

**Psalms:
Words of the Mouth
Meditations of the Heart**

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Commentary on Psalms 1 & 2 page 52
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Psalm 1 (structure)
Psalm 2 (structure)

Commentary: Crowning the King:
the King & the Nations page 55

Psalm 18 (structure) with Psalm 144:1-11
Psalms 20-21
Psalm 101
Psalm 72 (structure) with additional notes on Psalms 1 & 2
Psalm 110 (structure)
Psalm 118
(Psalm 45 with Songs of Sons of Korah see below)
Related Psalms may be added later: 106, 111-112, 145, 148

Commentary: Shepherd of Israel page 63

Introduction
Psalms 23-28 The Lord is my shepherd
Psalms 77-80 God, Shepherd of Israel
Psalm 23
Psalm 25 (structure)
Psalm 78
Related Psalms: 100, 107, 119, 114, 144

Commentary: Creation Hymns page 69

Creation Hymns are Psalms 8, 19, 28, 29, 33, 97, 148
Psalm 29
Psalm 33

Comment [DMP1]: to be added

Commentary: Blessed by Torah (Wisdom) page 70

Psalm 1 (maybe 2), 72 (see pages 41, and 46-47)
Psalm 49-50
Psalm 62
Psalm 78
Psalm 83
Psalm 90, 91, 92
Psalm 105-106
Psalm 113-118
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Commentary: Songs of the Sons of Korah page 72
Introduction
Psalm 42-43 with Psalm 84
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Commentary: Korahite Interlude page 81
Psalm 45-47 Korahite Interlude: Kingship of God
Psalm 45
Psalm 46 (structure)
Psalm 47 (structure)

Commentary: Psalm 71 (Old Age) page 83

Commentary: Songs of Ascent page 84
Psalms 120-134
This section is part of a heading called The Long Journey Home
which will include Psalms 92, 106-110, 113-118, 135-137, 149

Comment [DMP2]: to be added later

Commentary: Seeing Jesus in the Psalms page 86
Palms & Hebrews

Commentary: Future page 87

_____ : The God of Israel
shepherd/redeemer (personal)
builder/redeemer (national)
creator/ruler (universal)
righteous judge/just king

Comment [DMP3]: ?future section?

_____ : City of God page
Psalms 46, 48
Psalms 84-87
Psalm 91
?Psalm 145

Comment [DMP4]: ?future section?

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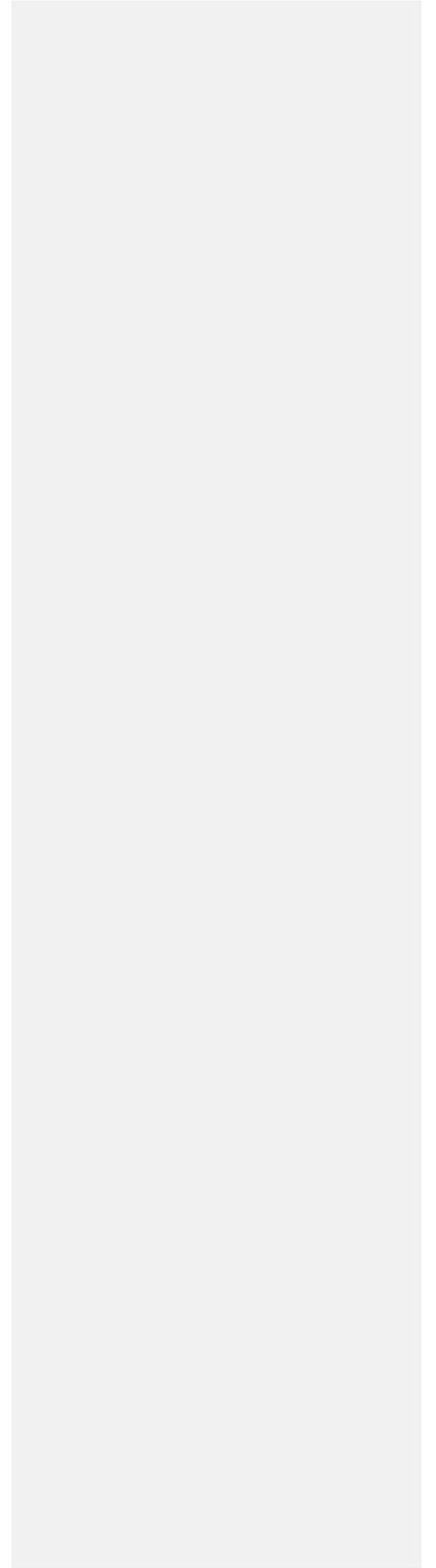
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Books to Find and Read List

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Of Dates & Times

1375-1340 BC	Ugaritic texts (related to early Hebrew) poetry demonstrates parallelism
1250 BC	Moses worship at Shiloh
1000 BC	David Davidic kingdom Jerusalem Solomon's Temple
922 BC	Solomon dies Northern Kingdom (Ephraim & Mannassh) Southern Kingdom (Judah)
875 BC	Shechem (Samaria) built
755 BC	Amos prophet in the Southern Kingdom sanctuary @ Beersheba Amos 5:5, 8:14
721 BC	Northern Kingdom falls to Assyria
700 BC	Hezekiah
622 BC	Josiah (probably) centralizes worship at Jerusalem II Kings 22-23
627 BC	Jeremiah prophet in Southern Kingdom until 586 BC
586 BC	Babylonian Captivity
587 BC	Jerusalem falls; Exile
538 BC	Cyrus on throne of Babylon Daniel at Cyrus' court in Susa
539	Babylon surrenders to Persia
536 BC	1 st Return 2 nd Temple started
521 BC	Darius on the throne of Persia Haggai Torah liturgy
516 BC	Ezra 2 nd Temple finished
486 BC	Xerxes on throne of Persia
473 BC	1 st Purim Feast (Queen Esther in Susa)
458 BC	2 nd Return Nehemiah
425 BC	Walls of Jerusalem completed
331 BC	Alexander the Great conquers Persia
200 BC	<u>Chronicles</u> written, <u>Psalms</u> as we have them today
150 BC	<u>Septuagint</u> , translation Hebrew Scripture into Greek

General Introduction to the Psalms

“psalm” Greek word meaning “poem set to music”
“mizmor” Hebrew means “song” or “praise”

Biblical commentaries remark:

“The Psalms are different...”

The most obvious difference is that they are poetry,
but they are not the only biblical poetry.

Songs appear throughout the historical & prophetic books.

Examples:

Moses & Miriam at Red Sea (Exodus 15)

Deborah (Judges 5)

Hannah (I Samuel 2:1-10)

Song of Songs & Ecclesiastes are both poetry. As is most of Job.

The primary difference is in the responsive nature of the Psalms.

The Psalms “bridge the chasm of centuries between the present and the past.” We feel “very close to the living, breathing, suffering, rejoicing psalmist. And the most profound, the deepest impression” left on us “is the amazing reality of the psalmists’ sense of relationship with God.... God is a being, not of whom, but unto whom the psalmist speaks.... The religion of the Psalms is a communion, a sharing of the human and the divine. And the thing that lifts this communion, great as it is in itself, to something yet nobler and more potent is that it is a communion with God in fellowship with other men. ”

Leslie p.17-18

The Psalms speak less *about God* than *to Him*. They answer the question:

“How do I answer the God who speaks to me?”

Eugene Peterson

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Their purpose is not to tell about God,
although we can learn much from them about God,
not to provide moral teachings
although we can learn much from them about a life that pleases God.

The Psalms are a model
a pattern,
a template,
a mirror
for a proper response to God,
as an individual and as a community.
The Psalms show that the proper response to God is communication with God
honest, forthright, complete communication with God
expressed in
prayer & praise—thanksgiving,
lament, rejoicing, remembering—
and a willingness to be taught by God.

Brueggemann (*Message of the Psalms*) classifies:

Psalms of Orientation

Examples: Psalm 104 Creation
Psalm 1, 119 Torah
Psalm 37 Wisdom
Psalm 133 Well-being

Psalms of Disorientation

Examples: laments
See Types of Psalms, page 26

Psalms of Reorientation

contain element of surprise
celebrate God, acting to save his people
Examples: thanksgiving songs
See Types of Psalms, page 26

Comment [DMP5]:

Comment [DMP6]:

"Psalms are not only responses to the reality of relationship with the biblical God but also expressions that help reshape that relationship with God. That is, psalms not only reflect reality but also shift reality."

Brueggemann *Israel's Praise*

Major Themes of Psalms

conflict reflecting the Jewish Cosmology, dichotomy of good/evil—heaven/earth introduced in Psalms 1 (personal) & 2 (communal)
resolved in Psalm 150 with God's final & eternal victory
explicit or implicit in every Psalm except Psalms. 100; 133; 150

faithfulness "It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man."
Psalm 118:8 which happens to be the central verse of Bible

journey The world is in darkness
there are struggles, suffering, & warfare, both physical & spiritual
BUT God's faithful love, God's promises, God's presence
is **light** for our **way**.

In the Psalms, as throughout most Hebrew scripture, the theme of **conflict** is explored in these types, metaphors, and motifs:

military: army, chariots, horses, archers
royalty: king, coronation, wedding, court
courts of law: judge, justice, retribution (imply kingship)
enemies, snares, pits
shield, defense, rescue: Zion, City of God

The theme of **faithfulness** is explored in these types, metaphors, and motifs:

gardens—trees & water & sometimes fruit—Eden/Paradise/The Land
flocks: sheep & shepherds, attacking animals lions & wolves
Israel as bride/wife (also as unfaithful whore, harlot, adultery)
dwelling: tent, temple, tabernacle (ruins), holy hill, mountain top,
city
courts of worship, praise, thanksgiving
adoption, servants & sons, heirship, citizenship
God's provision: feast & famine, harvest & vintage (bread & wine)
shelter, safety, plenty (& lack thereof when unfaithful)

As throughout Hebrew scripture, **journey** images are prevalent:

Exodus: smoke/cloud & fire/light—Sinai (presence/glory of God)
Holy Mountain
desert, thirst & hunger (God's provision)
fear, uncertainty along the way
attacking enemies along the way, in the way side
highway, narrow way, path, road, climbing mountains
Torah: Word, Law, Wisdom, "The Way"
rest along the way

Key Word Definitions:
Bless, Checed, Torah, Derek

“bless” (“happy” in some modern versions)
most common word (in various forms) in the Psalms, in English:
82 times, *Young’s Literal Translation*; 102 times, *King James*
when God is called blessed
root idea is of prostration/bowing
an attitude of adoration, praise
when people are called blessed
suggests happiness, fulfillment
a state of unity/peace with God

Hebrew words that are translated “bless”:

Comment [DMP7]: add Hebrew script

‘asher pronounced: aw-shar Strong H0833 (also 0835 & 0838)

Used 2 times in *Psalms*
to be straight, especially to be right, level (“upright”, “on the level”)
to go, to guide, to lead, to relieve

‘esher pronounced: eh'-sher Strong H0835

Used 26 times in *Psalms*
blessed, happy
only in masculine plural, as an interjection: How happy! How blessed!

‘ashur pronounced: aw-shoor Strong H0838

Used 6 times in *Psalms*
in the sense of going: a step

Note: To be blessed includes at its most basic meaning step/walk,
e.g. **to be blessed is to be walking in the way of the Lord.** (Psalm 1)

“checed” pronounced: kheh’sed Strong H2617

Used 130 times in *Psalms*; 253 times in Hebrew scripture
kindness, favor, good deed, loving-kindness,
merciful kindness, mercy, pity

***“The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases;
His mercies never come to an end.”***

by implication (towards God): piety

“If you love me, you will keep my commandments.”

rarely: beauty (subjective)

Comment [DMP8]: add Hebrew script

Interestingly, “checed” derives from a primitive root

“chacad” Strong H2616

to bow one’s head in courtesy to an equal, to be kind, merciful

rarely: reproof (by opposition), put to shame

“Those whom the Lord loves, He corrects”

Thus, God’s checed originates in Creation: *Let us create man in our own image.*

Any instance of God’s checed is an invitation to relationship, to conversation,

to friendship, as Abraham, Moses & David experienced.

How amazing and awe-full: the King of Creation chooses to walk and talk with us, to be Immanuel, God-with-us!

“checed” (faithful love) in

Psalms 5:7, 6:4, 13:5, 17:7, 18:25 (“mercy”), 21:7 (“grace”)

Comment [DMP9]: Need to add the remaining psalms with checed to list

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While “cheched” does not appear in **Psalm 22**, there is no better image of God’s cheched
always, ever loving-kindness, mercy, pity, grace,
sufficient, pressed down & overflowing loving provision,
caring, tender, shepherding, compassionate,
steadfast, never-coming-to-an- end, without limit
Faithful Love
than Jesus,
Messiah (Christ),
God’s Anointed King (Heir to David’s Throne)
on the Cross.
“For God so loved...”

Words Jesus spoke from the Cross begin and end Psalm 22.
Who can say that he did not offer this entire psalm in silent prayer before God?

Comment [DMP10]: add NT cites

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“torah” pronounced: to-raw’ Strong H8451
Used 232 times in Hebrew scripture; 41 times in the Psalms
a precept or statute, especially the Decalogue or Pentateuch: The Law

Comment [DMP11]: add Hebrew script

The derivation and related words expand our idea of “torah.”

Its primitive root is:

“yarah” pronounced yaw-raw’ Strong H3384
Used 15 times in the Psalms
to flow as water (rain)
to lay an arrow, bend the bow, and shoot:
figuratively, to point out as if by aiming a finger,
(as Nathan pointed at David)
to teach: cast, direct, inform, instruct, show

Comment [DMP12]: add Hebrew script

Comment [DMP13]: add cite

Related words:

“towr” (tore) a border, row, hedge, turn (“turn row”) Strong H8447
an estate, marked by the manner of turning Strpmg H8448
So we find that Torah marks out God’s estate, his fields, his City
and that it emborders, hedges in, His people
and so shelters and protects them.

