

# ***Psalms***

## ***Part 1***

### ***Praise the Lord!***

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# *Title of the Book*

- Hebrew: *Tehillim*, תְּהִלִּים, means “praises”
- The English word “psalm” comes from the Greek Ψαλμοί (*Psalmoi*) which translates the Hebrew word *mizmor*, meaning “psalm/song/hymn/melody”
- In effect the Book of Psalms is the inspired hymnal of the Hebrew Bible

# *History*

- The 150 different Psalms were written over approximately 1,000 years
- Moses lived from ~1526 to 1406 BC; he wrote Psalm 90
- The last Psalms were likely written and collected during Ezra and Nehemiah's time (~400 BC)

# *Organization*

- Psalms has been organized into five books
- Each of the first four books ends with a doxology such as “Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel”
- In the fifth book, Psalm 150 is the doxology for the entire book of Psalms

# ***Five Books of Psalms***

- Book 1: 1-41 (ending—41:13)
- Book 2: 42-72 (ending—72:18)
- Book 3: 73-89 (ending—89:52)
- Book 4: 90-106 (ending—106:48)
- Book 5: 107-150 (final ending—150:6)
- Five Books of Law; Five Books of Psalms

# ***Chapter Headings***

- The headings of the individual chapters are part of the Hebrew text and appear to be the work of an inspired editor, perhaps someone like Ezra
- ~14 titles refer to some historical event
  - Not all the historical references are clear

# ***Chapter Headings***

- Psalm 3—Absalom’s rebellion against David
  - 2 Samuel 15-18
- Psalm 7—Concerning the words of Cush
- Psalm 18 is very similar to 2 Samuel 22
  - The Lord delivered David from Saul
- Psalm 34—David escaped from Gath
  - 1 Samuel 21:10—22:2

# ***Chapter Headings***

- Psalm 51—David's penitential prayer
  - 2 Samuel 11-12
- Psalm 52—Doeg told Saul that David went to Ahimelech, the priest
  - 1 Samuel 22:9
- Psalm 54—the Ziphites report to Saul
  - 1 Samuel 23:14-20



# ***Chapter Headings***

- Psalm 56—David fled to Achish in Gath
  - Psalm 34; 1 Samuel 21:10-15
- Psalm 57—David hides in the cave
  - Psalm 142; perhaps at Adullam/En Gedi; 1 Samuel 22 and 1 Samuel 24
- Psalm 59—Michal helped David escape from Saul
  - 1 Samuel 19:11-18

# ***Chapter Headings***

- Psalm 60—David defeated Hadadezer of Zobah and the Edomites
  - 1 Chron. 18:3-13 and 2 Sam. 8:3-13
- Psalm 63—David in the desert of Judah
  - Absalom's rebellion (2 Sam. 15:23)
  - Saul's pursuits (1 Samuel 22-23)

# ***Technical Identification***

- Certain technical terms identify the kind of psalm or refer to the use of the psalm
- Psalm (*mizmor*), 57 psalms:  
“psalm/song/hymn/melody”
- Song (*shir*), 12 psalms, means “song”
- *Maskil*, 13 psalms, a contemplative poem

# ***Technical Identification***

- Michtam, the heading of six psalms
  - The original meaning is unknown; later known as a poem with pithy sayings
- Prayers (*tepillah*), used for five psalms and Habakkuk 3
- Praise (*tehillah*) heads Psalm 145

# ***Technical Identification***

- A Song of Ascents (Psalm 120-134)
  - likely psalms sung or used when Israel went up to Jerusalem for festivals (Ex. 23:14-17; Ps. 42:4; Is. 30:29)
  - Psalms of thanksgiving, praise and declaration

# ***Human Authors***

- 100 psalms name the composer
- Moses: Psalm 90
- David: 73 psalms
  - In the LXX, ten more by David
- Solomon: Psalm 72 and 127
- Asaph: 12 psalms—Psalm 50 and 73-83

# ***Human Authors***

- Heman the Ezrahite: Psalm 88
- Ethan the Ezrahite: Psalm 89
- The sons of Korah: 10 psalms
  - 42, 44-49, 84, 87
  - 11 psalms if Psalm 88 (attributed also to Heman) is assigned to them
  - The sons of Korah were likely over the service of song (1 Chron. 6:22, 31, 37)

# *Trivia*

Which psalm is mentioned in the New Testament?

Give the reference.

“the second Psalm” (Acts 13:33)



# ***Memory Verse Review***

2 Chron. 7:14—“If My people...”

Ezra 7:10—“For Ezra...”

Neh. 8:8—“So they read distinctly...”

Esther 4:14b—“Yet who knows...”

Job 23:12b—“I have treasured...”

# ***Memory Verse for Psalms***

119:30

“I have chosen the way of truth;  
Your judgments I have laid before me”