120, 121, 132, 137, 149, 156, 160, 164, 175).

Word (דְּבָרָה [dabar]) occurs 23x in Psalm 119 (vv.9, 16, 17, 25, 28, 42, 43 [word of truth], 49, 57, 65,74, 81, 89, 101, 105,107, 114, 130, 139, 147, 160, 161, 169).

Word/promise/saying (אִמְרָה [imrah]) occurs 19x in Psalm 119 (vv.11, 38, 41, 50, 58, 67, 76, 82, 103, 116, 123, 133, 140, 148, 154, 158, 162, 170, 172).

THE REPETITION OF POETIC LINES (a.k.a. stich/hemi-stich, cola/bi-colon, tri-colon)

A. Inclusio (a.k.a. circular structure; envelope structure, bookends) — **Psalm 1:1 and 2:12**; 8:1,9; 21:1,13 [“in your strength”]; 26:1,11; 58; 73:1,2,28 [“God is good”; “But as for me”]; 103:1,2,22 [“Bless the LORD, O my soul”]; 104:1,35 [“Bless the LORD, O my soul”]; 106:1,48 [“Hallelujah”]; 113:1,9 [“Hallelujah”]; 117:1,2 [“halēlû .et-

Yahweh”]; 118:1,29; 122:1,9; 135 [“Hallelujah”]; 137:1,9 [By the rivers...Against the Rock]; 145; 146-150 [“Hallelujah”]; see also Psalm 1:1,6; 29:1,2//11; Exodus 15:1,21; 1 Chron.16:8,34; Ecclesiastes 1:1//12:7; Ecclesiastes 1:2//12:8.

Psalm 1:1 begins: _____

Psalm 2:12 ends: _____

Psalm 8:1 begins: _____

Psalm 8:9 ends: _____

Psalm 137:1 begins: _____

Psalm 137:9 ends: _____

Psalm 146:1 begins: _____

Psalm 146:10 ends: _____

Psalm 150:6 ends: _____

B. English Bibles are formatted to show parallelism (repetition of lines) (see Psalm 1).

Perhaps the Hebrew penchant for repetition is based on the Law of Moses and that truth is established by the testimony of two or three witnesses. Prayer has a legal element as typified by the altar of incense which stood before the Ark of the Covenant. Parallelism is like a “seconding” in parliamentary procedure (James Kugel, *The Idea of Biblical Poetry: Parallelism and its History*, 51).

C. Even parts of the Aleppo Codex highlight the parallelism of poetry.

D. Repetition within lines leads to different types of parallelism. Commentators do not agree how to label parallelism within lines but sometimes refer to:

1. Synonymous parallelism (Psalm 24:1; 40:12; 42:1; 51:10; 58:5,6; 76:2; 77:12; 90:3; 91:13; 94:1; 103:10; 114:4; 143:5)
2. Antithetic parallelism (**Psalm 1:6**; 11:5; 20:8; 27:6, 7; **30:5**; 34:10; **37:9, 16,17, 21, 22**; 68:2-3; 75:10; 90:6; cf. Proverbs 10-15)
3. Synthetic/constructive parallelism (Psalm 6:6; 18:7-8; 77:17; 93:3)

The Parallelism and Repetition of Psalm 49

1 Hear this, all peoples;

2 Both low and high,

3 My mouth will speak **wisdom** (חִכְמוֹת),

4 I will incline my ear to a proverb;

5 Why should I **fear** in days of adversity,

6 Even those who trust in their **wealth**

7 No man can by any means **redeem**
his brother

8 For the **redemption** of his soul is costly,

9 That he should live on **eternally**,

10 For he sees that even **wise** The stupid and the
men **die**; senseless alike **perish**

11 Their inner thought is that And their dwelling
their houses are **forever** places to **all**
generations;

12 But **man in his pomp** will not
endure;

13 This is the way of those who are
foolish,

14 As sheep they are **Death** shall be their
appointed for **Sheol**; shepherd;

And their form shall be for **Sheol** to
consume

15 But God will **redeem** my soul from
the power of **Sheol**,

16 Do not be **afraid** when a man becomes rich,

17 For when he **dies** ~~he will carry [receive]~~
~~nothing away~~;

18 Though while he lives he congratulates
himself—

19 He shall go to the **generation** of his fathers;

20 **Man in his pomp**, yet without **understanding**,

Give ear, all inhabitants of the world,

Rich and poor together.

And the meditation of my heart will be **understanding**.

I will express my riddle on the harp.

When the iniquity of my foes surrounds me,

And boast in the abundance of their riches?

Or give to God a ransom for him—

And he should cease trying **forever**—

That he should not undergo decay.

And leave their **wealth** to others.

They have called their lands after their own
names.

He **is like the beasts (בְּהֵמָה) that perish.**

And of those after them who approve their words.
Selah.

And the upright shall rule over them in the
morning,

So that they have no habitation.

For ~~He will receive me~~. Selah.

When the glory of his house is increased;

His glory will not descend after him.

And though men praise you when you do well for
yourself—

They will never see the light (cf. Psalm 17:15).

Is like the beasts (בְּהֵמָה) that perish.

The Parallelism and Repetition of Psalm 51

Prayer for forgiveness

1 Be gracious to me, O God, according to Your lovingkindness;

2 Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity

According to the greatness of Your compassion blot out my transgressions.

And cleanse me from my sin.

Confession of sin

3 For I know my transgressions,

4 Against You, You only, I have sinned

So that You are justified when You speak

5 Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity,

6 Behold, You desire truth in the innermost being,

And my sin is ever before me.

And done what is evil in Your sight,

And blameless when You judge.

And in sin my mother conceived me.

And in the hidden part You will make me know wisdom.

Prayer for cleansing & restoration

7 Purify me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;

8 Make me to hear joy and gladness,

9 Hide Your face from my sins

10 Create in me a clean heart, O God,

11 Do not cast me away from Your presence

12 Restore to me the joy of Your salvation

Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

Let the bones which You have broken rejoice.

And blot out all my iniquities.

And renew a steadfast spirit within me.

And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.

And sustain me with a willing spirit.

Vow that praise will be public when God hears and answers

13 Then I will teach transgressors Your ways,

14 Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, the God of my salvation;

15 O Lord, open my lips,

16 For You do not delight in sacrifice, otherwise I would give it;

17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit;

And sinners will be converted to You.

Then my tongue will joyfully sing of Your righteousness.

That my mouth may declare Your praise.

You are not pleased with burnt offering.

A broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise.

Prayer for Zion's restoration

18 By Your favor do good to Zion;

19 Then You will delight in righteous sacrifices,

In burnt offering and whole burnt offering;

Build the walls of Jerusalem.

Then young bulls will be offered on Your altar.

Part 2 of this lecture can be found at:

<http://www.sermonaudio.com/sermoninfo.asp?SID=32314029501>