Comment [DMP14]: add Hebrew script

“towr” (tore) ring-dove, turtle dove Strong H8449
bull or bullock Strong H8450
The animals that are used in sacrifice by rich and by poor.
These animals are those which may be offered
as the required sacrifice for sin that restores relationship with God.

Comment [DMP15]: add Hebrew script

Comment [DMP16]: Need Leviticus citations

Thus, Torah defines not only God’s Law
but also the borders of His City where God is King,
and whose citizens live in justice and peace.

Through God’s faithful love e.g. checed,
Torah also offers a way to re-enter the City (by blood sacrifice)
when one has been cast out by disobedience.

When poetic structure of the Psalms is considered,
Torah is often equated to salvation
and/or blessing.

Often, Torah is associated with derek, “walking the way” (of the Lord).

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“derek” pronounced: deh'-rek **Strong H1870**
Used 759 times in Hebrew scripture; 70 times in Psalms
a road (as trodden);
figuratively, a course of life or a mode of action
conversation, custom, direction, journey, manner, pathway

Comment [DMP17]: add Hebrew script

Its primitive root:
“darak” pronounced: daw-rak' **Strong H1869**
Used 64 times in Hebrew scripture; 10 times in Psalms
to tread, to walk
to string a bow by treading on it to bend it
to bend, to come, to draw, to go, to guide, to lead
to thresh by treading down the harvest

Comment [DMP18]: add Hebrew script

Notice that both torah/yarah and derek/darak have archery images.

*Lord God, shoot us like arrows along your chosen course.
Let us fly straight and true as you direct us.
Let us hit the target.
Let us not miss the mark.*

Comment [DMP19]: citation to Pauline letter

Torah Psalms include phrases like:
teach us your way
lead us through
walk in your path
walk in the way
chart our course
by the way, wayside
lost the way
guide us back
straight paths/course (as an arrow flies)

Sources of the Psalms

"By and large, the Psalms are without known context."

Robert L. Alden

A Psalm may have been written by one person, but it speaks to and for other individuals and particularly for the worshipping community of Israel.

In content, the book of *Psalms* resembles our church hymnals. Some were written specifically for public worship. Others were the personal outpouring of one person, adopted and adapted for communal use. A psalm may examine a single truth, one small part of a relationship with God. A single psalm need not contain all truth, although taken as a whole Psalms 1-150 echo all truth revealed in the Bible.

Psalms were composed by many people over hundreds (probably thousands) of years.

Psalm 90 attributed to Moses	approx.	1250 BC
Psalms 126 & 137 are post-Exile	after	538 BC
Psalm 119	between	332 - 200 BC

Psalms were collected, probably by Levites, in the 3rd or 4th Century BC
(late Persian or Ptolemaic Period)

little historical information about these 200 years
it was a time of consolidation not innovation in Jerusalem

Notations in superscriptions (postscripts in some Hebrew versions) which refer to David express the same view of David (as organizer of worship in Jerusalem) that is found in *Chronicles*.

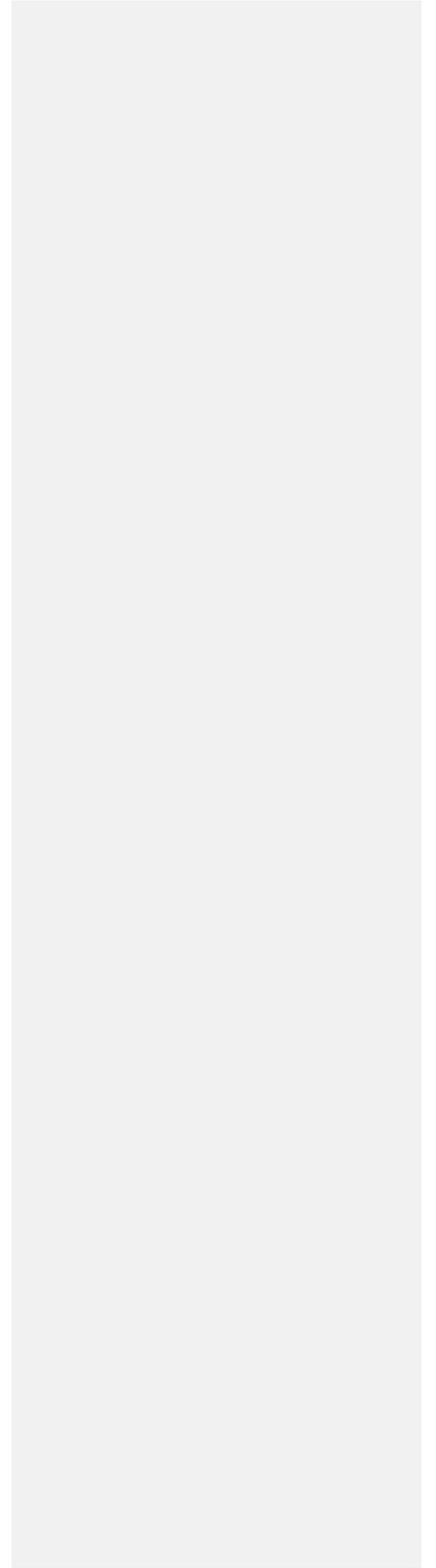
As they come to us today, the psalms were collected & organized (and may have been edited) by the post-Exilic Jewish community. (See Faith & Outlook, page 17)

There are at least two versions:

- (1) Old Palestinian—73 or 74 Psalms are attributed to David
the Hebrew version of those who remained or returned to Palestine,
the version of the Dead Sea Scrolls—
became the text of Aramaic-speaking Judaism.
This version through translation entered the Protestant Bible.
- (2) Babylonian—88 Psalms attributed to David
the Hebrew version gathered by the Jewish community in Exile,
the version that was translated into the Greek Septuagint, 150 BC—
became the text for Hellenistic Judaism.
This Greek translation was quoted
by Paul in his Epistles and by the writers of the Gospels.
It was translated **into Latin** and standardized as the Vulgate.
This version through translation became the Catholic Bible.

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The Psalms as We Have Them

In our Bibles today, there are

5 “Books of David” (Psalms)
to balance

5 “Books of Moses” (Pentateuch)

In Hebrew text, each book is marked by a closing doxology.

“Book” divisions and numbers were added by Martin Luther in 16th Century.

Comment [DMP20]: add date

Book I Psalms 1-41

Book II Psalms 42-72

“Here end the psalms of David, son of Jesse”

Book III Psalms 73-89

Book IV Psalms 90-106

Book V Psalms 105-150

Some psalms were collected (perhaps edited several times), then added to other collections. Various commentators suggest that the psalms were arranged in order by a process of progression by key word (see concatenation, page 28).

Others identify grouping by subject. (See Thematic Outline of Psalms, page 33)

Books I, II, III stabilized first.

Arranged to present devotion to God through the experience of David
who probably wrote some but not all, or even most, of them.

These may have been written & collected well before the Exile,
perhaps as early as the time of Solomon

(Hezekiah, Josiah are other candidates)

Final arrangement & superscriptions to David’s life
were probably added much later.

Dead Sea Scrolls contain Psalms 1-89, in order, with superscriptions.

Comment [DMP21]: date?

Books IV & V stabilized later

perhaps not until 1st or 2nd Century AD

There is no break in style between Books IV & V

Dead Sea Scrolls contain these Psalms 90-150
intermingled with non-canonical psalms.

Dating the Psalms

from Holladay, William L: *The Psalms through Three Thousand Years*, 1993

- Canaanite antecedents: Psalm 29 (sounds “bl” “al”)
Yahweh substituted for Baal
Psalm 89:7 (polytheistic)
- Pre-Davidic: Psalm 19:2-7
(borrowed from Canaanite Hymn to the Sun.
Borrowing worked both ways. Psalm 20 from
Aramaic to Egyptian’s Song of Aton
similar to Song of Deborah
late 12th Century BC
Psalm 82
- Davidic Psalm 2 traditionally David’s coronation
Psalm 18 duplicates 2 Samuel 22:1
Psalm 23 why not?
- Northern Kingdom before 587 BC
geographic refs. Psalm 42 and Psalm 80
language use (Hosea) Psalm 10 and Psalm 16
also Psalms 9-10 (a unit)
Psalm 29
Psalm 36
preferred name of God = Elohim: indicates Northern Hebrew
Korah (tribe Dan) Psalms 42-49, 84,85, 87,88
Asaph Psalms 50, 73-83, 116, 132, 133, 140, 141
- Southern Kingdom, 922 - 587 BC
royal psalms Psalms 2,18,110,20,21,72,89,101,144
language Psalm 24 (Torah liturgy)
Psalm 104 (Egyptian influence)
Psalm 131 (maybe a female author)
cited by Amos Psalm 139
cited by Jeremiah Psalms 1,139,79,6,38
perhaps also Psalms 6,7,22,35,38,64,139
- Exile, 587 -538 BC Psalm 137
- Post-Exile, Psalm 19:8-15
vocabulary, phrasing Psalm 126
also perhaps Psalms 103,117,119,124,125,145
I Chron. 16:8-36 quotes Psalms 105:1-15; 96:1-13; 106:47-48 (400 BC)
Latest (332 BC) Psalm 119 (Maybe, could be more recent)

Faith & Outlook

The way Israel viewed the world and expressed their faith changed greatly after the Exile.

These changes are reflected in *Psalms*.

Pre-Exile	Post-Exile
Oral Culture	Bilingual Aramaic & Hebrew, related Written, Scriptures collected, “canonized”
Yahweh is God king & judge leader in battle covenant with David & his house (kingship) dwells in Zion in Jerusalem where men meet Him in sacrifice	Adonai, preferred name (YHWH) is God, creator & sustainer king & judge (idea of God as warrior has faded) Davidic covenant a figure of ideal past, glorified future dwells everywhere. Men meet Him in obedience
Yahweh is Israel’s refuge retribution	Adonai is merciful faithful & kind “cheched”
worship is Temple Sacrifice	praise is better than worship
Torah = teaching, instruction the will of God refuge of God’s people	Torah = Law: a body of legal formulations Wisdom, a new motif, a didactic, the systematic pondering of the universe, (somewhat like Greek philosophy)
Israel covenant community ruled by God embattled ultimately victorious	Israel covenant community chosen by God poor, vulnerable no king, no border, scattered with a questioning hope/faith
sickness/suffering result of sin	Exile, result of sin

Superscriptions

Superscriptions may indicate genre, performance notes, or use in Temple worship. They may offer some clues to authorship. There is strong evidence of their being added to provide an editorial context.

The superscripts (early versions had both superscripts and postscripts) appear in both the earliest extant Hebrew texts and in the Greek Septuagint (150 BC) with only slight variation between the two. Thus the superscriptions predate 150 BC. Those notations that refer to David express same view of David (as the organizer of worship in Jerusalem) that is found in *Chronicles*. Thus *Psalms* with superscription probably date from around 200 BC, when *Chronicles* were written. Books I, II, III (with or without other superscription) may date somewhat earlier to 400 BC.

What do the superscriptions mean?

Genre (type of psalm):

“song” in Hebrew **“sir”**
perhaps with instruments “gear of song” I Chronicles 15:16
Examples: Psalms 30, 48, 75, 76, 83, 87, 88, 92, 108
“songs of ascent” Psalms 120-134

Comment [DMP22]: add Hebrew script

“psalm” in Hebrew **“mizmor”** 57 psalms, usually with attribution
“psalm of David” with notations of circumstance
Examples: Psalm 3, 7, 18, 34, 51, 52, 54, 56, 57, 59, 60, 63, 142
Psalm 92 is both psalm (mizmor) & song (sir.)

Comment [DMP23]: add Hebrew script here and following

Is there a difference between psalm & song?

“miktam” in Hebrew, “poem inscribed on stele” in Septuagint
Examples: Psalm 16, 56-60

“maskil” in Hebrew, see 2 Chronicles 30:22,
perhaps didactic or artistic song
Examples: 32, 42, 44, 45, 52-55, 74, 78, 88, 89, 142

See page 60 for possible meaning: with hands raised and a shout of praise.

Comment [DMP24]: check pg #

“tevilla” in Hebrew, translated “prayer of healing, petition, intercession”
see Psalm 109:4
Examples: Psalm 17, 86, 90, 102, 142

“siggayon” in Hebrew, “lamentation”
“to wander” Hab. 3:11
Example: Psalm 7, one example ?others?

Comment [DMP25]: only 1 example are there others?

“tehilla” in Hebrew, translated “praise” in NRS

often in body of psalm texts, an expression of thanksgiving
See individual (Psalm 22:25) & congregational (Psalm 100:4)
Psalm 145 only example of this superscription

Instructions for performance:

“to the choirmaster” or “leader” Habakkuk 3:19
could also mean “make music” or “from one who excels”
Examples: often in Books I, II, III - Psalms 4-88
also, Psalm 109, 139, 140 (all in Book V)

“with stringed instruments” lyres or harps
see Psalm 33:2-3
Examples: Psalms 4,6,54,55,67,76

“with wind instruments” flutes
only Psalm 5 (in text of Psalm 150)

“according to”
may designate musical instruments, See I Chronicles 15:20-21
or voice parts, or vocal stylings
or **“to the tune of”** familiar melodies
sometimes it remains a mystery. A listing follows:

“the sheminith” “the eighth” ?8th string on lute or bass voice?
Examples: Psalms 6,12

“the alamoith” “the young women” only Psalm 46

“Muth-labben” ?? only Psalm 9

“the Gittith” ?the harp or harpist of Gath? ?melody: “Gath”
Examples: Psalms 8,81,84

“the mahalath” ?? “for illness” ?healing song or ?melody?
Examples: Psalms 53,88

probable well-known tunes:

“Do not Destroy” Examples: Psalms 57,58,59,75

“The Deer of the Dawn” Examples: Psalm 22

“The Dove on the Far-off Terebinths” Examples: Psalms 56

“Lilies” Examples: Psalms 45,69

“Lily of the Covenant” Examples: Psalm 60

“Lilies, a Covenant” Examples: Psalm 80

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Time or situation when Psalm is to be used in the ceremonies of the Temple:

“on the Sabbath” Psalm 92

Greek Septuagint assigns a psalm for other days as follows:

1st Day Psalm 24

2nd Day Psalm 48

3rd Day Psalm 94

?no 4th

or 5th Day?

