

OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY

Lesson 15

Psalms

Following our study of the three kings, Saul, David and Solomon, let's take a look at the writings of David and Solomon as found in the books of Psalms and Proverbs. For this week, Old Testament Survey focuses on the book of Psalms.



Praising God and seeking God go hand in hand in the book of Psalms. Representing some of the most powerful poetry in the world, it is a book worth reading over and over again. I once heard Reverend Charles Stanley challenge everyone to do nothing but read Psalm 1 at least once each day for thirty days and see if, by the end, it didn't impact their life in a profound way.

So let's consider this most powerful, and yet most touching, book of songs and praises.

1. Look up the following sets of verses and note what each set has in common. How many "books" or divisions are contained within the psalms?
 - a. Psalm 41:13, Psalm 72:19, Psalm 89:52, Psalm 106:48, and all of Psalm 150.
 - b. Psalm 1:1, Psalm 42:1, Psalm 73:1, Psalm 90:1, and Psalm 107:1
2. Over how long a period of time were the Psalms written? The actual book was assembled by priests after the return of the Jews from exile, in 536 BC.
 - a. Read Psalm 90. Who wrote that prayer and when did he die?
 - b. Read Psalm 126. Who is being returned, and from where? When did this happen? Using the two dates from these two Psalms, we can get a range of years covered by the Psalms. What is that range?
3. Much of Hebrew poetry, including the Psalms, uses something called parallelism. Write out a short definition of "parallelism".

4. There are four types of parallelism in Hebrew poetry: (1) Synonymous (Psalm 2:1-4, for example), (2) Emblematic (the 23rd Psalm and the 42nd Psalm, for example), (3) Synthetic (Psalm 1, for example), and (4) Antithetical (used primarily in Proverbs, see Proverbs 10:1 and on). Write a short definition of each of these below.
 - a. Synonymous Parallelism:
 - b. Emblematic Parallelism:
 - c. Synthetic Parallelism:
 - d. Antithetical Parallelism:
5. The numerous Psalms that David wrote can be placed in one of three categories. Read the following Psalms, all written by David, and see if you can define the category that they fall into.
 - a. Psalm 21 and Psalm 22
 - b. Psalm 38, Psalm 70 and Psalm 78
 - c. Psalm 18 and 30
6. Using the three categories of Psalms you identified above how would you implement a worship service?

The book of Psalms is one of my most cherished and favorite books in the Bible. It consoles me, lifts me up, reminds me of the greatness and holiness of God, and it speaks of His tender mercies.

May He bless all of us these next weeks as we continue our study.

In Christ,

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