

Psalms

Prayer & Worship



The Books of Wisdom

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1 – 5 The Pentateuch, Law or Torah

6 – 17 The Historical Books

18. Job Suffering Well

19. Psalms Prayer & Worship

20. Proverbs

21. Ecclesiastes

22. Song of Songs

Psalms Prayer & Worship

Psalms Prayer & Worship

- The Book of **Psalms** was Israel's national hymnbook.
- It is the ultimate book of Hebrew poetry.
- We might call it the “**heart of the Bible**”.
- With 150 psalms or “**chapters**” it is **the Bible's longest book**.

Psalms Prayer & Worship

- Many say that a biblical faith is not a religion, but a relationship with God.
- **Psalms** shows us that relationship up close.

Psalms Prayer & Worship

- We have the cries of the psalmists' hearts in the midst of their varied circumstances.
- In **Psalms**, we see true prayer, true praise and true worship, all inspired by the Holy Spirit.
- We get the whole spectrum of experience and emotion.

Psalms Prayer & Worship

- The name **David** is attached to **73** of the **150 Psalms**.
- **50** of the Psalms are **anonymous**.
- Other authors include **Asaph (12)**, **Solomon (2)**, **Moses (1)** and others.

Psalms Prayer & Worship

- The book of **Psalms** is divided into **five parts** or “**books**” each of which ends with a **blessing**.
- The separate books were added over several generations.
- After the Jews were released from captivity, they gave the book its final form.

Psalms Prayer & Worship

- Each psalm is an individual work or composition.
- Yet, there is an overall shape to the book, leading from lament, through wisdom, to praise.
- It might be best to study them all in order, but they can also be looked at separately, as separate prayers.

Psalms Prayer & Worship

- Psalm 117 is the shortest and middle chapter in the Bible.
- Psalm 118:8 is the middle verse.
- Psalm 119 is the longest chapter.
- Psalms is the Old Testament book most quoted in the New Testament.
- Psalm 110 is the most quoted Psalm and 110:1, the most quoted verse.

Psalms Prayer & Worship

- The Hebrew name of Jesus, *Yeshuah*, is found **78 times** in the Old Testament, and **45 of those times** are in the **Psalms**.
- It is usually translated “salvation”.
- The **Psalms** contain some of the **clearest prophecies of Christ** in all of Scripture.

Psalms Prayer & Worship

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- “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”

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- Jesus quoted the Psalms twice from the cross. Compare the following verses:
- Matthew 27:46 with Psalm 22:1a
“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”
- Luke 23:46 with Psalm 31:5a
“Into your hand I commit my spirit”

Some Notes on Hebrew Poetry

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- It is **similar** to ours in at least two ways:
 1. It uses plenty of rich, figurative language.
 2. It sometimes repeats words or ideas for emphasis.

Some Notes on Hebrew Poetry

Most emphatically the Psalms must be read as poems; as lyrics, with all the licences and all the formalities, the hyperboles, the emotional rather than the logical connections, which are proper to lyric poetry.

– C. S. Lewis,
in Meditations on the Psalms



Some Notes on Hebrew Poetry

- Hebrew Poetry is **less about rhyming and rhythm** of words than ours is.
- It is **more about** the relationships between **ideas or thoughts** expressed from line to line.

Some Notes on Hebrew Poetry

- These relationships between lines are called **parallelism**.
- We will observe various types of **parallelism** when we read an actual Psalm.

Psalm 1 Two Roads, Two Destinations

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- Parallelism: There will not be a test!
- 1:1 Focusing >
- 1:3 Consequentiality →
- 1:5 Synonymity =
- 1:6 Complementarity ()

(Categories by Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Poetry*. New York, Basic Books, 2011.)

Psalm 16 A Psalm of the Resurrection

Psalm 16 A Psalm of the Resurrection

- Peter used **Psalm 16:8-11** when speaking to the crowd on the Day of Pentecost in **Acts 2**.
- It was not literally true of David who wrote it.
- It pointed ahead to Christ rising from the dead.

Psalm 19 From the Heavens to the Heart

I take this to be the greatest poem in the Psalter and one of the greatest lyrics in the world.