6th Day Psalm 93

Comment [DMP26]: find psalms for 4th & 5th

“for the memorial offering” See Lev. 2:2
Psalms 38,70

“of thanksgiving” See Lev. 7:12
Psalm 100

“dedication of the house” Psalm 30
?for the dedication of the Second Temple or
?rededication after the desecration of Antiochus Epiphanes (164 BC)

Selah, Higgaion, and Hallelujah

Unlike the superscriptions, these Hebrew words occur within the body of the text of the Psalms.

“Hallelujah” Hebrew “halelu-yah”
Jah, shortened name of God used occasionally outside *Psalms*
See Exodus 15:2
transliterated into the Greek & Latin as “alleluia”
“praise ye the Lord” plural imperative

Comment [DMP27]: add Hebrew script her and following

This phrase always had special significance as the word of praise high above all others. While the verb “hallel” or “halelu” appears frequently in other combinations, in the Hebrew text this phrase appears only
23 times in Psalms, all of them in Psalms 104:35 - 150:6
most often at the beginning or end of a psalm, both in Psalm 106 .
The word does not share in the poetry of its context.

The *Septuagint* took it to be a superscription and used it more often,
Example: at the beginning of Psalm 119.

“Selah” in Hebrew “sela” no agreed on meaning
71 times in Hebrew Psalms; 92 times in Greek Septuagint
may indicate instrumental interlude or choral response
or recitative pause for a prayer or story
Example: Psalm 85:2 inserts Exodus 32-34

“Higgayon” or “Higgaion”
used once, just before “Selah” in Psalm 9:16
perhaps a meditation
or musical interlude See Psalm 92:3

Psalms: a collection of collections

We can see traces of earlier sub-collections.

Attributions

Psalms	1-41	42-72	73-89	90-106	107-150
	Book I	Book II	Book III	Book IV	Book V
Attributed to:					
David	37	18	1	2	15
Asaph		1	11	2	
Korah		7	3		
Jeduthun		1			
Solomon		1			1
Moses				1	
Heman			1		
Ethan			1		
No attribution	4	4		14	23

Davidic psalms (total 73)

make up almost all of Book I. 37/41
make up over half of Book II. 18/30

Korahite psalms (total 10)

are limited to Books II & III Book II 7/30

Asaphic psalms (total 12)

are limited to Books II & III Book III 11/15

Anonymous psalmists (total 55)

are almost all Book IV 14/16

Davidic (15) & Anonymous (23) psalms

make up Book V 48/53.

All the doxologies of Book V are anonymous.

David was the covenant King of Israel, promised an eternal heir to the throne..

Solomon whose name means Prince of Peace is David's son, builder of the Temple in Jerusalem.

Moses was the founder of an older covenant, the Sinai Covenant of Law, Torah.

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Who were the other psalmists?

Asaph	A singer in David's court close ties to prophetic circles	I Chronicles 15:19 Hosea 5:14, 6:6 (Psalm 50)
Korah	A guild of singers Levitical priest in Dan Festival of Booths (North King.)	2Chronicles 20:19 Exodus 6:21 I Kings 12:32-3, Hosea 9:5
Jeduthun	A singer in King David's court	Psalm 62
Heman & Ethan	(Ezrahites, native born) also singers in David's court	I Chronicles 15:19, 16:41

Names of God

Yahweh name of God (YHVH)
 derives from verb "to be" = God is
 or from verb "to become" = Becoming One
God is, in infinite grace, to become whatever is needed,
 closely tied with Exodus, rescue, redemption

Comment [DMP28]: Hebrew script here and following

Jah a shortened form of Yahweh,
 used twice in Exodus & a few times in Isaiah

Elohim plural noun
 root idea is strength, might, power
 closely tied with Creation, Nature

Adonai also plural noun
 root idea is supreme sovereignty
 acknowledges God as master, lord, king

Psalms	1-41	42-72	73-89	90-106	107-150
	Book I	Book II	Book III	Book IV	Book V
God's Name:					
Yahweh/Jehovah	275	32	44	103	236
Elohim/God	68	234	80	72	40
Adonai/Lord	14	19	15	2	12
Jah		1		15	32

psalmists (or editors) of Books I & V
 prefer Yahweh indicating origin in the Southern Kingdom

psalmists (or editors) of Books II & III
 prefer Elohim indicating origin in the Northern Kingdom

psalmists (or editors) of Books IV
 prefer Yahweh, but often use Elohim
 probably indicative of post-Exilic origin

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Psalms quotations among the Books:

Yahwehistic (Southern Hebrew)		Elohistic (Northern Hebrew)
Psalm 14	identical to	Psalm 53
Psalm 40:130-17	identical to	Psalm 70
Psalm 108	identical to	Psalm 57:7-11
Psalm 108	identical to	Psalm 60:5-12

Psalms 42-43, 44, 48, maybe 52—written 9th century BC—are similar to
Psalms 84, 85, 87, maybe 82—Zionist adaptations, about 750 BC

See appendix for additional quotations of Psalms

One Scenario--How *Psalms* Came to Be

This is my scenario of how psalms were collected and formed into the book we read today.

Psalms were spoken for a long time in an oral society. As written language developed, some psalms were written down; their wording & style preserved and solidified. Over time they were gathered into various collections. We may suppose that there were a number of them in Solomon's library. During the time of the Divided Kingdom, two separate cultures of psalmists (or singers) wrote, and perhaps collected psalms.

Comment [DMP29]: add scripture cite

At some point, there were at least three early collections:

- Yahwehistic *Psalms of the South* (Psalms 3-41)
- Elohist *Song Book of the Singers of Korah* (Psalms 42-49)
- Elohist *Psalms of the North* (Psalms 50-72)

These collections included many psalms written by David, or written about his experience or written in his honor and ascribed to him. At some point these early collections were combined and may have been organized in an editorial context of David's life. There may have been superscripts & postscripts.

“Here end the psalms of David, son of Jesse”

Perhaps these collections of psalms were gathered in Jerusalem, after the fall of the Northern Kingdom. This new combined collection shows a strong reliance on the Davidic Covenant. I'll call this new collection

- ***Psalms of the Shepherd King*** **Books I & II , Psalms 1-72**
having added Psalms 1&2 as introduction.

Psalms of the Shepherd King was later combined with yet another collection which concerned the failure of the Davidic Covenant, an appeal to God for justice, and which showed a reliance on the older covenant of Law, or Torah.:

- Elohist *Asaph's Righteous Hymns* (Psalms 73-83)

I'll call this new collection

- ***Psalms of Covenant*** Book I, II, III of *Psalms*

This collection solidified, probably in Babylon, shortly before the 1st Return. (For the sake of my story, I'll say maybe Daniel was an editor.)

Some Jews returned to Jerusalem, bringing ***Psalms of Covenant***.

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There were also people who had remained in Samaria. They had collected and preserved scripture in a

- ***Samaritan Version.***

In the rebuilt city, selected psalms from the Samaritan version were added to the canon and other psalms were collected or written, including

- Hallels written to celebrate the return to Jerusalem and the renewal of worship in the rebuilt Temple:
- *Miscellaneous Psalms*
Asaph's Hallel (Elohistic) Book IV of Psalms
More Psalms of the Shepherd King (Yahwehistic) Book IV of Psalms
Hallels to God Book V of Psalms

Those who gathered & combined this collection of Psalms also wrote the book of *Chronicles* and added the superscriptions to *Psalms*. This collection became

- ***Psalms (the Old Palestinian Version).***
This version was preserved in the **Dead Sea Scrolls**
Books IV & V did not stabilize until 1st or 2nd Century AD when the Hebrew canon was finalized.
This version was translated into Aramaic and much later into modern languages.

Meanwhile some Jews remained in Persia, using ***Psalms of Covenant*** in Synagogue. They communicated with Jews in Jerusalem & elsewhere in Persia & Greece, Egypt & the Diaspora and obtained copies of *Chronicles* and the new *Psalms* texts with superscription. Some texts may have had other (perhaps older) superscriptions.

These Diasporic Jews added other superscriptions to even more psalms, continuing to look at *Psalms* through the experience of David, ascribing to him additional psalms in Books IV & V. This collection became

- ***Psalms (the Old Babylonian Version)***

Some Jews in Egypt, in Alexandria, spoke both Hebrew & Greek. They (traditionally 70 scholars) translated this version into Greek:

- ***Psalms (The Septuagint)*** **150 BC**
This version was translated into Latin, standardized as the Vulgate, and the Latin translated much later into modern languages, including the King James Version.

Some Notes about Poetry

Historically, in the development of language, poetry comes before prose. It is the outgrowth of an oral society.* The attributes of poetry—rhythm, word sounds, imagery, repetition, juxtaposition, music itself—are tools for memory. Primitive cultures, oral societies, usually view speech as powerful, able to shape reality:

"Saying does make it so."

Even when a culture becomes literate—even when language matures, becomes more written than oral—poetry retains some sense of that power. Prose is the language of science, of human knowledge, of mind. Poetry is the language of the heart, mind, & soul—emotions with intellect—what the Greeks called “soul”, what the Hebrews called “self.”

Poetry, whether English or Hebrew, is not written to be analyzed and dissected. Poetic devices that give the poem its shape are intended to be an undercurrent carrying the emotion and the meaning. The meaning is clear only when both the poet and the listener experience the emotion, only when there is resonance (like tuning forks or bells or strings tuned to the same pitch).

"Every mind is a primitive mind."

Years pass. Languages and their cultures are supplanted. The tools people use change. However, the hearts of people—their emotions, their inner thoughts & inner lives—remain the same from generation to generation.

Somewhere in *Psalms* you will find yourself. As you first read, then pray, the psalms you will better understand yourself, and you will be better able to offer your whole heart and all your life to God.

Psalms are poetry, song and prayer

"an anatomy to all parts of the soul."

Calvin

*Oral expression is: (1) additive rather than subordinate; (2) aggregative rather than analytic; (3) redundant rather than concise; (4) conservative rather than creative. Works performed in an oral culture both entertain and educate. Poetry was "first and last a didactic instrument for transmitting the tradition."

Lord: Words Heard and Words Seen.
Havelock: Preliteracy. quoted in Harvey, p. 41.

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All prayer finally, in one way or another, becomes praise. There are no short cuts to praise. The Psalms teach us not to be insensitive to all the doubts, fears, tears, and pain that are gathered into the final psalms of praise. Prayer almost never begins in praise (it usually begins in hurt), but if we pray long enough, often enough, prayer will finally grow into praise. This does not mean that every prayer we make will be capped off with praise but that the life of prayer itself is always reaching toward praise.

"Might as well start learnin' to do it now, 'cause as near as I can tell that's what we'll be doin' for eternity."

Frances Mathews, Southwest Central Ladies Bible Class

Some Hebrew Poetic Devices

Comment [DMP30]: add ne info from Harvey

Parallelism

- primary device, found in all Semite poetry & in most psalms,
dependent on meaning rather than language's sound, rhythm,
thus it is translatable without loss of meaning
- "internal parallelism" two adjoining synonymous lines (stichs)
the meaning of one line is repeated in the next line
"this & more this ab//ab (Ex: Ps 140)
- or meaning of one line is contrasted in the next
"this & not this" ab//not ab (Ex: Ps 1:6)
- or meaning of one line is repeated with variation in the next & the next
"stair step parallelism" abc//abd//abe (Ex: Ps 96:1-2; 29:1-2)

Chiasmus: Inclusions, Ring-compositions, Transpositions, Inversions, Concentric Symmetry

- symmetrical structures involving an inverted order of corresponding elements
for the purpose of emphasis, comparison, or contrast.
very common in all biblical literature, a "circular parallelism"
any section may be "chiastic" or an entire psalm may be an "extended chiasmus"
- ABCDC'B'A' most important point: middle D
ABB'A' no middle, most important point in A & A'
ABCDEA' framing device begins & ends psalm (Psalm 8)
may be a word or several sentences (ring-composition)
- Examples: Psalms 1,2,8,12,25,37,41,57,64,67,90,103, 113
and, many other small chiasms within psalms
with different overall patterns

Acrostics

- also common in biblical literature
(Proverbs 31:10-31, Nahum 1, Lamentations)
each verse, or section begins with a sequential letter
based on 22 letter Hebrew alphabet
some are "imperfect", missing a letter
- Examples: Psalms 9-10 (every second verse), 25, 34,37,111,112,
119 (every 8 verses), 145 (missing "nun" found in Dead Sea Scrolls)

Note: Psalms 25 & 37 are both chiastic & acrostic.

Concatenation, Word chains

key word linking, a chain of repeated words, a word repeated from verse to verse

Examples: Psalms 25, 123, 130

some commentators believe this is underlying structure of *Psalms*

Examples: Psalms 1 & 2 by “Happy” & “meditate” or plot,

Psalms 2 & 3 by “way” with “perish”, Psalms 3&4 by “holy hill”...

The Psalms were meant to be spoken aloud! Read them aloud if possible.

Listen for the voices. Some psalms are responsive; some are antiphonal.

Some psalms are solos—a single voice. Some are choruses; some are intended for the entire congregation in unison.

Refrain a line may echo, repeat, throughout, a chorus

Examples: Psalm 46, 136

Response one speaker followed by response by chorus or congregation

Antiphony one chorus speaks & another responds

Examples: Psalms 124, 129, 136

Progression movement from common to spiritual

from sheep & shepherd to nation & king

from sheep & shepherd to people & God

from individual to nation to all mankind

verbs from still to moving or vice versa

Example: Psalm 1 prostrate, bowing, sitting, standing, walking

Verbs are very important!

