

# Note

## Psalms – Part 1 of 1

<p><b>Psalms</b></p> <p>Written by David, Asaph(the family), Korah, Solomom, Moses, Ethan...</p> <p>About 1500 BC ~500 BC</p>	<p><b>Book one (Psa 1-41)</b></p>	<p>Focuses on God's ability to deliver those who fear Him.</p> <p><i>We see Lord beside us during the times of trouble</i></p>
	<p><b>Book two (Psa 42-72)</b></p>	<p>Focuses on God as the mighty Judge and King.</p> <p><i>We see the lord before us to execute justice on his enemies.</i></p>
	<p><b>Book three (Psa 73-89)</b></p>	<p>Focuses on God's relationship with the whole nation of Israel.</p> <p><i>We see the Lord around us, remaining faithful to his people through the generations.</i></p>
	<p><b>Book four (Psa 90-106)</b></p>	<p>Directs our eyes to the lord who rules over all the earth.</p> <p><i>Shows the lord above us, the king and righteous God who deserves our worship and Praise.</i></p>
	<p><b>Book five (Psa 107-150)</b></p>	<p>We are called to thank him. He's the savior, deliverer, and God of all.</p> <p><i>We see the lord among us, in His temple with his people</i></p>

# Summary

## **Psalms - Part 1 of 1.....3**

The book of Psalms is a collection of 150 poems, written over a span of 1000 years. The Hebrew title of this book means songs of praise. King David wrote about half of all the Psalms.

Psalms express the spectrum of emotions of the palmists to God and about God. The writers who had a very personal relationship with God led us to worship God.

The Psalms are divided into 5 books, each ending with a praise of God. Psalm's poetic structure is based on synonymous and antithesis parallelism to emphasize the same point.

Psalm 1 serves as an introduction of taking delight in God's word and meditates on it day and night. Psalm 2 points to the fulfilment of God's covenant in the coming of David's descendent, Jesus Christ. Psalm 22 offers clear foretelling of the suffering of Jesus Christ, our wonderful Saviour.

The book of Psalms reveals God's person, power and plan to redeem and restore us when we put our trust in Him.

# Transcript

## Psalms – Part 1 of 1

Today we look at the Psalms. It's by far the most loved and the most read book in the Bible. It's universally loved. Whatever culture you come from, whatever age you are, you can connect with the Psalms. It's very human. All our experiences, our struggles, our joys are all expressed in the Psalms by the writers of the Psalms.

The writers of the Psalms pour out their hearts to God. It's very personal. They literally talked to God, they complained to God, they begged God, they told God their fears and they expressed their joys. Basically, the writers had a very personal relationship with God. That's why when we come to the Psalms, it's refreshing for most of us because the rest of the Bible is a little bit religious to us. We are afraid to get near. It's like Leviticus -when you read it, how does this connect to me? A lot of the Bible, Kings and Judges, this is for Israelites. But then here, you and I can connect. I can understand all these things. So here we have a book that is just human in that sense, rather than far away from us. Martin Luther said in the Psalms, "we look into the heart of every saint". It's so true, because the Psalms are about humans like us, struggling with life. Calvin said something even better. He says, "we in the Psalms, we look into a mirror, and we see our own heart." So you know the Psalms are something we don't just read. But we use the Psalms. A lot of us use it because it's something that we can connect with immediately, as opposed to most of the Old Testament, which most Christians do not read, or hardly read. Because if you see the Old Testament, there were types, Jewish types, Israelite types of some truth in the New Testament, and unless you understand the connection, they are alien to you. Example, the tabernacle-why was it like that, the temple-why was it like that, why all those ways of doing things -they were types of something that happened in the New Testament. But unless you can connect them, they are alien to you, they are strange to you. But not the Psalms! Straightaway you can connect. With young believers they just go straight into the Psalms and read it but for the rest of the Old Testament they read it, but with an attitude of no choice but to read it.

Basically, what does Psalm mean? Psalm actually is the Greek word for a stringed instrument like a guitar or ukulele, you pluck it. The Israelite version of the Psalms has nothing to do with an instrument. It is Tehillim. Tehillim simply means songs of praise. That's what it is. It is really worship, praising God. And the Jews use this as their songs of praise. That's why it's placed centrally in the Bible. Worship is central to our relationship to God. God loves us and enjoys how we worship Him. We praise Him. That's why it's in the center of the Bible, and one of the longest books of the Bible: 150 chapters in terms of chapters, it is the longest book in the Bible, because worship should be the biggest part of our life. Whether we eat or drink, whatsoever we do, do all to the glory of God, to the praise of God.

