

Psalms 73-150

1. Introduction:

The book of Psalms, "Israel's Hymn Book," has been from very ancient times divided into five parts, as follows: Psalms 1-41; 42-72; 73-89; 90-106; 107-150. Each part closes with a song of praise to God. In March we studied the first two divisions; this month we return to complete the Psalms.

2. Authorship:

Writers of the Psalms are numerous and varied, as are the writers of modern songs. David is named as the author of very many of them; they express well his faith, his character, his experiences, and his skill as a musician. Moses is named as a writer of at least one. Others bear the names of Asaph, the "sons of Korah," Solomon, and Ethan. Many are anonymous; some of them no doubt coming from David.

3. Background:

The word "psalm" indicates a song composed especially to be sung to the accompaniment of a stringed instrument. So the Psalms are songs, expressing the deepest and highest feelings of the writers in their worship, praise, and dependence upon God. In the Hebrew language they are the highest form of poetry, depending not upon rhyme and meter as English poetry does, but rather depending upon strength and beauty of expression, and upon rhythm and balance of thought and form. The Psalms were loved by Jesus. His speech shows that He knew them well, and treasured their message. Principal thoughts of the Psalms are (1) trust in God, (2) praise to Him, (3) rejoicing in His goodness, (4) reminders of His loving kindness or mercy, (5) pleas or thanks for His protection against the wicked enemies of the righteous.

4. Points of Interest

- Psalms was a favorite book of the early Christians. Of the New Testament's 283 direct quotations of the Old Testament, 117 are from Psalms.
- The Book of Psalms is the largest book of the Bible.
- Thirty-four of the psalms are called orphan psalms. They have no title of any kind.
- The shortest chapter, and also the middle chapter, is Psalm 117. It has two verses.
- The middle verse in the Bible is Psalm 118:8--*It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in people.*
- Judging from the abundance of notes in the margins of his personal Bible (on display at the Museum of the Bible in Washington), the Book of Psalms was Elvis Presley's favorite book of the Bible.

5. May Reading Guide

Week of May 1-7	Psalms 73-92
Week of May 8-14	Psalms 93-112
Week of May 15-21	Psalms 113-132
Week of May 22-28	Psalms 133-150