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Imagery

some images recur throughout all scripture
Included are these types & metaphors & motifs:
gardens—trees & water & sometimes fruit—Eden/Paradise/Land
journey—Exodus, path, highway, way
mountains & deserts
sheep & shepherds (enemies of the flock: lions, wolves, bears)
Israel as bride/wife (adultery, whore, harlot)
field & vineyard, harvest & vintage (bread & wine), seasonal
festivals
feast & famine
military: army, chariots, horses, archers
royal (king)
judge, justice, retribution
adoption, servants & sons, heirs
dwelling: city, temple, tabernacle (ruins)
Word, Law, Wisdom, Way
there are others

Some poetic devices do not translate

Rhythm

much of Psalms (especially those heavy with parallelism) use
short lines (3 or so-words) connected with “and” or “but” or “so”
almost a staccato rhythm
some versions do a better job of reproducing these effects
(KJV better than RSV) (NIV is dreadful)

Alliteration

repeating sounds

Puns

word play on meaning and/or sounds

A Structure for Psalms

I. Happy is the Man (Psalm 1) Happy is the Nation (Psalm 2) As illustrated by the Life of David, King of Israel

(Book I)

Psalms 1-41 (9-10 a unit)

Psalm 1

Happy is the man

Psalm 2

Happy is the nation

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel

from everlasting to everlasting. Amen & amen.

(Book II)

Psalms 42-72 (42-43 a unit)

Includes most Korahite Psalms

Blessed be his glorious name forever

let the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen & amen.

(Book III)

Psalms 73-89

Includes most Asaphite Psalms

Blessed be the Lord forevermore. Amen & amen.

II. The Steadfast Love of the Lord Never Ceases Return to Jerusalem: Festivals of Praise

(Book IV)

Psalms 90-106

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel from everlasting to everlasting;

and let all the people say, Amen. Praise the Lord.

(Book V)

Psalms 107-145

includes

Egyptian Hallel

113-118

Songs of Ascent

120-134

Great Hallel

135-136

Trouble & Trust

140-142

My mouth shall speak the praise of the Lord;

let all flesh bless his holy name forever and ever.

III. Yaweh Victorious! Praise the Lord!

Psalms 146-150 (Hallel)

146: Redeemed Individual Praises

147: Redeemed Israel Praises

148: Redeemed Nature Praises

149: God's Righteous Judgment

150: Universal & Eternal Praise

Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord. Praise the Lord.

Arranged to Tell a Story

I and countless commentators have said that psalms are poetry, song, and prayer. I have come to believe that the psalms as they are arranged in the book of *Psalms* also tell a story. It is the story of a journey—the journey of God's people to His Holy City.

Synopsis: The story begins with a people who thought they understood how the world worked. They relied on God and took refuge in his Covenant Love, his promise to David. Their faith assured them that they were protected and safe. That faith is challenged by trial, persecution, suffering, and finally Captivity. They ask hard questions and find few answers. They appeal to God and accept his teaching in the way (Torah). At long, long last the way leads home, to Jerusalem, and the people sing songs of praise and thanksgiving.

Psalms 1 & 2, set the scene:

there are 2 paths:

- (1) the way of the wise; blessed, fruitful, living forever
- (2) the way of the wicked: perishing

there is God's anointed king who will rule over the Nations now opposing Him

In **Psalms 3-41** (Book I), the psalmists view God's Love and their faith through the life of King David, Shepherd King of Israel. When challenged, David and his people turn to God again and again. God is my/our Shepherd, God is my/our King—all is (or soon will be) well. Again and again God recreates the world according to His Covenant with David—"a son of your house will sit enthroned from generation to generation."

In **Psalms 42-49** (Book II), the Nations attack, asking "Where is your God?" The Sons of Korah sing, "God, our King, is in His Holy City. Why should I/we be afraid? Hear, you Nations, death is your shepherd (but the Lord is my/our shepherd)." However, this attack has shaken Israel. The remaining Psalms of Book II prompt them to reconsider "the way."

Psalms 50-72, (Book II) explore themes of judgment/repentance, God's faithful love, refuge, and these psalms culminate with death of David and the crowning of a new king of the house of David. Asaph and Jeduthun, the singers of King David's Court, (Psalms 50, 62) call the people to repentance, teaching them that sin brings judgment. David appeals to God's faithful love (Psalms 51-61) and finds refuge (Psalms 63-69). Having found refuge David places Zion in God's hands, and dies (Psalms 70, 71) and his Son, Solomon, is enthroned. The Nations bow before the anointed king. (Psalm 72)

"Here end the psalms of David, son of Jesse"—the phrase is more than an organizational note on the collection of Psalms. It marks the end of an almost simplistic reliance on God's covenant with David.

Book III & part of Book IV chronicle the journey along the way through the valley of shadow. The repeated image is one of judgment, an exhortation to learn the lesson of “Meribah, do not harden your hearts.”

In **Psalms 73-76** (echo Psalms 1 & 2) and in **Psalms 77-83**, Asaph cries for justice. God’s flock is under attack and asks, “How long?” until God hears, until God rescues. Appeal is made to God the King; appeal is made to God, the Shepherd. These appeals are based not on God’s Covenant with David, but on an older covenant, the Covenant of Moses and the Exodus. The Nations ask “Where is their God?” God demands that his people listen to his teaching and at last God stands in judgment of the Nations.

In **Psalms 84-89**, David & his singers give voice to the people’s penitence and appeal once again to God’s faithful love but the Lord has cast away his chosen king. “Where is our God? How long?”

In **Psalms 90-94** they appeal to the Law of Moses. “How long?” At last, they express a willingness to be taught by God. Questioning becomes song and God’s flock kneels at his feet.

Psalm 1 began with the question, “Who is blessed?”
Psalm 94 answers, “The blessed are instructed by God.”

Psalms 95-104 “sing a new song,” say among the Nations that the Lord is King, sing faithful love and justice. God is again the shepherd of his flock. The Nations will bow and worship.

Psalms 105-106, the **Asaphic Hallel** closes this section with the Exodus narrative and an appeal to God’s covenant with Abraham (to give him the land.) Sin (Meribah, idolatry in the land) is recounted. An appeal is made to God’s faithful love to relent and gather his people/flock from among the Nations.

Book V celebrates the redemption of God’s people as they are released from Captivity and return to Jerusalem.

Psalms 107-118 celebrate God’s faithful love with
the **Davidic Hallel** (Psalms 108-110)
and the **Egyptian Hallel** (Psalms 113-118),
celebrating both the Covenant of David and the Covenant of Moses/Exodus/Torah..

Psalm 1 asked, “Who is blessed?”
Psalm 119, answers “Those who walk in the way of the Lord,”
those who celebrate Torah, the way, the Law, the teaching of the Lord.
The people move from darkness into light.

Psalm 120-134 are the Songs of Ascent,
the songs of pilgrims climbing the Holy Mountain.

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Psalm 135-136 is the Great Hallel, a celebration of God's faithful love.

Psalm 137 recalls the Exile when the people could not sing the songs of Zion.

Psalms 138-145 reprise the Davidic themes of Book I:
God is my refuge, rescue me, lead me, show me the way I must go.

Psalms 146-150 conclude the story of the *Psalms* with a victorious festival of praise.
Our God is
 our sufficient help,
 redeemer of Zion,
 creator of the universe
 (king of kings, before whom all people kneel, as promised in Psalm 2),
 righteous judge.
Praise God in his Holy Place, for all he has done.

The journey concludes with an almost frenetic shout of praise.

Thematic Outline for *Psalms*

Book I

Introduction to the Psalms

Psalm 1 Torah: *Blessed is anyone who is wise*

A King is enthroned in Zion & opposed by the nations

Psalm 2 Coronation of the King (David) God = Yahweh
Torah: *Why are the nations in turmoil?*
Blessed... find refuge in Yahweh

David, the Shepherd King of Israel

Psalms 3-41 Each is introduced by attribution to David
except 10 (9-10 a unit, acrostic) & 33 (32-33 a unit, 32:11=33:1)

3-7	A Cry for Justice	
8-10	Yahweh is King	Psalm 8: Creation Hymn
11-19	Refuge & Rescue	Psalm 19: Creation Hymn
	Torah: <i>Who may dwell in the lord's tabernacle?</i> (Psalm 15)	
	Psalm 18 duplicates 2 Samuel 22:1	
20-22	Yahweh is King	
23-28	Yahweh is Shepherd	
29-31		Psalm 29: Creation Hymn
32-39	The Way of the Lord	
	Torah: <i>Blessed... forgiven</i>	Psalm 32
		Psalm 33: Creation Hymn
	Torah: <i>Blessed... nation</i>	
39-41	Waiting for rescue: from silence to a new song	
	Torah: <i>Blessed... concern for helpless</i>	Psalm 41

**Blessed be the Lord God of Israel from everlasting to everlasting.
Amen & amen.**

Book III

Songs of Asaph

God = Elohim

(This Asaphic section may be understood as commentary upon Psalms 1 & 2.)

Psalms 73-76 *A destroyed shrine*

Psalm 73 begins as Psalm 1 “Blessed are the upright” but I have fallen
Adonai Elohim is my refuge; How long?

Psalm 74 Remember your flock; you are my king

Psalm 75 God says, “I will choose the time, I will judge

Psalm 76 God dwells in Zion; the nations fear

Psalm 77-80 An appeal to the Shepherd of Israel

Psalm 77 A cry for rescue; I remember you led your flock

Psalm 78 God shepherded: Exodus/taking the Land

Torah: *My people, listen to my teaching*

Psalm 79 A cry for rescue— we are your flock

The nations have invaded us & say:

Where is their God? (This question is answered in Psalm 114)

Psalm 80 Shepherd of Israel, hear us, save us

Psalm 81

Sing joyfully;

an unfamiliar voice: God answers

Torah: *My people, listen to my teaching*

Meribah do not harden your hearts

sin brings judgment up upon Israel

Comment [DMP31]: flock should find the voice of the shepherd familiar!

Psalm 82

God stands in judgment

Arise, oh God, and judge the nations

Psalm 83

a mizmor Asaph

God = Elohim

See how the nations rage recalls Psalm 2

Penitent Psalms (Mizmor) & Poems (Maskil) of David & His Singers

Mizmors

Psalms 84-87 Where God Dwells God = Yahweh
Psalm 84 of Korah The house of Yahweh Sabbaoth
Torah: *Blessed... trust Yahweh Sabbaoth*
Psalm 85 of Korah The house of Yahweh Sabbaoth
Psalm 86 of David
An appeal to God's love: listen, answer, pity
Torah: Teach me your ways
The nations will bow down & worship God
Psalm 87 of Korah City of God
God calls his people from out of the nations.
"You are born in Zion"

Maskils for the Ezrahites (the native born)

God = Elohim

Psalms 88 for Heman in sickness A cry in the night
I have had my fill of woes
Psalm 89 for Ethan God, you have cast away your king
!A covenant with David forever!
God rules: justice & judgment
 love & loyalty
?A covenant with David forever?
Where Is Our God?
How long?

Blessed be the Lord forevermore. Amen & amen.

Note: the very short and faint doxology which closes the book.

At the beginning of Book II, the nations rage and scornfully ask, "Where is their God?" and the people know the answer—our God is with us, with the king in the City of David. The beginning of Book III brings another attack and the invading nations, ask, "Where is your God?" (note the change from "their" to "your." The enemy is much closer.) and the people answer with a question. At the end of Book III, Israel asks, "Where is our God?"

Reliance on the Davidic covenant has created a crisis of faith. The royal house of David is overthrown; there is no king. The prophets, the priests and the people have been carried by their enemies into Captivity (as opposed to being carried by God in the way) and a remnant is scattered in the Land.

Where is our God?—is Yahweh Elohim still the God of Israel?

Where is our God?

The question is asked in the context of monarchy; in Book IV.

It will be answered in the context of sin, and the older Mosaic covenant.

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Images & Motifs to be examined:

Darkness & Light (Psalms 80, 87,89)
Doorkeepers (Psalms 84,88)
Native Born (birthright Psalm 2)

Comment [DMP32]: elaborate

Book IV

An Appeal to the Mosaic Covenant

God = Yahweh

Psalms 90 of Moses *Relent, O Lord, How long?*

Torah: *Teach us to count our days...*

Psalm 91 God is our refuge

what God teaches:

I rescue, I protect, I answer, I come

Psalm 92 for the Sabbath (an appeal to the Mosaic covenant:
remembering Sabbath oldest/most basic tenant of the Law)

response to God's teaching: I have learned

proclaim: God's faithful love

enemies perish; sinners scattered

proclaim: *The Lord is just*

Comment [DMP33]: add Exodus cite

Justice, At Last

Psalm 93 Yahweh is our king

power belongs to God

answers the questions raised in Psalm 89

Where Is Our God? How long?

Psalm 94 Rise up and judge

Torah: the one who instructs the nations, rebukes

Blessed... instructed by God

Come, let us sing!

Psalm 95 God is our shepherd; we are God's flock

Let us kneel... (see 103-104)

Torah: *do not harden your hearts* (Meribah)

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Hallelulia!

Psalm 105-106 1st Hallel (traditional Aspahic Hallel)

Remember: Exodus narrative (of Moses)

Psalm 105 The Lord remembered Abraham

The Lord led his people out of Egypt

Psalm 106 Lord, remember me;

like my fathers, I've sinned

sins of Exodus recounted (Meribah)

sins in the Land recounted (idolatry)

Lord, remember your covenant,

in loving-kindness relent:

Save us!

Gather us from among the Nations

**Blessed be the Lord God of Israel from everlasting to everlasting;
and let all the people say , Amen. Praise the Lord.**

The prayer that concludes Book IV, "*Gather us from among the Nations*" will be answered in Book V.

Book V:

Hallelulia! Exiles are gathered.
Remembering Exodus. Torah! The road home.
Hallelulia! Exile remembered.
Reclaiming the Davidic covenant through Torah (the way I travel).
Hallelulia! God is victorious!
I am safe; Zion is rebuilt; the people, the king, the nations bow;
God is righteous judge!
Sing a new song! Praise him! (a festival of praise)

Hallelulia!

