

The Psalms

*Always Combine Bible Study with...
faith / humility / teachability / zeal / examination
questions / prayer*

Discover The Attributes of The Psalm
Highlight or circle below

STRUCTURE

- **Strophe** / 96 / Paragraphs
- **Chiastic** / 49 / X / Parallels
- **Acrostic** / 9 / A. B. C. etc.

GENRE

- **Lament** / 59 / complaint // they - I - you
- **Praise** / 41
- **Hymn** / 17 / follow a structure
- **Royal** / 10 / Messianic?
- **Wisdom** / 9
- **Thanksgiving** / 8
- **Trust** / 8

TAGS

- **Superscriptions** / 116 / author, setting, melody
- **Communal** / 23
- **Imprecatory** / 18 / a curse, a word against
- **Overtly Messianic** / 15 / direct conn to NT
- **Songs of Ascents** / 15 / up to Jerusalem
- **Maskil (wisdom song)** / 14
- **Zion (Jerusalem Hill)** / 7

ATTRIBUTION

- **David** / 74
- **Anonymous** / 48
- **Asaph** / 12
- **David LXX*** / 12
- **Korahites** / 12
- **Anonymous LXX** / 14
- **Haggai LXX** / 3 /
- **Zechariah LXX** / 3 /
- **Solomon** / 2 / Psalm 72 and 127
- **Herman the Ezrahite** / 1 / Psalm 88
- **Ethan the Ezrahite** / 1 / Psalm 89
- **Moses** / 1 / Psalm 90

Let the Psalm Soak into ~ your very soul ~

1 / Write Out Your Psalm

No, this is not busy work, its a way to see and hear what is there so you can have greater success in your study.

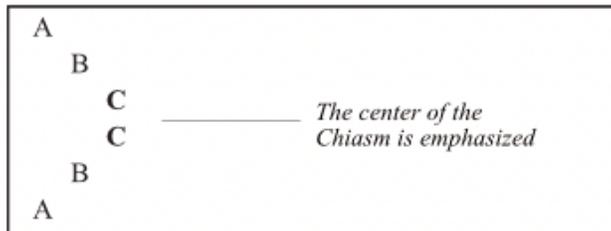
2 / Take an Emotional Walkthrough

- What does this psalm **make you feel**?
- What is your **initial emotional reaction**?
- Highlight highly emotional **words** of **phrases**
- Highlight **imagery** that is intended to paint pictures in your mind
- Highlight words that **evoke description** for the senses / seeing / smelling / hearing / tasting / feeling

3a / Consider the Structure

Determine the structure using Bible helps so that you can see the structure visually. Use this to better organize the next step below.

If your structure is **chiastic**, consider the center section of the psalm with a bit more thought. Why is this center emphasized? What is the purpose?



3b / Take a Thematic Walkthrough

For each strophe or paragraph take some time to read it and think through and assign a **subject** (*what is it about*) and a **complement** (*what does it say about the subject*) for each; this will help you see the overall flow of the Psalm as a whole unit. These should be fairly brief.

Example / Psalm 3:1-2

Subject: (many) Foes...

Complement: ...rise against and condemn me

4 / Take a Relational Walkthrough

- What does this psalm tell us about our **relationship** with God or God's relationship with us?
- How does the psalmist relate to God?
- What does he do **to** relate to God.
- What are some things to emulate? Avoid?
- What are crucial things described?

5 / Take a Theological Walkthrough

- While the Psalms are **not theological treatises** they do often help us understand who God is, who we are, and the reality of what is.
- What does this psalm say about the **God**? What does it say about **humankind**?
- What does this psalm say about being right with God? Salvation? Sin?

• Consider in particular the person of **Messiah** (the anointed (Christ), the coming Son of God, Son of David, the King eternal) is both displayed and foretold in the pages of the Psalms.

* The Psalms are not only periodically about Messiah, they are steeped in the concept of Messiah by their very structure.

6 / Take a Applicational Walkthrough

- Consider the message of the psalmist, and apply what he intends you to do with your thoughts and your behavior in response.

~ Some Further Attributes of Psalms ~

The Psalms are Hebrew poetry. Our poetry rests in meter and rhyme, theirs emphasize structure and parallelism. We have discussed structure a bit.

Parallelism is the art of saying parallel thoughts in succession. There are different types displayed and each type has many potential alterations.

- **Synonymous Parallelism** / in two or more lines saying the same thing in a slightly different manner.
- **Antithetical Parallelism** / in two or more lines saying contrasting things about a topic or an idea.
- **Synthetic Parallelism** / in two or more lines building on one idea with more similar ideas obviously adding more information.

Inclusio / Another structural technique to look out for are called **inclusios**. When **the beginning + the end** seem like bookends separating out portions of text.

There are Five Books!

What Book is Your Psalm In?

The Book of Psalms is a work of compilation that was organized during the restoration period after Judah came back from being in captivity. It is organized and loosely tells the story of Israel beginning with David, his kingship, the promise of God's Messiah (see Psalm 2), and the seeming failure of the messianic line. God is faithful still, even if mankind is not.

Book I

Psalm 1 & 2 / are an introductory set, they set the tone of the Psalms / follow God's Word (1), Follow the Messiah (2)!

Psalms 1-41 / 41 Total

Contrasting Images / Reigns of King David and Solomon, Deep Laments

Book II

Psalms 42-72 / 31 Total

Reigns of King David and Solomon; reign will extend to the ends of the earth

Book III

Psalms 73-89 / 17 Total

Divided kingdoms and Destructions / apparent failure of Davidic line, therefore the apparent failure of the covenant?

89 / seam psalm / God's faithfulness proclaimed

Book IV

Psalms 90-106 / 17 Total

Babylonian exile, rethinking identity, rethinking history of God's faithfulness despite Israel's unfaithfulness. God remembers covenant (106).

Book V

Psalms 107-150 / 44 Total

Community restoration. Enduring love of God.

When you finish your study return here to consider how it fits into this puzzle...