

Introducing the Psalms

How can I understand the Psalms?



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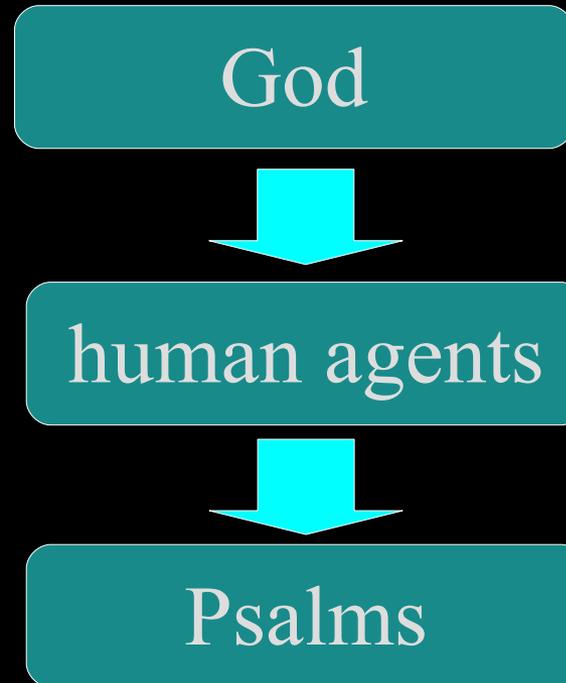
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A. Origin in God

God's Writing

All Scripture is breathed out by God.

-- 2 Tim. 3:16



God's Writing through Moses

When Moses had finished writing the words of this law in a book to the very end, Moses commanded the Levites who carried the ark of the covenant of the LORD, "Take this Book of the Law and put it by the side of the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, that it may be there for a witness against you.

-- Deut. 31:24-26

God's Writing a Song

Now therefore write this song [Deut. 32:1-43] and teach it to the people of Israel. Put it in their mouths, that this song may be a witness for me against the people of Israel. -- Deut. 31:19

God's Wrote a Song through David

And David spoke to the LORD the words of this song on the day when the LORD delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul. He said, ...

-- 2 Sam. 22:1-2a

= Psalm 18

B. Use of Songs

Deliverance

And David spoke to the LORD the words of this song on the day when the LORD delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul. He said, ...

-- 2 Sam. 22:1-2a

praise for deliverance

Praise and Worship

Then on that day David first appointed that thanksgiving be sung to the LORD by Asaph and his brothers.

Oh give thanks to the LORD;
call upon his name;
make known his deeds
among the peoples.

-- 1 Chron. 16:7

= Ps. 105:1

Petition

Say also:

"Save us, O God of our salvation,
and gather and deliver us
from among the nations,
that we may give thanks
to your holy name.

-- 1 Chron. 16:35

= Ps. 106:47

More Kinds (Genre)

- ◆ Groaning ("lament")
- ◆ Confidence
- ◆ Confession of sin
- ◆ Remembrance
- ◆ Wisdom
- ◆ Zion
- ◆ Royal (the king)
- ◆ Ascent

Corporate
and
Individual

C. Authors of Psalms

Human Authors

- ◆ David (Ps. 18)
- ◆ Asaph (Pss. 73-83)
- ◆ Sons of Korah (Pss. 84-85, 87-88)
- ◆ Moses (Ps. 90)
- ◆ Solomon (Ps. 127)
- ◆ In exile (Ps. 137)

over 1000 years

D. Structure

Five "Books"

The prayers of David, the son of Jesse, are ended.

BOOK THREE

-- Ps. 72:20

Division of Five "Books"

1-41

42-72

73-89

90-106

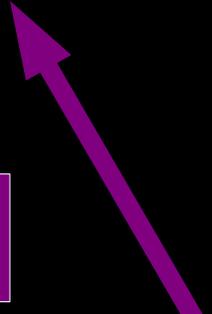
107-150

David

Levite

mostly praise

songs of ascent



E. Poetry

Psalm 2:1

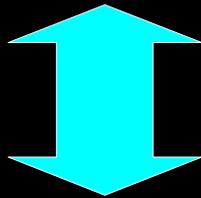
L: Why do the nations **rage**

C: and the peoples **plot in vain?**

line 1:

thought

a



line 2:

2: rhyming thought

A

"bicolon"

Psalm 2

L: Why do the nations rage

C: and the peoples plot in vain?

L: The kings of the earth set themselves,

b

C: and the rulers take counsel together,

B

L: against the LORD

c

C: and against his anointed,

C

saying,

L: "Let us burst their bonds apart
C: and cast away their cords from us."

L: He who sits in the heavens laughs;
C: the LORD holds them in derision.

L: Then he will speak to them in his wrath,
C: and terrify them in his fury,
saying,

L: "As for me, I have set my King on Zion,
C: my holy hill."

L: I will tell of the decree:

C: The LORD said to me, "You are my Son;

L: Today I have begotten you.

L: Ask of me, and I will make the nations
your heritage,

C: and the ends of the earth your possession.

L: You shall break them with a rod of iron

C: and dash them to pieces
like a potter's vessel."

L: Now therefore, O kings, be wise;
C: be warned, O rulers of the earth.

L: Serve the LORD with fear,
C: and rejoice with trembling.

L: Kiss the Son,
 lest he be angry, and you perish in the way,
C: for his wrath is quickly kindled.

A: Blessed are all who take refuge in him.

Psalm 1

L: Blessed is the man

C: who walks not in the counsel of the wicked,

L: nor stands in the way of sinners,

C: nor sits in the seat of scoffers,

L: but his delight is in the law of the LORD,

C: and on his law he meditates day and night.

L: He is like a tree planted by streams of water
C: that yields its fruit in its season,
L: and its leaf does not wither.
C: In all that he does, he prospers.

L: The wicked are not so,
C: but are like chaff that the wind drives away.

L: Therefore the wicked will not stand
in the judgment,

C: nor sinners in the congregation
of the righteous;

L: for the LORD knows the way
of the righteous,

C: but the way of the wicked will perish.

F. Special Psalms

Special Psalms

- ◆ Psalm 1: wisdom
- ◆ Psalm 2: The King
- ◆ Psalm 150: Praise
- ◆ Psalm 119: God's word
- ◆ Psalm 110: The Messiah
- ◆ Psalm 23: God's promise