The Gathering of Exiles

Psalm 107 *Oh, give thanks to Yahweh for he is good
His faithful love endures forever!*
Psalm 108-110 Hallel of David a king bows before The King
Torah: *Blessed...
consider in heart God's faithful love*
Psalm 111-112 *Blessed...
fear God & keep commandments*
Psalm 113-118 Egyptian Hallel celebrating Exodus
The Lord has given us light

Psalm 115 answers Where is their God? asked in Ps 42-43,79
Our God is in Heaven; whatever God wills is done.

Psalm 118 *Oh, give thanks to Yahweh for he is good
His faithful love endures forever!*

The Lord has given us light

Psalm 119 Instruction in the Way
Torah/wisdom: *Blessed...
blameless; walks in Torah
observes Torah; seeks God in heart*
I have wandered like a lost sheep;
come find me!

Songs of Ascent

Psalm 120-134 Pilgrims on the Road Home
Rejoicing in Zion

Hallelulia!

Psalm 135-136 Great Hallel
Psalm 136 *give thanks to Yahweh for he is good*
 His faithful love (cheched) endures forever
Related back to Psalms 134, 118, (Book IV Aaron)
Refrain looks forward to 145:8

Exile remembered

Psalm 137 *By the rivers of Babylon we could not sing*
The songs that they could not sing are remembered.
Upon the Return to Jerusalem the songs of the
Davidic covenant can be sung again with a new
understanding. Hallelulia!

Interlude: Psalms (Mizmor) of David, reprised

Psalm 138-145 David—Trouble & Trust (reprised)
A Psalm 138 Bless God—You listen
A Psalm 139 Bless God—You examine & know me
B Psalm 140 Rescue me
C Psalm 141 You are my refuge
C' Psalm 142 You are my refuge,
 rescue me(lead me out = Torah)
B' Psalm 143 Show me the road I must travel
A' Psalm 144 *Blessed... whose God is the Lord*
A' Psalm 145 *Blessed: My mouth will speak praises*

Hallelulia!

Psalm 146-150 God is victorious! Praise Him!
Psalm 146 God, sufficient help
 praise Him, my soul
Psalm 147 God, builder of Jerusalem (Zion)
 Sing! For no other nation has he done this!
Psalm 148 God, creator of universe
 praise Him, all people
 kings & princes, male & female, young & old
Psalm 149 God, righteous judge
 Sing a new song!
Psalm 150 Praise God in his holy place
 for all He has done
 according to his surpassing greatness!

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**Praise Him with fanfare of trumpets;
praise Him with harp & lyre;
praise Him with tambourines and dancing;
praise Him with crashing cymbals;
praise Him with sounding (triumphant) cymbals;
Let everything that has breath praise the Lord.
Hallelulia!**

Commentary on *Psalms*: 3 Strands, Woven Together

I believe that the Psalms are not randomly arranged. Rather they are arranged to tell the story of a faith journey which almost parallels the one in the beloved 23rd Psalm. The journey begins with trust in God's shepherding and provision, leads through a valley of shadow, and ends by the goodness and mercy (the checed) of God with a homecoming to the house of God.

The story is told by weaving together
three images of God: King, Shepherd, Light of the Way.
three types of prayer: cries for justice, cries for mercy, cries for guidance

When people pray, "It's not fair!"

God answers: I am King--I rule my House, my City, my Creation.
I will judge. Justice is done; right is victorious.
All power belongs to me.
Citizens of my City obey my Law to live just/righteous lives.
The blessed find refuge in my City.

When people pray, "Help me!"

God answers: "Checed" I am your shepherd.
I care for and carry you. You are safe.
My faithful love has no limits and does not fail.
My sheep hear my voice, trust & follow me.
The blessed find refuge in my Mercy.

When people pray, "Teach me!"

God answers: "Torah"
To kneel before the King in His City, one must
walk the Way the Shepherd leads
even when the way leads through the valley of
shadows.
Do not be stubborn, do not harden your heart,
my word, law, teaching, instruction will light your way.

To each of God's answers,
the appropriate response
is to kneel before the Lord,
to walk in His Way,
to worship with songs of praise.

From the Christian perspective, one can almost see The Trinity:

God, the Father—Creator of the Universe, King enthroned in splendor,
Jesus, Anointed Son of God—the Good Shepherd
who lays down his life for the flock
Spirit, Breath of God—the Law written on our hearts, lighting the Way

Commentary on Psalms 1 & 2

Psalms 1 & 2

are related to one another by key word grouping:

“meditate” (1:2) & “rage” (2:1) (share related Hebrew roots)

“happy is the...” (1:1, 2:12)

“perish” (1:6, 2:12)

introduce the major themes and set the tone of the book of *Psalms*:

blessed (how happy!, the blessed ones) (1:1,2:12)

Blessed Torah is delight & meditation

Blessed take refuge in God (Yahweh)

opposition of righteous (1:1,2-3,6a, 2:12a)

& wicked (1:1,4-5,6b, 2:12b)

judgment, of wicked, death (1:4-5, 2:4-5)

(both vengeance/punishment and mercy are God’s prerogative)

God, as life-giver & refuge of righteous (1:3, 2:12)

Torah (the Law) and *derek* (the way) (1:2,6, 2:12)

God, as shepherd

(superintendent/watcher of the way) (1:6)

a king enthroned in Zion (2:4-9)

opposed by the nations (2:1-3, 10, 12)

(power belongs to God)

birthright/heritage/inheritance/sonship (2:8-9)

Psalms 1 instructs: choose the path of the Lord & be blessed

or choose the path of the wicked and perish

Psalms 2 instructs: take refuge in the Lord’s Anointed or perish

God’s kingship demands that everyone

“Serve Yahweh!

Fear him.

Humble yourself before him.

Kiss his feet.” (2:11-12a)

In later Psalms this attitude becomes:

“*my soul kneels*”:

Consider: adopting postures of prayer mentioned in the Psalms. Kneel, bow down. Stand, lift up hands, clap.

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Psalm 1

Psalm 1 has two interwoven structures.

Structure:

present:	A	1-3	Blessed not walking or sitting with the wicked
	B	4-5	the wicked not standing with the assembly of righteous
future:	A	6	Blessed walk the way God watches over
	B	6	the wicked walk the way that perishes

And:

A		1	The blessed walk/sit not with wicked...
	B	2	their way (Torah)
	C	3	Comparison: like trees/water fruitful, useful
	C'	4	Comparison: like chaff/wind not nourishing, trash
	B'		"not so" (their way implied: not Torah)
A		5	wicked do not stand with righteous
The reason:		6	God shepherds the way of the righteous the way of the wicked perishes

Psalm 2

2:7 You are my Son, today I've fathered you

cited by Paul at Antioch, with reference "the second Psalm" Acts 13:33
Mark 1:11, Matthew 3:17 @ Jesus' baptism
also quoted in Hebrews 1:5 & 5:5

2:2 quoted Revelation 19:19
2:9-10 19:15

Key ideas:

Lord's anointed ("messiah")
enthroned in heaven
installed as king
Zion, my holy mountain
nations, inheritance (birthright)
refuge in God

Structure:

1-3	A	Actions of	earthly rulers	A
4-6	A	Actions of	God	B
7-9	B	Commands for	Son	B'
10-12	B	Commands for	earthly rulers	

A'

To perish or to die are sometimes translations of Hebrew words that are idioms for to be lost, to lose the way.

Psalm 1 ends with "perish the way of the wicked"

Psalm 2 ends with "the wicked perish" because they will not walk in the way of the Lord.

Both the wicked (who do not choose the path the Lord watches and who do not take refuge in the Lord's anointed king) and their way of life perish, cannot not stand, are damned.

See additional commentary of Psalms 1 & 2 with that on Psalm 72 (page 48).

Commentary: Crowning the King

Royal Psalms: 2, 18, 20-21, 45, 72, 101, 110, 144:1-11
(Psalms 2 discussed with Psalm 1, previously)
(Psalm 45 will be discussed as a Song of the Sons of Korah)

Psalm 18

David rescued from Saul
4th longest 2 Samuel 22 duplicates

18:49 cited by Paul in Romans 15:9
18:50 the Messiah among the nations

Key ideas & structure:

1-4	A	Praise: I love God	rock & salvation
4-19		B God rescues/loves me	
20-31			C I keep God's way
32-35			C' God is God
36-46		B' God gives me victory	
47-51	A'	Praise	rock & salvation

Psalm 144:1-11

begins the last round of praise in *Psalms*
144-146 personal praise

similar to Psalm 18 (from which it quotes)

In fact, this psalm is made up almost entirely of quotations from other psalms:

1a	18:34 & 36
3	8:4
4	39:6, 102:11
5	18:9, 104:32
6	18:14
7	18:16
9	33:2-3
10	18:50
15b	33:12a

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Psalms 20 & 21

David

The King Goes to Battle & Returns Victorious

20:1-6 all verbs may be interpreted 2 ways: prayer or prediction
may the Lord or the Lord will

20:7-10 “anointed” boast is the name
v. 9 “**Hosanna**” **Save**

21:1-8 gratitude the king trusts
positives: in your strength + blessing of goodness of
life

21:9-13 God rescues
negatives: enemies, hate, anger, wrath, destroy evil

21:14 Arise, Yahweh, in the power of your strength

Note: Psalm 22, the one which follows, is the psalm of the suffering one (Christ on the Cross)

Psalm 101

of David

royal/wisdom
king’s coronation vow
city of God (Zion)

v.2 in Hebrew “When will you come to me?”
usually translated as “please be with me”
perhaps a “so help me, God”

v. 4a	Proverbs	11:20
v. 5b		6:17
v.7a		25:5

Psalm 72

of Solomon (as is Psalm 127) ends Book II of the Psalter.

It is a coronation hymn, often said to have been used at Solomon's coronation (as Psalm 2 is said to have been used at David's). Much discussion in commentaries: Is this psalm written by Solomon or by David for Solomon, his son?

as in Psalm 20:1-6 verbs either wish/prayer or future/predictive

- v. 8 "peace" = Shalom
- Solomon = Shelomo
- prince of peace = sar shalom

There is not battle in this Psalm, the ever-present conflict is not mentioned. The nations bow to the king, not because they have been conquered, but because he is worthy.

- v.9 Chronicles 9:21 Tarshish tribute I Kings 10:1 Sheba ?Seba?
believed to represent North & South (i.e. the world)

Note: In biblical literature, directions have meaning. East generally represents Wisdom. the West wind brings destruction, the result of "un-wisdom." North and South may be taken to represent earthly kingdoms. Thus, "the four corners" encompass all of creation.

Comment [DMP34]: Look for confirmation of this idea.

- v. 17 Genesis 12:3, 22:18
- v. 18-20 Zechariah's Song

Key ideas & Structure:

- 1 A the King, endowed with God's judgment/righteousness
- 2 B rule with justice to the oppressed
- 3 C mountains fruitful;
- 4 B defend the poor
- 5 D Live long! (as the sun endures)
- 6-7 C rain/ abundance
- 8-11 A the King, the kings of the nations bring gifts/bow
- 12-14 B rescue the poor
- 15 D Live long!
- 16 C abundance
- 17 D lasting name (sun endures)
- A the King blessed, the nations blessed in him.

18-20 The doxology that closes Book II
Here end the psalms of David...

"Here end the psalms of David..."

prompts some additional comment on the organization of the **Psalms**.

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Books I and II of Psalms, Psalms 1-72, form a coherent unit:

Premise of Psalm 1:

Blessed is the man who walks in the way of the Lord.
This premise is examined and affirmed in the life of David,
Shepherd King and singer of Israel.

Psalm 71 presents the death of David;

blessed even in old age because he walks in the way of the Lord.

Premise of Psalm 2:

God will crown a king and give to him the nations to rule.
This premise is examined in the context of the nation of Israel,
as the nations rage:

Will God act as righteous judge?
Will the King be crowned?
Will the son of David sit upon his throne?
Will conflict end in peace?

Psalm 72 presents the coronation of David's Son,

Solomon—whose name means "peace."

The answer to all the questions is a resounding "yes!"

Psalm 72 also offers a definition of Kingdom in it's outline:

verses 1-4	Kingdom is of Righteous
5-9	Kingdom is Eternal
10-11	Kingdom is Universal
12-14	Kingdom is of Compassionate
15-17	Kingdom is Blessing

Jesus said,

"Blessed are the poor."

Jesus prayed and taught us to pray:

"Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth..."

The kingdom of Psalm 72 is

"the kingdom for which the world still waits."

G. Campbell Morgan

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Psalm 110

of David (Jesus said so. Matthew 22:41-46)
Often thought to be David's coronation vow.
Psalm 110 is both a royal psalm and a messianic psalm.

Augustine re Psalm 110:

"*verbis brevis, sensu infinitus*" short in words, in sense infinite

Scofield provides a summary of the psalm saying it

"*begins with the Ascension... moves prophetically through the conversion of Israel... and judgment of the Gentiles... to Armageddon.*"

Scofield asserts that Jesus is the

"*Rod*" of Yahweh and the "*Deliverer of Zion.*"

Spurgeon relates it to Psalm 109 (a Passion psalm), calling 110 a psalm of Resurrection/Ascension/Enthronement. He identifies similar sequences in Psalms 22-24 and 45-47.

Comment [DMP35]: examine these sequences

Psalm 110 is the psalm most frequently cited in the New Testament:

20+ N.T. quotations New Testament writers cite it to affirm
the deity of Jesus and his eternal priesthood.

