



Survey of the Psalms

Welcome to the Fall 2020 Women's Bible Study!


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The Psalms

English title comes from the Greek:
PSALMOI = songs sung to the accompaniment of a stringed instrument; or songs of praise.

Hebrew title = TEHILLIM = praises

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The works of the Lord
ARE GREAT, STUDIED BY ALL
WHO HAVE PLEASURE IN THEM.
PSALM 111:2

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Fall 2020

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Authors of the Psalms:

- **David** = 73 Psalms, identified in the NT as the author of 3 more.
- **Asaph** = 12 psalms, mostly post-exilic (after Babylon captivity); was one of the heads of 3 families of Levitical singers
- **The sons of Korah** = Levitical singers, 11 psalms: Ps 42, 44-49, 84-85, 87-88
- **Solomon** = Psalm 72, 127
- **Ethan (possibly = Jeduthan)** = a wise man and Levitical singer, Ps 89
- **Heman** = singer, wise man in Solomon's court, co-wrote Ps 88
- **Moses** = wrote Psalm 90
- **Anonymous** = 46-50 Psalms, some probably by David

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Where Psalms fits in the Bible:

Christian Bible: OT has 4 sections:

- **Law:** Genesis – Deuteronomy [The Pentateuch]
- **History:** Joshua – Esther
- **Poetry:** Job – Song of Solomon; including **Psalms**
- **Prophets:** Isaiah – Malachi

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Jesus after His resurrection on the Road to Emmaus:

“Then beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them ***the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures.***”
Luke 24:27

“And He said to them, ‘These are My words which I spoke to you while I was with you, that all ***things which are written about Me in*** the Law of Moses and the Prophets and ***the Psalms*** must be fulfilled.’”
Luke 24:44

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Where Psalms fits in the Bible:

Hebrew Bible: has 3 sections:

- **Torah:** Genesis – Deuteronomy; “The Law of Moses”
- **Prophets:** Early prophets = Josh – II Kings
Later Prophets = Isaiah - Malachi
- **Writings:** Psalms, Prov, Job, Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Ezra-Nehemiah, Chronicles

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II Samuel 23:1

“...David the son of Jesse declares, The man who was raised on high declares, ***The anointed*** of the God of Jacob, ***and the sweet psalmist of Israel....***”

Could be translated:

“The oracle of David, son of Jesse and the oracle of the man raised up ***concerning the Messiah*** [Anointed One] of the God of Jacob, and ***the Delightful One of the songs of Israel.***”

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Psalm 33:1-3 :

- **Vs. 1** “**Sing** for joy”
- **Vs. 2** “Give thanks to the LORD **with the lyre; sing** praises...**with a harp of 10 strings.**”
- **Vs. 3** “**Sing** to Him a new song; **play skillfully...**”

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Types / Themes of Psalms:

- Thanksgiving Psalms = for God’s works, salvation, provision
- Historical Psalms = God’s work in the nation of Israel
- Praise / Worship Psalms = used in worship (ex. Hallel Psalms, Psalms of Ascent)
- Nature Psalms = wonder at God’s creation, Ps 19
- Psalms of Assurance = God’s presence in difficulty

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Types / Themes of Psalms:

- Wisdom Psalms = instructions for right living; ex. Ps 1
- Lamentation Psalms = suffering in life, enemies from without
- Penitential Psalms = sorrow for sin, the “enemy” within
- Kingship Psalms = the reign of Messiah
- Psalms about the Word of God = praise God’s Word; Ps 119

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Structure of Psalms:

- Book One: Psalms 1-41
- Book Two: Psalms 42-72
- Book Three: Psalms 73-89
- Book Four: Psalms 90-106
- Book Five: Psalms 107-150

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Parallelism in the Psalms:

- **Synonymous** = consecutive lines present the same idea
 “Where can I go from Thy Spirit?
 Or where can I flee from Thy presence?” Ps 139:7
- **Antithetic** = consecutive lines present a contrasting or opposite idea.
 “For the LORD knows the way of the righteous;
 But the way of the wicked will perish.” Ps 1:6

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The value of studying Psalms:

1. The Psalms teach us about prayer.

“We are in danger of losing the Psalter in our churches...so it is no accident that many people in our congregations *do not know how to pray.*”

2. The Psalms teach us how to praise God.

3. The Psalms encourage the believer with the hope of God’s coming Kingdom.

“The study of the Psalms transforms our perspective on ourselves and on the world.”

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Parallelism in the Psalms:

- **Synonymous** = consecutive lines present the same idea
- **Antithetic** = consecutive lines present a contrasting or opposite idea.
- **Synthetic or Developmental** = consecutive lines present complementary ideas providing a fuller idea than either line alone.

“He will not let your foot slip;
 He who watches over you will not slumber.” Ps 121:3

“With Thy counsel Thou wilt guide me,
 And afterward receive me to glory.” Ps 73:24

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The value of studying Psalms:

4. The Psalms reflect the faith experience of God’s people as a community, linking Old and New Testament believers.

5. The Psalms addresses the individual believer’s walk with God.

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