

INTRODUCTION TO PSALMS

PRAISE THE LORD, ALL NATIONS;
LAUD HIM, ALL PEOPLES!...PRAISE THE LORD!

PSALM 117

INTRODUCTION TO PSALMS

About the Book

- Collection of collections
- Divinely inspired poetry , varying in purpose and subject matter
- Varied authorship
- Written over 1000 years

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About the Book

- Hebrew hymnal
- Most quoted Old Testament book in the New Testament
- Rich Vocabulary expressing the deepest of emotions, an utmost faith and trust, and a penitent heart laid bare before Jehovah.

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Our Lessons

- God in the Psalms
- His Unending Love
- The Blessed Man
- Jesus in the Psalms
- An examination of the structure of the book
- Topical lessons to finish the quarter

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About the Book

1. Define the word “psalm”.
 - A sacred poem set to music. A sacred song or hymn.

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About the Book

2. Origin or etymology of the word “psalms”.
 - Hebrew *mizmor* (melody of praise) or *zamar* (pluck or strike the strings)
 - Greek *psallein* (verb meaning to pull or pluck) *to psalmos* defined by Strong as “a set piece of music, a sacred ode, accompanied with the voice, harp, or other instrument.
 - Latin *psalmus* to Old English *psealm*

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The Music of Psalms

3. List the occasion or circumstance eliciting a response in song recorded in the following passages.
 - a) Job 38:7
 - Creation
 - b) Exodus 15
 - Deliverance from Pharaoh and his army
 - c) Num. 21:17
 - When God led Israel to the well at Beer

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3. List the occasion or circumstance eliciting a response in song recorded in the following passages.

d) Deuteronomy 32

- As Joshua assumed leadership

e) Judges 5

- Deborah and Barak praising Jael

f) 2 Chronicles 29:27–30

- Hezekiah restores worship at the temple

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3. List the occasion or circumstance eliciting a response in song recorded in the following passages.

g) Nehemiah 12:40–42

- Dedication of the wall in Jerusalem

h) Matthew 26:30

- After Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper

i) Acts 16:25

- Paul and Silas imprisoned in Philippi

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3. List the occasion or circumstance eliciting a response in song recorded in the following passages.

j) Revelation 5:9-13

- Praise of the Lamb around the throne

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- Singing in Psalms – 3 primary Hebrew words
 - *Zamar*... Pluck or strike the strings, a praise with instrument accompanied by voice (Ps. 33:2; 108:1b-2; 144:9b)
 - *Siyar*... singing in the vocal sense (108:1a; 144:9a; 137:3-4)
 - *Ranan*... Rejoice, cry out, be overcome (51:14; 63:6-7; 92:4)

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4. As we attempt to picture in our minds the grandeur and spectacle of the worship at the temple, let's look at some of the instruments mentioned in the psalter.
 - a) 33:2; 57:8
 - Lyre and harp
 - b) Inscriptions of Ps. 4; 6; 54
 - Stringed instruments

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4. As we attempt to picture in our minds the grandeur and spectacle of the worship at the temple, let's look at some of the instruments mentioned in the psalter.

c) Inscription of Ps. 5

- Flute

d) 81:3

- Trumpet

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4. As we attempt to picture in our minds the grandeur and spectacle of the worship at the temple, let's look at some of the instruments mentioned in the psalter.

e) 68:25; 81:2

- Tambourines, timbrels

f) 150:4-5

- Cymbals

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- What we see:
 - A grand spectacle, impressive and beautiful
 - A praise fit for Jehovah
- What God says:
 - Only a shadow
 - The praise He desires is our expression through singing
 - Eph. 5:19, *psallo* or *psallontes* is translated “making melody” and Col. 3:16, *ado* or “singing”, both done from the heart

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The Music of Psalms

5. Identify the authors to which the Psalms are attributed.
 - a) The “sweet psalmist of Israel” (2 Sam 23:1), directly or indirectly given credit for almost half the psalms.
 - David

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The Music of Psalms

5. Identify the authors to which the Psalms are attributed.
 - b) A Levite, music director, musician, and seer.
(1 Chr. 15:17, 19; 16:5; 2 Chr. 29:30)
 - Asaph

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5. Identify the authors to which the Psalms are attributed.
 - c) This group was comprised of descendants of the Kohath, son of Levi, and were gatekeepers in service at the temple . Some think that they possibly wrote as a guild of singers and musicians dedicated to aiding in the worship surrounding the temple.
(Num. 16:1; 1 Ch. 26:19)
 - Sons of Korah

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5. Identify the authors to which the Psalms are attributed.
 - d) A member of the group above, grandson of Samuel, a seer, and a singer/musician who directed a choir of his children. If the same man, he was known for his wisdom in 1 Kings 4:31. (Ps. 88; 1 Chr. 6:33–38; 15:19; 25:5–7)
 - Heman the Ezrahite

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5. Identify the authors to which the Psalms are attributed.
 - e) Another known for wisdom in 1 Kings 4:31. A singer/musician referred to as an Ezrahite.
(Ps. 89; 1 Chr. 15:19)
 - Ethan the Ezrahite

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5. Identify the authors to which the Psalms are attributed.
 - f) A great leader from Israel's history. (Ps. 90)
 - Moses

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5. Identify the authors to which the Psalms are attributed.
 - g) A king in Israel who wrote over one thousand songs, yet only has two psalms attributed to him.
(Ps. 72, 127)
 - Solomon

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The Structure

6. How many “books” or divisions are traditionally referred to in the psalter? What is the reason for divisions at these specific psalms?
 - Five (1–41; 42–72; 73–89; 90–106; 107–150)
 - Each of the first four end with a similar doxology (41:13; 72:18–20; 89:52; 106:48)

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The Structure

7. See what you can find out about the inscriptions that precede many of the psalms.
 - Accompany all but 34 psalms
 - Ancient in origin
 - Superscriptions or subscriptions
 - Vary in length and content