Jesus himself expounds on the psalm Matthew 22:1,41-45
Mark 12:35-37
Luke 20:41-44

Peter uses Psalms 16, 39 & 110, & 132:11
at Pentecost, the 1st sermon text Acts 2:22-47 v.34,35

Stephen alludes to it Acts 7:55-56

Paul quotes it and refers to its thematic ideas Romans 8:34; 11:25-27;
I Corinthians 15:23-26
Ephesians 1:20-22
Philippians 2:9-11; 25, 4:8-9
Colossians 3:1,
II Thessalonians 2:8;
I Timothy 2:5,6 *et al*

John joins in also John 10:24,26, 14:2, 6; 20:17
Revelation 3:21; 16:14; 19:11-21

The book of Hebrews might be said to be a treatise upon the psalm
Hebrews 1:13; 5:1,6; 6:20; 7:1-28; 9:26, 10:12,13

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Recently some Jewish scholars offer an alternate reading:

"Melchizedek" is not a name but rather a phrase meaning
"my king is legitimate."

I reject this reading on basis the argument in Hebrews:

verse 4 is quoted & commented on in Hebrews 5-7.

An excellent illustration of the use of Scripture by 1st Century Christians.

verse 5 who is at whose right hand? Lord or LORD
is the son at the father's as in verse 1 or father at son's?

Christ at right hand of God:

Matthew 26:24, Mark 14:62, 16:19, Luke 22:69

Ephesians 1:6, Colossians 3:1, Hebrews 1:3, 8:1, 10:2, 12:2 1 Peter 3:22

enemies as his footstool

1 Corinthians 15:25, Ephesians 1:22 Hebrews 10:13

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Psalm 118

a hymn of thanksgiving
related to the Song of Moses Exodus 15
118:14 & 28 Exodus 15:2
118:15 & 16 Exodus 15:6

Important Psalm in NT:

118:6 Hebrews 13:6

Entry into Jerusalem (Jesus on Palm Sunday)

Mark 11:9-10
Matthew 21:9
118:22-23 Mark 12:10-11 “stone builders rejected”
Matthew 21:42, Luke 20:17 Jesus accepts identity
Ephesians 2:20
118:25-26a Hosanna “save now, please” Psalm 20
son of David (king)
Matthew 21:9, 23:38
Mark 11:9-10
Luke 13:35, 19:38
John 12:13
118:26 Matthew 23:39 Jesus accepts identity
Luke 13:35

“cheched” Faithful love used 5 times (only Psalm 136 more, 26 times)

v. 1 & 29 It is good to give thanks to the Lord for he is good
his faithful love endures forever
v. 2,3,4 begin “Declare it”
v. 6a, 7a “the Lord is on my side”
v. 8 & 9 it is better to find refuge in the Lord
than to trust in men (princes)
v. 10a,11a,12a “surround”
v. 10b,11b,12b but in the Lord’s name I drive them away
v. 15 & 16 right hand of the Lord
v. 19 & 20 gate(s) righteous(ness)

Commentary: Shepherd of Israel

Shepherd
Psalms 23:1, 28:9, 80:1

Flock
Psalm 77:20, 78:52 & 70, 79:13, 80:1
Psalm 119:176
Psalms 100:3,
Psalms 107:41, 114:4-6, 144:13

Blessed are those who find refuge in Yahweh!

Psalm 119:176

*I am wandering like a lost sheep!
Come, search for me!
I do not forget your commands.*

Psalms 100:3,

*Know
Yahweh is God
He made us
We are his
We are his people
the flock he shepherds
the sheep he pastures
the flock of his sheepfold
God's well-tended flock*

Psalms 23 - 28
The Lord is my shepherd...
psalms of David
related by key-word grouping

Psalm 23

testimony of faith
structure

*The Lord is my shepherd
provides all I need
leads me
right paths
for name's sake
darkest valley*

presence of enemies

*dwell in house of Lord
for length of days*

Psalm 26

individual lament

*your faithful love
leads me
wondrous deeds
the house where you dwell
thanksgiving
stand on level ground*

Psalm 24

liturgical hymn

*The earth is the Lord's
who? In his holy place
receive blessings
seek God's face
& skilled hands*

presence of God

who is the king of glory

Psalm 27

testimony/prayer

*light/salvation
enemies
seek God's face
dwell in his house
all days of my life
refuge
lead me
wait for the Lord
be strong*

Psalm 25

elaborate

*I wait for you, Lord
teach me your path
lead me
remember
loving
kindness
paths =
faithful love
enemies*

Psalm 28

personal lament

*I cry, hear
enemies
my heart trusts
thanksgiving
refuge of the king
save us!
a heritage
Lord is strength
shepherd your
people*

Psalm 77, 78, 79, 80
God, Shepherd of Israel
songs of Asaph
related by key-word grouping
sometimes viewed as commentary on Psalm 23

Psalm 77
individual lament

sake

77:22

*You led your people
like a flock
by the hand of
Moses & Aaron*

generation

Psalm 78
didactic
2nd longest

78:70-72

*You chose David
took him from sheepfold
to shepherd Jacob, Israel
with a pure heart
& skilled hands*

he led them

Psalm 80:1
national prayer for restoration
*Shepherd of Israel, listen,
you who lead the flock of Joseph*

Psalm 80:3,7,19
*God Sabaoth, Lord of Hosts
bring us back, restore us
let your face shine upon us
that we may be saved*

Blessed... find refuge in Yahweh

Psalm 79
national lament
malediction
79:9
for your name's

79:13

*We, your people
flock you shepherd
give thanks forever
repeat your praise
generation to*

Psalm 23

most recognizable psalm, America's funeral psalm

Rabbi Kushner, calls it a 3-act play depicting one man's story:

first, peace & serenity; then darkness & grief;
finally new relationship with God

God, the source of strength at a time when all seemed lost.

For Kushner, "the 23rd offers lessons on
gratitude ("my cup runneth over"),
direction "he guides me in straight paths, for his name's sake),
and inner peace (he makes me lie down in green pastures").

***"God's promise is never that life would be fair; God's promise is that
whenever we have to confront the unfairness, He will be with us."***

***"The most important lesson is that in times of trouble God does not
explain, God comforts."***

Rabbi Harold S. Kushner

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Psalm 25

alphabetic acrostic

(each verse begins with Hebrew alphabet: verse 2, 2nd word;
verse 5, divided in two assigned 2 letters; verse 22 beyond end)

chiasmus (A - J, with J' repeated at end)

key-word linking, verse to verse

1	A	I lift up my soul, I wait	<i>aleph</i>
2	B	let me not be shamed	
	<i>bet</i>		
3	C	those who break faith, shamed	<i>gimel</i>
4-5a	D	3 petitions: guide, teach,	<i>dalet</i>
5b	E	save me	<i>he</i>
1	F	I wait	<i>(waw)</i>
7	G	God's mercy	<i>zain</i>
8-9	G	God's goodness	<i>het</i>
10a	H	God's Torah	<i>yod</i>
10b	I	Faithfulness	<i>kaph</i>
11	J	"Pardon"	<i>lamed</i>
12	I'	those who fear Lord	<i>mem</i>
13	H'	Covenant instructs	<i>nun</i>
14-15	G'	God frees entrapped.	<i>samek</i>
16a	G'	Have mercy	<i>pe</i>
16b	F'	I am lonely & afflicted	
17a	E'	save me'	<i>zade</i>
17b-19a	D'	3 petitions: relieve, rescue, forgive	<i>(qoph)</i>
19b	C'	see my enemies	<i>resh</i>
20	B'	let me not be shamed	<i>shin</i>
21	A'	I wait for you	<i>taw</i>
22	J'	"Redeem"	

Commentary: Creation Hymns

Creation Hymns are Psalms 8, 19, 28, 29, 33, 97, 148

Psalm 29 Creation Hymn

from Boice: Psalm 29 is different from all previous psalms 1-28.

It is entirely praise. Pure praise.

Also "pure poetry" relying on the oldest Hebrew poetic devices:
repetition & parallelism

simple alternating lines: a defend me
 b attack my enemies

In its 11 verses, "Yahweh" is used 18 times!

Spurgeon:

*Just as the 8th psalm is to be read by moonlight,
when the stars are bright,
and the 19th needs the rays of the rising sun
to bring out its beauty,
so this (the 29th) can be best rehearsed by the glare of lightening
or amid the dubious dusk which heralds the war of elements.
The verses march to the tune of thunderbolts.
God is everywhere conspicuous,
and all the earth is hushed by his presence.*

Treasury of David, Vol. 1, Part 2, page 29

Creation hymns, Psalms 29 and 33 form a ring structure around the intervening psalms. Psalm 33 has no superscript. In 2 Dead Sea Scrolls, Psalm 33 follows Ps 31 with Ps 32 omitted. It may be possible to view Psalm 32 as an interlude on prosperity, blessing, sin or even as a Torah insertion into an earlier text.

Psalm 29 Creation Hymn

Psalms 30-32 Shaken by sin

Psalm 30: David's Royal Palace:

When I became prosperous (blessed)... never be shaken.

Psalm 31: Let your faithful love be my saving grace

(take pity on me, a sinner)

Psalms 32:1-7 Blessed... forgiven

you are my hiding place (not palaces nor prosperity)

Psalms 32:8-11 God promises Torah:

The solution to sin is Instruction in the Way

Psalm 33 Creation Hymn (celebrating the ways in which God acts)

Commentary: Blessed by Torah (Wisdom)

"Where is our God?"

The answer to this question is God's response to a cry for rescue.
It is God's righteous judgment that addresses a plea for justice.
It is TORAH

The following are Torah psalms:

Psalm 1 (maybe 2), 72
Psalm 49-50
Psalm 62
Psalm 78
Psalm 83
Psalm 90, 91,92
Psalm 105-106
Psalm 113-118
Psalm 119

see notes on torah, page 14

Psalm 119:

Using Psalm 119, Martin Luther said a theologian needs 3 things:

1. meditation = personal engagement with scripture,
not for sermons, not for lectures but
for meeting with God
for hearing God speak
2. temptation = desire to resist or rationalize what God speak
3. prayer = our reply, our response to God's speaking
our wrestling with the desire to resist/dispute

Commentary: Songs of the Sons of Korah

Psalms 42-49, 84,85,87,88

In the Catholic liturgy for Maundy Thursday, during the ceremony of washing feet the narrative from Gospel of John is interspersed with Psalm 48:1, 85:1, 49:2, 84:1-2a

In the Korah sequence, Psalm 45-47 form an interlude on the kingship of God

Who were the sons of Korah?

Exodus 6:16,21	2 nd son of Levi, family head
Numbers 16:1, 31-35	Levite family who challenged Moses annihilated, swallowed by earth their story illustrates truth of the phrase “serve the Lord in fear & trembling”
I Chronicles 6:22, 31	Levites appointed by David to be in charge of music in the House of the Lord
I Chronicles 9:19	family responsible as guards at the gates of the Tabernacle: their ancestors had guarded the entrances to the camp of the Lord
2 Chronicles 19	Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, appointed Levites to administer justice
20	attacked by Moab, Ammon, et al
20:13	Jehoshaphat declares a fast & seeks God
20:14	all Judah stood before the Lord
	Levite from line of Asaph prophesies victory:
	<i>Stand firm & wait;</i>
	<i>you will see the deliverance worked by the Lord.</i>
	<i>Do not be afraid</i>
	<i>the Lord is on your side.</i>
20:19	Levites from sons of Korah stood up and praised the Lord the God of Israel with a mighty shout.

Note: Psalms 42-43, 44, 45, 88,89 are all superscribed “maskil” meaning is uncertain, usually guess is artistic song
Perhaps a maskil is a psalm written to be sung in the style of the Korahite singers: standing, praising the Lord with a mighty shout.

Psalm 42-43 a unit

related to Psalm 84

maskil,

setting is Far North, below the peaks of Hermon

Note: Psalm 42-43 (a unit) open Book II of Psalms

Key ideas & structure

- 42:1-4 A mountain streams,
B thirsting for God
C I ask: When shall I come into God's presence?
D day & night - tears
C enemies ask all day long: Where is your God?
B Prayer (lament),
remembering pilgrimage, great house of God
42:5 Refrain:
How deep I am sunk in misery
groaning in my distress
yet I will wait for God
I will praise Him continually
my deliverer, my God.
- 42:6-10 A' springs of Jordan,
A' overwhelming waves
D' Day & night –
God's unfailing love, praise in prayer
C' I ask: God, my rock, why have you forsaken me?
C' enemies ask all day long: Where is your God?
42:11 Refrain:
How deep I am sunk in misery
groaning in my distress
yet I will wait for God
I will praise Him continually
my deliverer, my God.
- 43:1-4 B' Plead my cause, give me judgment, save me, God, my refuge
C''' I ask: Why have you rejected me?
C''' my enemies oppress me
D'' send light (day) guide, lead to your holy hill,
B' tabernacle, festival of praise at the altar of God
43:5 Refrain
How deep I am sunk in misery
groaning in my distress
yet I will wait for God
I will praise Him continually
my deliverer, my God.

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Psalm 84

a "gittith" of Gath

related to Psalm 42-43

Key ideas & structure

1 Lord of Hosts (Yahweh Sabbaoth)

1b-3a lovely your dwelling place related to Psalm 43:3
thirsting for God
at home by the altars of the living God

3b Lord of Hosts
my king & my God

4 blessed are those who dwell in your house
praise unceasing

Selah

5 blessed are those whose refuge is in you
hearts on pilgrimage

6-7 springs in the desert, early rains related to Psalm 42:9, 43:2
going to Zion where God dwells

8 Lord of Hosts

hear my prayer
God of Jacob
listen to me

Selah

9 God, our shield
look at the face of your anointed

10 blessed, to be in God's court
blessed to stand at the gates of your house

11 Yahweh God, our sun (refuge), our shield
bestow grace & honor, withhold no good thing

12 Lord of Hosts

blessed are those who trust in you

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Psalm 44

related to Psalm 85

maskil, an appeal to the God of history
732 BC Assyrian Tiglath-pileser ravaged Galilee
& other northern kingdoms. Dan was left intact (2 Kings 15:27-31)
Psalm 44:22 cited by Paul in Romans 8:36
for your sake we are done to death all day long
treated as sheep for the slaughter

Key ideas & structure

- 44:1-8 O God, we have heard for ourselves (Psalm 48:8)
our fathers have told us... (God's mighty deeds recited)
You are my King and my God
Save me! (4 times in 1st 7 verses)
In God we glory & praise
all day long (?recalls Psalm 43: Where is your God?)
- 44:9-16 But you, God, have rejected & humbled us
miserable situation described (?details of misery in Psalm 43)
mockery of the nations
- 44:19-21 We are innocent but suffering!
But we do not forget God's covenant
We are sheep for slaughter (?implied Where is our Shepherd?)
- 44:22-26 Wake up! Save us!
Arise & come help us for thy love's sake
an appeal to God's *cheved*

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Psalm 85

related to Psalm 44

an appeal to the God of history

Augustine used this Psalm in his sermon for Christmas Day 5 times.