Interestingly, it's placed after Job and that makes sense. Because life is full of suffering in Job. And yet if you suffer without understanding that in suffering God has a plan for us, and we can still worship God in our suffering, you will be a very depressed believer. But if you are suffering and you're thinking, O.K. God, I know that all things work together for good to them that love God-praise God for that.

So that's why it's interconnected, two major books. One is the struggles of life which we will all go through, rich or poor, young or old, newly married or long married. And yet, even in the midst of all that, praise God. So you see the beauty of the Bible, even the position of things are so wonderful.

Who wrote the Psalms? A lot of writers, over a span of 1000 years, I know no other book that took 1000 years to write. Some of the earliest ones were written by Moses. Time of Moses 500 some in 1500 B.C., some in the time of the exile 500 B.C. so it's like 1000 years span. But the largest number were written by David about 1000 B.C.

David wrote about half of all the Psalms. The rest are various writers, some are anonymous. In every Psalm you read in your Bible, there's often an introduction, a superscription. Most of it looks strange to us, like the Psalm on Neginoth or Maschil. We're not even sure what these words mean but largely, I believe they mean musical instructions, because the Psalms were sung in the tabernacle, in the temple. When you sing, the music leader needs to know how to sing the song. A lot of the superscription was for the choir master of the worship in the temple. Some of the superscriptions are the name of the writer, sometimes an event like David when he fell into sin with Bathsheba or the dedication of the temple. So, it does give you

some header for some of the Psalms. Those are called superscriptions like the header. When we look at the Psalms, we must understand it's poetry. It's Hebrew poetry.

Now in English poetry, it is basically rhymes. I remember as a little boy, we learned nursery rhymes-Jack and Jill went up the hill. Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall, Humpty Dumpty had a great fall. They rhyme the sounds. But in rhyme, the minute you translate it's nonsense, it doesn't rhyme anymore. It's gone.

God is wise, he didn't use rhyme. He used poetry with a rhythm, but it was not by sound, it was by parallelism. So, the large part of Psalms are poetry, and they are in parallel. Two sentences that speak of the same thing, emphasize the same point, but the second highlights and emphasizes the first. Sometimes they are what we call synonymous. Let me give an example. You can look through and you see they're almost all parallelisms. Psalms 27:1 "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?" The second line, "the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?" - sounds almost the same. It's synonymous but it emphasizes the point. So, it's like two points, more or less the same, saying the same thing but putting bold on it.

Another one is antithesis, entirely opposite, but they also emphasize the same point. Let's see this one "In the daytime also he led them with a cloud, and all the night with a light of fire." Can you see that? One was day, one was night, but both speak of God leading them. That's antithesis, opposite but still the same point, it's parallel.

Another one is amplification method "let my mouth be filled with thy praise" second line "and with thy honour all the day". It's not exactly the same, one is praise, one is honour, but it's still the same point. It amplifies that point. It's not the same, but it amplifies the fact that we should be praising God and lifting him up honouring him all the time.

So when you read poetry, please read it aloud. It makes a lot more sense. And sometimes I prefer just to listen to it, like this morning, I listened to like, two and a half hours of Psalms just in read to me. You don't analyse poetry too much, you lose the beauty of it. It's like a beautiful masterpiece, the Mona Lisa, you cut up the pieces and try to analyse, it won't be the same again.

That's what the beautiful book is all about. Seeing the whole thing as beautiful. So, listen to the Psalms, it was always read or it was sung. Sometimes, it would even be shouted, but never silent. That's not how you read Psalms. That's not how you read poetry; it's expression.

Again, we have dissected the Psalms until it becomes a study subject, just like the rest of the Bible. Let me give you a little hint when you see the word 'I' in the Psalms rather than 'we' - that Psalm can be used very personally. 'We' was more congregational -national repentance, national rejoicing. This is not strict and fast, but it helps you a little bit.

I hope this helps you to understand the poetry of the Psalms.

Most churches of the past and many traditional churches today, still read the Psalms systematically through- Catholic Church, Anglican Church, Lutheran Church, a lot of traditional Presbyterian churches, Eastern Orthodox Church. In fact, in the early church, a Bishop could not even be ordained unless he could memorize the entire Psalms. That's a minimum requirement -entire 150 Psalms.

