

BONUS Read the Bible in a Year

Week 32 – January 9th, 2022

Read on Your Own this Week:

Psalm 94-96

Matthew 5-8

Readings in Class:

Nehemiah 5-13

Esther 1-10

Introduction to the Psalms

The Psalms are without a doubt, the most treasured book in the whole Bible and is the most quoted book of the New Testament, with 85% of the Psalms being quoted or alluded to in the New Testament. Every major event in the life of Christ is marked by quoting a Psalm which describes the weight and the power that this book contains.

Often called the Psalter or the David, since about half of the Psalms were composed by him, The Psalms are meant to be a mobile temple for people who are away from God. The Psalms grab the whole weight of human emotion and weigh them toward God. In the ancient church, it was required that before anyone could be ordained, that he must have all 150 Psalms memorized. Fortunately they were structured in the ancient world to be read weekly.

The Psalms generally follow the story and hope of the Old Testament. Beginning with an Edenic like scene with Psalm 1 and describing in poetic terms the hopes and story of God's people through the trial and sufferings of slavery, through the rise and fall of the Davidic Kingdom, to the hope of restoration and to the final coming and praise of God's salvation and Praise the Lord! The mood of the Psalms tends to flow from sorrow to praise just as our lives also move in the direction of suffering to glory.

A Brief Overview of the Psalms* and Key Psalms

a. Book 1: Psalms 1-41

- a. Psalm 1-2 Introduction to the themes of the Psalter
- b. Psalm 8
- c. Psalm 19
- d. Psalm 22
- e. Psalm 23
- f. Psalm 32

b. Book 2: Psalms 42-72

- a. Psalm 46
- b. Psalm 51
- c. Psalm 61
- d. Psalm 67

c. Book 3: Psalms 73-89

- a. Psalm 74
- b. Psalm 79
- c. Psalm 82
- d. Psalm 86

d. Book 4: Psalms 90-106

- a. Psalm 90
- b. Psalm 94
- c. Psalm 98
- d. Psalm 105-106 (Twin Psalms)

e. Book 5: Psalms 107-150

- a. Psalm 110
- b. Psalms 111-113 Hallel Psalms (Praise)
- c. Psalm 119
- d. Psalms 120-134 the Songs of Ascent
- e. 146-150 Hallelujah Psalms (Praise the Lord!)

*Note: the Structure of the Psalms is meant to mirror the 5 books of Moses. Meaning that the Psalms are an exposition and prayer through the entire Torah of God. Each book ends with the verse, "Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting! Amen and Amen."

Who is Praying?

The Psalms are a beautiful tapestry of words and voices. But sometimes they are hard voices to pray with. How can I say to God, "judge me in my righteousness!" (7:8). We must remember who is praying these Psalms: Jesus. Jesus is the one praying in the Psalms. This is his voice that is working through David, Solomon, Moses, and the other composers. These 150 Psalms are the prayers and words of Jesus to His Father. And also, these are the prayers that he invites us to pray and gives us to pray. We receive the mouth of Jesus to pray these Psalms. Just as Jesus gives us salvation, he also gives us the words to pray. We get to join with Jesus in praying his prayers with the confidence that the Father hears the prayers of Jesus his Son.

Types of Psalms

While there are no distinct categories, the Psalms can fit into several groupings and themes. These can be helpful to pick out Psalms for various occasions, but do detract from the point that because one Psalm isn't listed under a Messianic Psalm, doesn't mean it is not a prayer of the Messiah. But with that in mind, here are some categories the Psalms have been put in:

Messianic Psalms: 2, 20, 21, 22, 69, 72, 88, 110

Imprecatory Psalms: 5, 9, 10, 31, 59, 71, 137

Penitential Psalms: 6, 32, 38, 51, 102, 130, 143

Suffering Psalms: 13, 31, 35, 41, 44, 54, 55, 86, 102, etc.

God's Word Psalms: 1, 19, 119

Ascent Psalms: 120-134

Praise Psalms: 146-150