Key ideas & structure

- 1-2 A Yahweh once you favored the land
 B restored Jacob,
 C forgave
- Selah
- 3 C' once you withdrew your wrath
- 4-7 B' Restore us
 A' God of our salvation
 Will you be angry forever?
 B Revive us
 C show your steadfast love "cheched"
- 8-11 I will listen for God's word
 A be our salvation
 A Salvation is near
 C love & faithfulness meet
 justice & peace kiss
- 12-13 A Yahweh will grant abundance: the land will increase in harvest,
 justice will march before Him, peace will be his pathway

At this point in the 750 B.C. psalms, there is an insertion of a royal wedding sequence, the Korahite Interlude on the Kingship of God, Psalms 45-47. See page

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Psalm 48

probably the same author as Psalm 46 related to Psalm 87
the city of God "Zion"
believed by most scholars to be written
701 BC Jerusalem saved from Sennacherib Is. 36 & 37
(some say Nehemiah 12:27 supported by v. 12-13)

The second verse along with Isaiah 66:1 is quoted in Matthew 5:34-35

Key ideas & structure

1 A Praise God in the city "great & worthy"
2-3 B Zion
4-7 C kings attack/tremble
8 D What we heard we see,
Selah
9-10 C' God's faithful love saves
11-13 B Zion
14 A' Praise God! Our guide, forever

Psalm 87

related to Psalm 48

theme is the city of God & the praise of the nations
may have been a song to celebrate a royal birth

Key ideas & structure

1-3 founded on the holy mountain
Yahweh loves his holy city
the gates of Zion
more than all the dwellings of Jacob
Glorious things are spoken of you,
city of God
Selah
4-6 of Rahab (Egypt), Babylon, Philistia, Tyre, Ethiopia
"this one was born there" (?the Diaspora)
of Zion
"everyone was born here"
for the Lord records it in the register of his people
"this one was born here"
Selah
7 Singing & dancing in festival
All my springs are in you
(within you is my true home)

Psalm 49

related to Psalm 88

the poet is a very self-aware poet (as in Psalm 45),

The Hebrew is very old, structure complex:

1st four verses address the audience prior to the body of the psalm

2 couplets: (alternating) (introverted) pattern is repeated

"Listen, everyone! I sing a parable"

verse 5-11 couplet, quatrain alternating, couplet, quatrain introverted
"men are like beasts. They die."

verses 13-19 couplet, quatrain introverted, couplet, quatrain alternating
"men are like beasts. They die."

Key ideas & structure:

1	a	Hear	c/d	all people
	a	Give ear	c/d	all inhabitant
			2	c
				Low
				d high
				d' rich
				c' poor
3	a'	my mouth speaks	b	wisdom
	a'	heart meditates	b	understanding
4	a	Attend to a proverb		
	a	my question to music	b'	expound (solve, interpret)
5	A	Why should I fear time of trouble?		
6-9	B	riches are not a ransom from death		
10	C	neither is wisdom (both wise & foolish die)		
11	D	riches left to others		
	E	grave is eternal dwelling		
12	F	despite riches, men are like beasts. They perish		
13		foolish to trust in wealth		
	Selah			
14		F'	like sheep with death as their shepherd	
		E'	Sheol is their home	
15	A	But God will ransom me		
		E"	redeem me from Sheol	
	Selah			
16	A'	Do not fear		
	B'	when others grow rich		
	C'	they die		
17-18	D'	can't take it with them		
19	E'	never again to see light		
20	F'	despite riches, men are like beasts. They perish		

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Psalm 47

enthronement

v.5 "go up" = enthrone

key ideas & structure:

1	A	peoples
2-4	B	God is sovereign
<i>Selah</i>		
5-6	C	Let the music sound "sing praises" 4 times in v. 6
7-8	B'	God is king
9	A'	peoples

Commentary: Psalms 71

The 71st psalm describes the trials of old age. The person is probably David.

"struggling, but unstaggering, faith"

Polycarp story

Comment [DMP37]: find it

"Old age

***robs us of our personal beauty
and deprives us of strength for active service;
but it does not lower us
in the love and favour of God."***

"Grace does not leave the saint

***when the keepers of the house tremble;
the promise is still sure
though the eye can no longer read it;
the bread of heaven is fed upon even
when the grinders fail;
and the voice of the Spirit in the soul is still melodious
when the daughters of music are brought low.***

Blessed be the Lord for this!

***Because even to the hoar hairs
he is the I AM who made his people...
and bears and carries them"***

Spurgeon.

Commentary: Songs of Ascent

Psalms 120-134

One of several sub-collections in Psalms and, like The Songs of the Sons of Korah (42-49) and their reworking (84-87), they are usually viewed as psalms used during or while traveling to festivals of worship.

They are variously called songs "of ascent, of degrees, of pilgrimage, the graduals." The Hebrew means simply "going up." Indeed they were probably sung when "going up to Jerusalem." However, at least one commentator speculates that perhaps the song was sung with low voice and went up, with ever high voices.

There is much speculation as to the which Festival in which era:
David's moving the Ark into Jerusalem,
Dedication of Solomon's Temple,
Return from Captivity and dedication of the 2nd Temple.

Some theorize that these are psalms by/for Hezekiah celebrating the 15 steps that the shadow moved, symbolizing 15 years of peace.
Some believe they are marching songs used by those returning from Babylon either with the first return or later with Ezra/Nehemiah.

I favor a later date based not only on language and theme but on the poetic structure which is unique to them.

- All of these psalms have a feeling of sweetness/tenderness/pathos
- and they are all brief. (Psalm 132 is the longest, and has a more formal structure. Therefore, I believe the "of David" superscript/postscript belongs to this psalm rather than to Psalms 131 or 133.)
- Unlike other psalms, they are completely lacking in parallelism, the usual Hebrew poetic device.
- They have a unique rhythm—a quick, trochaic rhythm (two syllables—long,short) and lines of increasing length, an almost step-like progression.

An English example of trochee,
Longfellow's ***Psalm of Life***:
Tell me not in mournful numbers
Life is but an empty dream
For the soul is dead that slumbers
And things are not what they seem.

When "by the rivers of Babylon the Hebrews "hung up their harps" and could/would not "sing the songs of Zion" (Psalm 137), there was undoubtedly room for a new creative impulse. Perhaps borrowing the style and rhythms of Babylonian songs and the songs of captives from other areas, they sang these songs—homesick for Jerusalem, in need of comfort, relying on their God to bring them home to Zion. Later, with too-good-to-be-

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true joy, they did indeed sing these songs while they journeyed home to Jerusalem and as they worshipped in the restored Temple.

The style of these psalms is new but the themes are timeless and common to the other psalms:

Whenever I'm in trouble, I call to Yahweh. He answers.
He keeps me/us safe; even through overwhelming difficulties.
Zion is unshakeable; we will go there & worship.
God blesses with peace those who walk in His Way.

These are songs we should sing, prayers we should pray as we
***"journey together to the higher ground
of life in Christ Jesus, Our Lord."***

Jesus is The Anointed One of Psalm 132.

Commentary: Seeing Jesus Christ in the Psalms

Psalm 2	Son of God/Baptism (see notes: Crowning the King)
Psalm 16	Garden Prayer & Empty Tomb
Psalm 19	Christ on cross, cast lots, I thirst
Psalm 22	Christ on the Cross
Psalm 23	Good Shepherd (see notes: Yahweh, Shepherd of Israel)
Psalm 24	King of Glory enters the gates
Psalm 31	
Psalm 34	Magnificat (Mary's Song)
Psalm 40	Incarnation/Virgin Birth
Psalm 41	Last Supper/Betrayal
Psalm 45	?Nativity? (Bride of the King) (see notes: Songs of the Sons of Korah)
Psalm 69	Zeal for thy house/Cleansing Temple crown of thorns/wine & gall
Psalm 72	Elizabeth's Song/Zechariah's song (gold, frankincense, myrrh (see notes: Crowning the King)
Psalm 89	Simeon's Song
Psalm 110	Messiah! Most quoted OT passage in NT
Psalm 118	Entry into Jerusalem Hosanna!
Psalm 119	The Word Forever

Jesus' Prayer in John 17 parallels Psalm 133

Commentary:

The God of Israel | _____

shepherd/redeemer (personal)
builder/redeemer (national)
creator/ruler (universal)
righteous judge/just king

Comment [DMP38]: ?future section?

City of God | _____

page

Psalms 46, 48
Psalms 84-87

Rabbi Robert I. Kahn Says that Psalm 84 is called the Usher's (the gatekeeper, doorkeeper) psalm.

Psalm 84 would make good commentary with Jesus coming to Temple at age of 12 years.

Psalm 91

?Psalm 145

Comment [DMP39]: ?future section?

Appendix I: Psalms Quotations in Scripture

Psalms quoted by Jeremiah:

Psalms 1,2,6,7,9-10,22,35,38,63,64,78,79,83,84,122,139

Psalms that quote Jeremiah:

Psalms 51,69,31,55:1-8,40:1-11, 135, 148 some 103

Jeremiah also quoted in Psalm 103 after 540 BC

Psalms that quote Isaiah

Psalm 103
Isaiah 40-66 quoted in Psalm 103

Other Psalms quotations:

I Chron 16:8-22 quotes Psalm 105:1-15
I Chron 16:22-23 quotes Psalm 96:1-3
I Chron 16:34-36 quotes Psalm 106:1,47-48

Ezra 3:11 Psalm 106:1, 107:1
118:1,29
136:1

There may be other examples.

Psalm 96 similar Psalm 98

Paul in his epistles quotes Psalms 18 times and alludes to Psalms 15 times.
E.E. Ellis, Paul's Use of the Old Testament, quoted by Harvey p. 83

In the book of Hebrews there are 19 citations to 11 Psalms:

Hebrews	1:5	cites	Psalm	2:7	coronation psalm
Hebrews	1:6	cites	Psalm	97:7	
Hebrews	1:7	cites	Psalm	104:4	angels/gods quote
Septuagint					
Hebrews	1:8-9	cite	Psalm	45:7-8	royal wedding psalm - "God has enthroned you forever
Hebrews	1:10-1	cite	Psalm	102:26-28	hymn/lament of sick/suffering
Hebrews	1:13	cites	Psalm	110:1	coronation psalm (most frequently quoted in Gospels)
Hebrews	2:6-8	cite	Psalm	8:5-7	angel/gods, see 104:4
Hebrews	2:12	cites	Psalm	22:23	Jesus on the cross
Hebrews	3:7-11	cite	Psalm	95:7b-11	
Hebrews	3:15	cites	Psalm	95:7b-8a	
Hebrews	4:3	cites	Psalm	95:11	
Hebrews	4:5	cites	Psalm	95:11	
Hebrews	4:7	cites	Psalm	95:7b-11	Meribah
Hebrews	5:5	cites	Psalm	2:7	coronation
Hebrews	5:6	cites	Psalm	110:4	
Hebrews	7:17	cites	Psalm	110:4	
Hebrews	7:21	cites	Psalm	110:4	Melchizedek a priest forever
Hebrews	10:5-7	cite	Psalm	40:7-9	thanksgiving, heal
Hebrews	13:6	cites	Psalm	18:6	thanksgiving for deliverance: "The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid."

A Selection of Cited Psalms in Context (Hebrews quoted in bold)

Psalm 97: 1a,7,9-12

The Lord is king, let the earth rejoice.

**All who serve idols are put to shame,
who glory in worthless things;
all gods bow down before him.**

For you, Lord, are Most High over all the earth, far exalted above all gods.

A harvest of light has arisen for the righteous and joy in the upright heart.

You that are righteous rejoice in the Lord and praise his holy name.

Psalm 104:1-4,5,24a,31,33-34

Bless the Lord, O my soul.

O Lord my God, you are very great, clothed in majesty and splendor

and enfolded in a robe of light.

You stretch out the heavens like a tent,

you set the beams of your dwelling on the waters,

you ride on the wings of the wind

**you make the winds your messengers, fire and flame
your ministers.**

You set the earth on its foundations so that it shall never be shaken.

Countless are the things you have made, Lord,

by your wisdom you have made them all...

May the glory of the Lord stand for ever, and may the Lord rejoice in his works!

As long as I live I shall sing to the Lord

I shall sing psalms to my God all my life long.

May my meditation be pleasing to him for I rejoice in the Lord.

Psalm 102:1-3a,11-12,25,**26-28**

Lord, hear my prayer and let my cry for help come to you.

Do not hide your face from me when I am in distress.

Listen to my prayer and, when I call, be swift to reply;

for my days vanish like smoke...

My days decline like shadows lengthening.

I wither away like grass.

But you, Lord, are enthroned forever; your name endures to all generations.

Long ago, you laid the foundation of the earth,

and the heavens are the work of your hands.

**They will perish, but you remain;
they will all wear out like a garment.
Like clothing, you change them and they vanish.
But you are the same; your years have not end.
The children of those who serve you will live secure
and their offspring be established in your presence.**

Psalm 8:1-4,5-7,9

O Lord, our sovereign, how glorious is your name in all the earth!
Your majesty is praised as high as the heavens.

Out of mouths of babes...

you have established a bulwark against your adversaries
to restrain the enemy and the avenger.

When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers,
at the moon and the stars you have set in place,
what are frail mortals that you are mindful of them?