Today in monasteries, you still hear them chanting the Psalms all day. Finish entire 150 Psalms a day. In fact, the Catholic Church before Vatican II, like 1865 something like that, Psalms was chanted. I've been to churches in Scotland for example, where they don't sing hymns at all. They sing only the Psalms. They have a book, I think it's called Psalter, if I'm not mistaken, and they just sing the Psalms out, kind of not very melodious tunes. In English it's kind of not so natural, I think in Hebrew it was very natural. So that is the way churches use Psalms today, hardly many churches barely even read a Psalm at all. People just pick bits and pieces of verses they like from the Psalms, but it's so beautiful when you read it aloud, when you hear it well read.

Now, what's the structure of this book of 150 Psalms? Is there a structure or just a mishmash of things? No, no, no, technically there are five books in this one book. And how do you know one book before the next book? They end with Amen. It's almost like the editor of the Psalms added the word "Amen" at the end of the Psalms.

If you go to a concordance, you'll find only four Amen in the whole Psalms and they are at the end of Section one, Section two, Section three, and Section four. Section five ends with five Psalms.

Section Five, the last section of the Psalms, ends with 5 Psalms and these 5 Psalms, Psalms 146 to 150 are very unique. They all begin with, Praise Ye the Lord and end with Praise Ye the Lord. 5 Psalms are like that. Praise Ye the Lord is just the word for hallelujah. Hallelujah is the Hebrew way of saying Praise the Lord, praise Yaweh. Hallelujah. The last 5 Psalms are, Hallelujah.... Hallelujah. It's basically a book of praises. You see the number 5, five sections, and the ending ends up with 5 Psalms that say, Praise Ye the Lord. Hallelujah. Hallelujah, hallelujah 10 times in these 5 Psalms.

So it's basically a song, a book of praising God. But anyway, not critical you see, just enjoy the Psalms along the way. I don't need to explain the Psalms, most of you have read it through. I don't need to encourage you to read through the Psalms, or listen to it because most of you, that's the only book you go to in the Old Testament anyway. The rest I have to explain a lot to you. This one doesn't need much explanation.

But I want you to just look at Psalm 1 and Psalm 2. To me, Psalm 1 and Psalm 2 is the introduction to the entire book, the purpose of this book.

Let me read Psalm 1 "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night."

That's the theme of the beautiful book-delighting in God's word, not dutiful. To some, it's punishing, it's a duty, it's a discipline. No, it's a delight. The whole idea of these Psalms is for us to delight in the Word of God. Which is something new to most modern Christians. Study, Bible study, Sunday school-all the words that are quite different from delight.

Can I read it to you again? You know what's the blessed man? The one who delights in the law of the Lord and in His law does he meditate day and night, enjoying it. Not 10 minutes quiet time a day, one verse devotional, and read other people's packaged words, synthetic words. Why don't you get it straight from the Bible. It's like organic food, enjoy rich organic food, pluck the fruit and eat it. Don't pluck the fruit and then eat it as a juice, packaged in the packet.

This is the purpose of this book - that we will delight in the law of God. Psalm 1 is about the law. What is Psalm 2 about? interesting, let's look at Psalm 2 and let me read to you verse 7 and verse 8. "I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I

begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.”

Who is this? Christ. Thou art my son, my beloved Son, and the last line of Psalm 2 says “Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.” Psalm 2 is not about the word, it’s about Christ. I hope you get this. The whole idea of this Bible is to Love God’s word, because in God’s word, you see God’s Son, the precious Son of God.

The Bible is beautiful because the focus of the Bible is about our beautiful God and Saviour, Jesus Christ. You know, the Psalms are full of Christ. Many prophecies of Christ are in the Psalms. I can just tell you a few—God put all things under his feet, He will not see corruption in the grave, his hands and feet are pierced, his friend will betray him, vinegar and gall will be given to him to drink, etc. It’s all there, the entire suffering of Christ. Psalm 22, you read it. It’s almost like a medical analysis of the sufferings of Christ in Psalm 22.

What’s the Bible about? Jesus, wonderful Saviour, our lover who loves us, patient with us, gracious to us. You can only know Him through the Word of God. Don’t make your own Jesus. Don’t make your own God. Don’t choose verses and create a god of your own imagination, the prosperity god and the Santa Claus god. No. He’s in the Bible, in the beautiful book.

So, Psalms are Delight in the law and Delight in the Lord. May God bless you with this beautiful book. I don’t need to say more about the Psalms, because you focus a lot of time on the Old Testament there, but nonetheless, when you go in, keep your eye on these wonderful truths. The beautiful book and the beautiful God. God bless You.