– C. S. Lewis in
Reflections on the Psalms



Psalm 22 The Psalm of the Cross

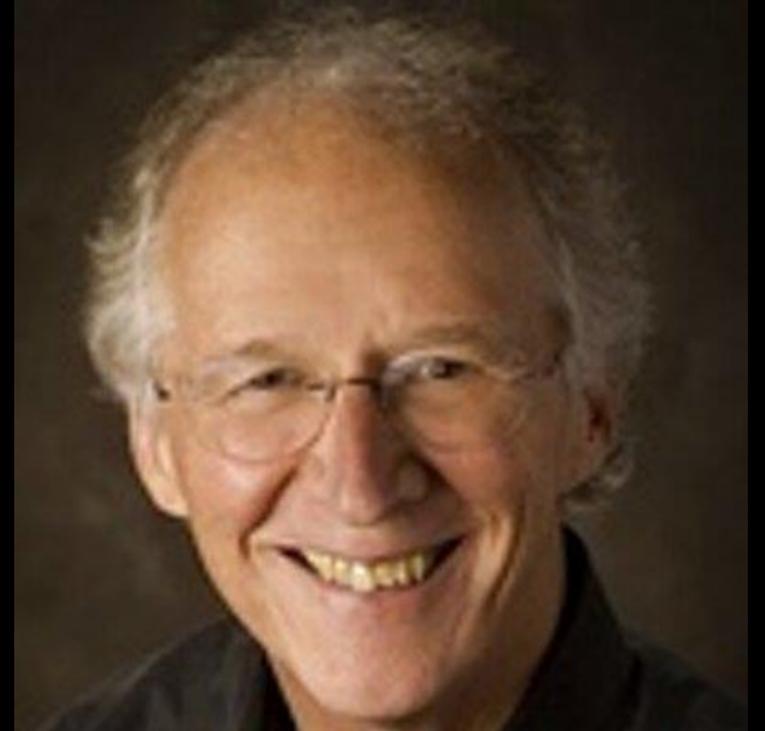
- As we read, imagine Jesus who quoted this psalm while being crucified.
- More than the only the first verse applies to him.

Psalm 67 A Missionary Psalm

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Missions is not the ultimate goal of the church. Worship is. Missions exists because worship doesn't. Worship is ultimate, not missions, because God is ultimate, not man.

*– John Piper, in
Let the Nations Be Glad*



Psalm 110 The Most Quoted Psalm

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- Notice the combination of a priest who also rules.
- Kings and priests were separate families in ancient Israel.
- In Jesus Christ the two are joined into one.

Psalm 110 The Most Quoted Psalm

- Christ also used **v.1** to point to his own deity. See his conversation with the Pharisees in **Matthew 22:41-45**.

Psalm 117 The Shortest Psalm

- This is what God once said when he didn't have much to say.

Psalm 118:8 The Middle Verse of the Bible

- We cannot do it on our own.
- We truly need Jesus.

Psalm 134 A Call to Worship

- There is a lot of blessing in this little Psalm.

Psalm 150 The Final Hallelujah

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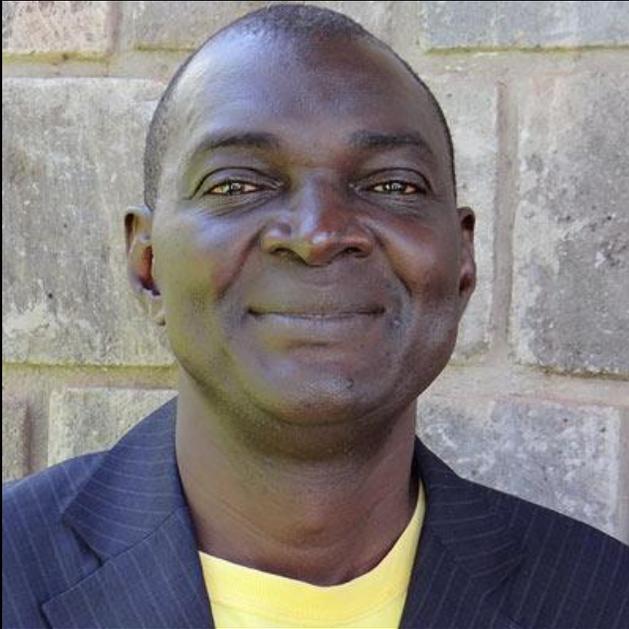
God apparently loves music ... The psalmist commanded that God be praised with the trumpet, harp, lyre, tambourine and cymbals ... Music too is a manifestation of God.

– Norman Geisler

Psalms

Conclusions

Psalms Conclusions



*While most of the Bible speaks to us about God and God's ways, the psalms help us to speak to God ... they draw us near to God and help us to cry out to him in our times of need and to praise him as he deserves.
Praise the Lord!*

*– Nupanga Weanzana,
Bangui Evangelical School of Theology,
Central African Republic*

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- They give us words with which we can praise the Lord.
- They remind us of God's priorities for us, like wisdom, the Scriptures, and his love for the nations.
- Best of all, they repeatedly remind us of Jesus Christ – even going so far as to speak of his death and resurrection.

Psalms Conclusions

- Psalm 150:6

Let everything that has breath praise the LORD!

Praise the LORD!