

The Scriptures Summarized / Book 19 – Psalms

This book of inspired poetry is the Hebrew Hymnbook. Each of the 150 chapters begins a new song. King David composed 73 of the 100 to which a human author is attributed. Other identified hymn writers include: Moses (1); Solomon (2); Asaph (12); The Sons of Korah (10); Heman (1); and Ethan (1).

There is a suggestion that Hezekiah was influential with the collection of 15 pilgrim songs known as the songs of ascent or “degrees.” These songs were used by travelers headed up to the Temple in Jerusalem.

All but 34 of the songs have a title attached. These songs were composed over a span of nearly 1000 years, but at least half were composed in the united kingdom era. Some are clearly written to commemorate a specific historical event. Others seem to be written in pairs or 2 movements on a similar theme. 1 was chosen as a daily reading in the Temple. (S-24; M-48; T-82; W-94; Th-81; F-93; Sat-92)

The songs are also arranged in 5 groupings or mini-books. Many Bible scholars believe that it was Ezra who was Spiritually Inspired to select, arrange and edit these poetic psalms. It has also been suggested the 5 books of Psalms follow the Pentateuch. Each of these sections ends with a doxology of praise.

Psalms is a unique book in that it deals with Spiritual and doctrinal truths about God, mankind, life, death, God’s Word, and eternal destiny in a poetic and emotionally evocative way. These truths are able to get into your head while at the same time gripping your heart. These are some of the most familiar portions of the Holy Scriptures. They have provided comfort and encouragement for centuries because they relate to almost any of the emotions that we might feel. The Psalms can be classified and listed by their type of content. (Examples not exhaustive)

1. Messianic — Songs that anticipate the coming Savior and Redeemer. (2; 16; 22; 45; 110)
2. Lament — Songs born of trouble yet filled with trust in God.(44; 60; 74; 79; 80; 85; 86; 90)
3. Testimony — Hymns detailing God’s blessings and intervention. (19; 34)
4. Pilgrim — Celebration songs sung at Jerusalem festivals. (120 — 134)
5. Imprecatory — Cry’s for God to bring just judgement upon the wicked. (55; 58; 69; 109; 137)
6. Penitence — Songs of confession and repentance. (32; 51)
7. Wisdom — Lyrics that give guidelines to encourage godliness. (1; 37; 73; 119)
8. Historical — These songs provide divine commentary on the past. (78; 105; 106; 135; 136)
9. Nature — Songs that celebrate God’s creative acts and power. (8; 29; 65; 104; 148)

Book 1: Chapters 1 — 41. Like Genesis these songs record God’s counsels concerning mankind.

Book 2: Chapters 42 — 72. Themed upon individual salvation and the deliverance of Israel in a similar fashion to the Exodus from Egypt.

Book 3: Chapters 73 — 89. Leviticus detailed the Tabernacle as God’s dwelling place as does these Hebrew Hymns.

Book 4: Chapters 90 — 106. In Numbers, God’s people wandered in the Wilderness. These songs record similar circumstances.

Book 5: Chapters 107 — 150. Songs that focus much upon God’s Word. Deuteronomy is also focused on the Word of God and the retelling of the Law.