

Calendar

Young peoples' meeting tonight after classes at the home of Brett and Letitia Zugnoni.

An Introduction to the Psalms

Law, Prophets, Writings (Psalms): Luke 24:44

Heb. *tehillim*: "Praises," so designated because it was the hymn book for the religious services of the second temple.



Greek: Psalms (from *psallo*, "to play an instrument").

A Collection of Israel's sacred songs; "the in-

spired response of the human heart to God's revelation of Himself in law, history and prophecy."

Date & authorship

Generally, from Moses (450) to Ezra (450), a 1,000 year span. 75, or about half of the psalms estimated to be written by David. 12 by Asaph (a priest who headed the service of music). 10 by the sons of Korah, a guild of singers and composers. 2 by Solomon. 1 each by Moses, Heman, Ethan. The rest (50) are anonymous.

Classes of Psalms:

1. A calling upon God in the direct address of petition or praise.
2. A communion of the soul with God in which its emotions and experiences are expressed.
3. A celebration of the works of God in nature and in history.
4. A consideration of the perplexing problems of life in relation to divine government in the world.

The Psalms commences with God blessing man (1) and ends with man blessing God (150). In between, every type and degree of human experience is found. "Man's heart is the harp from which the divine hand produces the richest music."

Order & divisions

The present arrangement of the Psalms is the same as in the first century (Acts 3:33). They are not in chronological order, but each

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Service Times

Sunday Morning Assembly
9:30 AM

Sunday Evening: 5:00 PM
Wednesday Bible Study
7:30 PM

Classes for all ages.

Private classes arranged at your convenience.

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psalm is in its proper place and related to the whole. There are five natural divisions, with doxologies at the end of each section (41:13; 72:18, 19; 89:52; 106:48; 150).

Titles appended to the psalms

Psalm (a song with musical accompaniment). Song (vocal piece). Prayer. Praise. Maskil (instruction to the wise; "word to the wise"). Michtam (probably "memorable maxims"). A song of ascents (songs sung by pilgrims on their way to the feasts).

Superscripts

Selah (71x) probably means "pause"—to call special attention to what follows and what precedes. It is directed more to the hearers than the singers. Hallelujah means "praise the Lord" (Jah = Yahweh).

Hebrew poetry

English poetry frequently uses a recurrence of sound (rhyme). Hebrew poetry is different in that it uses a recurrence of thought and rhythm, known as "parallelism." The earliest example is Gen. 4:23-24. The Simplest form of parallelism is a couplet, but often is expanded into a triplet or quatrain. Some understanding of parallelism is important to understanding the structure of the psalms.

Types of parallelism

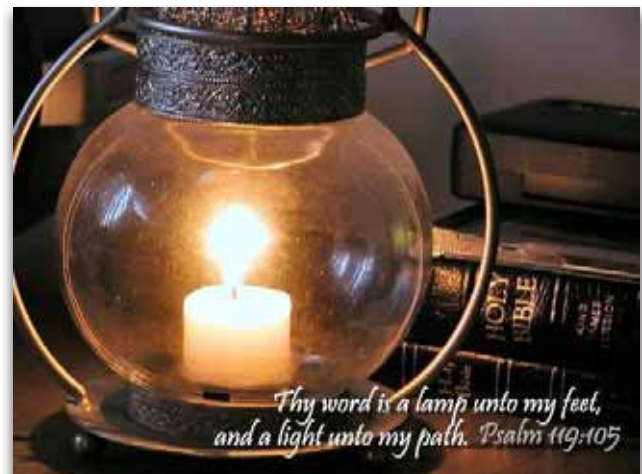
- *Synonymous* parallelism—same fundamental thought is repeated in different words in the second line of a couplet (e.g., 2:3-4; 114:1).
- *Antithetic* parallelism—thought in the first line of a couplet is corroborated or elucidated by the affirmation of its opposite in the second line (e.g., 1:6).
- *Synthetic* parallelism—two lines of a couplet stand in the relation of cause and consequence or some other constructional relationship. (:4).
- Some forms are *alphabetic acrostics* (e.g., Psalm 119). Each verse and stanza begins with a letter of the Hebrew alphabet. (E.g., A. . . aaaaaaaaa [8 stanzas]).
- Other psalms are *mini-dramas*. Psalm 2 is a good example.

Interpretation

Types of Psalms

- Historical Aspect (e.g., Psalm 1 = remnant; Psalm 3 = David fleeing from Absalom, possibly 32, 51 = David's innermost thoughts).
- Prophetic/Typical Aspect (Psalm 2 = Messianic; 22 = Christ on the cross)
- Personal Application. Not everything automatically applies to us. But we can learn lessons from nearly all the psalms.

DP



“THE PROPHETS AND THE WRITERS OF THE PSALMS WERE CLEAR THAT GOD WAS CONTINUING TO WORK IN THE UNIVERSE AND IN ALL HISTORY. THEY DECLARED THAT HE HAD CREATED THE UNIVERSE.”

KENNETH SCOTT LATOURETTE