What are frail mortals that you should care for them?

**You have made them a little less than the angels
and crowned them with glory and honor.
You have given them dominion over all you have**

made...

O Lord, our God how glorious is your name in all the earth!

Psalm 95:1-3,6-8a,9-11

Come! let us raise a joyful song to the Lord
a shout of triumph to the rock of our salvation.

Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving
and sing psalms of triumph to him.

For the Lord is a great God, a great king above all other gods.

**Come! let us bow down in worship,
let us kneel before the Lord who made us,
for he is our God,
we are the people he shepherds, the flock in his care.**

If only you will listen to him now!

“Do not be stubborn..

**{like those who put me to the test,
though you had seen what I am able to do}**

**They are a people whose hearts are astray
who do not discern my ways.**

Therefore I vowed in my anger:

“They shall never enter my rest.”

Psalm 40:1-5a,6,7-9,10-13,17

Patiently I waited for the Lord; he bent down to me and listened to my cry.

He raised me out of the miry pit, out of the mud and clay;
he set my feet upon a rock making my steps secure.

On my lips he put a new song, a song of praise to our God.

Many look with awe and put their trust in the Lord
Happy are those who their trust in the Lord who are not proud or arrogant.

Lord my God, great things you have done
your wonders and your purposes are for our good.
none can compare with you. You have not desired sacrifice or offering...

but you have given me ears to hear.

Then I said, "Here I am.

in the scroll of the book it is written of me."

God, my desire is to do your will. Your law is written in my heart.

**In the great assembly, I have proclaimed what is right
I do not hold back my words.**

I have not kept your faithfulness hidden

I have proclaimed your faithfulness and power

and have not concealed your steadfast love and truth..

You, O Lord, will not withhold your tender care from me;
may your love and truth ever guard me.

For misfortunes beyond counting press on me from all sides;

Evils have surrounded me and I cannot see.

They are more in number than the hairs of my head

My courage fails.

Please, God, save me!

Lord, come quickly and help me!

I am poor and needy, but the Lord takes thought for me.

You are my help and salvation, my God, do not delay.

Psalm 118:1,5-6,14,21,24,27a,28-29

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good for his steadfast love endures forever.

When in distress I called to the Lord, he answered me and gave me relief.

With the Lord on my side, I am not afraid.

The Lord is my refuge and defense; he has become my salvation.

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I shall praise you, for you have answered me and have become my
salvation.
This is the day that the Lord has made I will rejoice and be glad in it.
The Lord is God he has given us light...
You are my God, and I will give thanks to you
 you are my God and I shall extol you.
Give thanks unto the Lord for his steadfast love endures forever.

See meditation based on these readings, Appendix II

Appendix II

Sweet hour of prayer: Psalms 61-66

Jesus prayers: Psalms from Hebrews

o

Psalms for Intercessory Prayer

A Synagogue Service

PRAYERS of JESUS: the PSALMS in HEBREWS

In reading through Hebrews, two verses about Jesus jumped out at me:

2:28 Because he himself has passed through suffering
he is able to help
those who are in the midst of their test.

5:7 In the days of his flesh, he offered up prayers and petitions
with loud cries and tears
to God who was able
to deliver him from death.

While living here on earth,
with all the joy and sorrow that life brings to each of us,
Jesus offered up prayers and petitions, with loud cries and tears.

Sound familiar? A lot like us in our most private moments?
So began the path I wandered down in my study.

What did Jesus' prayers sound like? For what, exactly, did he petition
God?

Because Jesus was human, maybe his prayers sounded like ours.
What do our prayers sound like? Mine, and probably yours, contain:
a little dab of gratitude and praise,
a litany of my pain and needs,
loud cries and tears --
all phrased with bits and pieces of scripture and hymns, etched into
my memory from childhood.

Maybe, Jesus' prayers were phrased around the scriptures and hymns he
learned
at Mary's knee,
while helping Joseph sweep up the carpenter's shop,
in synagogue school, at worship each Sabbath, in the Temple courts.
And in our Bibles, we have those scriptures and at least some of the hymns.

Thank God! We have the Psalms.

In the book of Hebrews there are **19 citations to 11 Psalms**. (see Appendix I)
Generations of Jews and the New Testament writers used the Psalms
“to shape and highlight the experience of worship” and
“as clues to the reality of God’s breaking in on their lives at their present point of history.”

Comment [DMP40]: source quotes

Today, we can use these Psalms, cited in Hebrews, as clues to the prayers that Jesus prayed, at his point of history when he was "in the flesh," offering "up prayers and petitions with loud cries and tears to God who was able to deliver him."

Today, we can use these Psalms to shape and highlight our worship experience in the midst of our trials and suffering, in our prayers and petitions, with loud cries and tears,

And we can be sure that Jesus is able to help us, because he himself has passed through suffering. Let us meditate upon those two verses from Hebrews and on the Psalms cited in Hebrews. There will be a few quiet moments for your personal reflection and prayer. If you can be actively engaged in prayer while participating in a responsive reading, please join in. .

Now, think of your greatest “sufferings’.
Think of a time when Jesus might have experienced a similar feeling:

the weariness of the road
the needs of others pressing on him
physical pain
loneliness
separation from loved ones
feeling abandoned by God.

Now let's read these psalms together, listening to them, as if you were eavesdropping on Jesus' prayers. And as you listen, make his prayer, your prayer.

A responsive reading (bold in unison) with 2 leaders (*italicized passages from Hebrews by one voice*) (Psalm passages by another):

In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers

O Lord, our sovereign,
how glorious is your name in all the earth!
Your majesty is praised as high as the heavens.
When I look at your heavens,
the work of your fingers,
at the moon and the stars you have set in place,
what are frail mortals that you are mindful of them?
What are frail mortals that you should care for them?
***You have made them a little less than the angels
and crowned them with glory and honor.***
You have given them dominion over all you have made...
O Lord, our God
how glorious is your name in all the earth!

Psalm 8

In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers to God

The Lord is king, let the earth rejoice.
*All who serve idols are put to shame,
who glory in worthless things;
all gods bow down before him.*
For you, Lord, are Most High over all the earth,
far exalted above all gods.
**A harvest of light has arisen for the righteous
and joy in the upright heart.**
You that are righteous, rejoice in the Lord
and praise his holy name.

Psalm 97

Jesus offered up prayers to God who is able

Bless the Lord, O my soul.
O Lord my God, you are very great,
clothed in majesty and splendor
and enfolded in a robe of light.

You stretch out the heavens like a tent,
you ride on the wings of the wind
*you make the winds your messengers,
fire and flame your ministers.*

Countless are the things you have made, Lord,
by your wisdom you have made them all...
May the glory of the Lord stand for ever,
and may the Lord rejoice in his works!

**As long as I live I shall sing to the Lord
I shall sing psalms to my God all my life long.
May my meditation be pleasing to him
for I rejoice in the Lord.**

Psalm 104

*In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and petitions
to God who was able to deliver him*

Come! let us raise a joyful song to the Lord
a shout of triumph to the rock of our salvation.
Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving
and sing psalms of triumph to him.
For the Lord is a great God
a great king above all other gods.

***Come! let us bow down in worship,
let us kneel before the Lord who made us,
for he is our God,
we are the people he shepherds, the flock in his care.***

Psalm 95

*In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and petitions
with loud cries and tears*

Lord, hear my prayer
and let my cry for help come to you.
Do not hide your face from me
when I am in distress.

Listen to my prayer and, when I call, be swift to reply;
for my days vanish like smoke...
My days decline like shadows lengthening.
I wither away like grass.

**But you, Lord, are enthroned forever;
your name endures to all generations.**

Psalm 102

Because Jesus himself has passed through suffering with loud cries and tears

offering up prayers and petitions to God who is able to deliver

But you, Lord, are enthroned forever;
your name endures to all generations.
Long ago, you laid the foundation of the earth,
and the heavens are the work of your hands.

They will perish, but you remain;
they will all wear out like a garment.
Like clothing, you change them and they vanish.

But you are the same; your years have no end.
The children of those who serve you will live secure
and their offspring be established in your presence.

Psalm 102

*In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and petitions
with loud cries and tears
to God who was able to deliver him from death.*

Patiently I waited for the Lord;
he bent down to me and listened to my cry.
He raised me out of the miry pit,
out of the mud and clay;
he set my feet upon a rock
making my steps secure.

On my lips he put a new song,
a song of praise to our God.

Many look with awe
and put their trust in the Lord

Happy are those who put their trust in the Lord

Lord my God, great things you have done
your wonders and your purposes are for our good.
none can compare with you.

"Here I am. In the scroll of the book it is written of me."

God, my desire is to do your will.

your law is written in my heart.

In the great assembly, I have proclaimed what is right

I do not hold back my words.

I have not kept your faithfulness hidden

I have proclaimed your faithfulness and power

and have not concealed your steadfast love and truth..

Psalm 40

***In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and petitions
with loud cries and tears
to God who was able to deliver him from death.***

You, O Lord, will not withhold your tender care from me;
may your love and truth ever guard me.

For misfortunes beyond counting press on me from all sides;

Evils have surrounded me and I cannot see.

They are more in number than the hairs of my head

My courage fails.

Please, God, save me!

Lord, come quickly and help me!

I am poor and needy,

but the Lord takes thought for me.

You are my help and salvation,

my God, do not delay.

Psalm 40

*Because Jesus himself has passed through suffering
he is able to help those who are in the midst of their test.*

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good
for his steadfast love endures forever.

When in distress I called to the Lord,

he answered me and gave me relief.

With the Lord on my side, I am not afraid.

The Lord is my refuge and defense

he has become my salvation.

I shall praise you, for you have answered me

and have become my salvation.

Psalms: Words of the Mouth, Meditations of the Heart

A study by K Cummings Pipes
updated November 2009

This is the day that the Lord has made
I will rejoice and be glad in it.

**The Lord is God;
he has given us light...**

You are my God, and I will give thanks to you
you are my God and I shall extol you.

Give thanks unto the Lord
for his steadfast love endures forever.

Psalm 118

Give thanks unto the Lord

***Because Jesus himself has passed through suffering, he is able
to help us,***

for his steadfast love endures forever.

AMEN

Psalms for Intercessory Prayer

Psalm 62: 5-8 We come before the Lord

Truly. My heart waits silently for God;
my deliverance comes from Him.

**In truth, He is
my rock of deliverance
my tower of strength
so that I am unshaken.**

My deliverance & my honor depend on God,
God who is my rock of refuge
and my shelter.

Trust always in God...
pour out your hearts before Him;
God is our shelter.

Psalm 86 Our prayer for those who are under attack & in distress

**Truly. My heart waits silently for God;
my deliverance comes from Him.**

Psalm 91 Our prayer for those facing disaster & in fear

**Truly. My heart waits silently for God;
my deliverance comes from Him.**

**In truth, God is
my rock of deliverance
my tower of strength
so that I am unshaken.**

Psalm 41:1-3, 13 Our prayers for those who are ill:

How happy, is anyone
 who has a concern for the poor & weak
Blessed is he
 who cares for the helpless
The Lord will save him in time of trouble
The Lord protects him & gives him life
 making him secure in the land
The Lord never leaves him to the will of his enemies
On his sickbed,
 God nurses him,
 God sustains him
 transforming every illness to health...

How happy, is anyone
 who has a concern for the poor & weak
Blessed is she
 who cares for the helpless
The Lord will save her in time of trouble
The Lord protects her & gives her life
 making her secure in the land
The Lord never leaves her to the will of her enemies
On her sickbed,
 God nurses her,
 God sustains her
 transforming every illness to health...
Praise be to the Lord,
 the God of Israel,
 from everlasting to everlasting
 Amen & amen.

Psalms: Words of the Mouth, Meditations of the Heart

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Psalm 121 Our prayer for those who are on a journey:

Trust always in God...
pour out your hearts before Him;
God is our shelter.

A Synagogue Service

The psalms were a significant element of life, teaching and worship in the home, in the synagogue, and in the Temple. This devotion is a re-creation of a synagogue service which would have required a minimum of 10 adult men. The only significant deviation is the omission of Torah, for which I have substituted Torah psalms.

Preparatory prayers

Psalm 5:1-3,

**Through your great love I come into your house
and in reverence bow down...**

Lead me and protect me... give me a straight path...

Song #794 based Psalm 25 "unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my voice"

Psalm 84 "strength unto strength"

Yaweh Sabaoth, blessed are those who trust in you.

Song #71 based Psalm 42 "as the deer pants for the water"

Recitation of psalms

Psalm 1

Psalm 8:1-5,9

Song #42 "oh lord, our lord, how majestic is thy name in all the earth"

Psalm 139:1-4, 23-24

Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one (Deut. 6:4)

Song #446 "Hear, O Israel... thou shalt love the Lord, thy God"

Call to Worship

Psalm 95:1-7

Song #74 based Psalm 148 "praise the Lord, ye heavens adore him"

Psalm 103:1-5

Song #764 (refrain only) "those who wait upon the Lord"

Prayers of petition

Psalm 130:1-2

Offering our prayers

to be followed by unison response from Psalm 143:

Hear my prayer, O Lord, listen to my cry for mercy.

In your faithful love and saving righteousness, answer me.

Reading of Scripture (Torah) (from Genesis-Deuteronomy but we will substitute

"Torah" psalms) Psalm 27:1,14

Psalm 119 (Selected readings from the "Torah" psalm, Right Word Version:

1-7,18,28,49-50,52,57,64-66,76-77,81,88,103-105,114,116,117,149,

174-176 in unison:

I long for your salvation, Yahweh,

your love is my delight.

For I had strayed like a lost sheep,

but you came and searched for your servant,

and ever since then, I have not forgotten your commandments.

Concluding prayers

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Psalm 23 (in unison, from memory)

Psalm 98:1-4

Shout for joy!

Psalm 136:1-3, 26 with unison response

for His steadfast love endures forever.

Psalm 146:1-2,5-6

Song #123 "The steadfast love of the lord never ceases"

Amen & Amen.

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