

Psalms – summary of this book

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Psalms is a long book with many individual poem/song. It is good to have an overview of the structure & content of the book before reading individual ones.

Authors:

It is written by multiple authors; David wrote 73, Asaph wrote 12, the sons of Korah wrote 9, Solomon wrote 3, Ethan, and Moses each wrote one (Ps. 90), and 51 of the Psalms are anonymous.

Time span of the book was written:

Psalms were written over the span of approximately 900 years (Beginning at the time of Moses 1440 B.C. and through the captivity in 586 B.C.). Some indicated it was as late as about 430 B.C. that translates to about 1000years of time span.

Location of the book in the Bible:

The book of Psalms is the longest book (most individual documents/psalms) in the Bible. (We don't call them chapters because the Psalms' division is from the original form). The 119th Psalm is a longest chapter in the whole Bible. The 117th Psalm is the shortest chapter in the Bible and located near the middle. About one third of all OT quotes in the NT is from the book of Psalms.

Style of the book:

The book was written in the form of songs and poetry (various forms of poetry). Some of the titles point to the source of the Psalm, while others point to a certain purpose, or a certain melody, or something related to music. Hebrew poetry creates a sense of rhythm by repeating ideas in a style called "parallelism." Sometimes the writer will say the same kind of thing in different ways, while at other times he will put two ideas in opposition to one another. One can see those parallelism verses very often.

Language:

The book was written in Hebrew. The title of this book in Hebrew is Telhillim that means praises. (Note, the title of this book in Greek is Psalms that means songs.)

Main Contents:

Many psalms contain praises to God, thanksgiving, prayer, about God’s power and creation, God’s forgiveness, and trust in God. Some chapters are authors’ expression of lamentation or sorrow, and some are in the form of cry for God’s help or supplication. Some are songs that were sung during worship, and some are sung during travel to Jerusalem to attend the [three pilgrim festivals](#) (Songs of Ascents- Psalms 120 to 134).

Theme:

- 1) All shall praise God! (Psalms 148, Psalms 145:21, Psalms 19:1, Psalms 150:6)
- 2) God listens to all who call on Him. He walks beside us, goes before us, present around us, reigns above us and dwells among us. (Psalms 23:1)

Structure:

This book is divided into 5 sections with each corresponding to the first 5 books of the Bible (call Torah in Hebrew which means “the Law”). Section 1 consisted of Psalms 1-41 (corresponds to Genesis). Section 2 consisted of Psalms 42-72. Section 3 consisted of Psalms 73-89. Section 4 consisted of Psalms 90-106, and section 5 consisted of Psalms 107-150.

Psalms	Book 1 1-41	Book 2 42-72	Book 3 73-89	Book 4 90-106	Book 5 107-150
Author	David	David/Korah	Asaph/David	unknown	David/unknown
The Law	Genesis	Exodus	Leviticus	Numbers	Deuteronomy
Related to the Law	creation Psm 33:6	salvation/trust Psm. 65:5	dwelling Psm. 73 16-17 Psm. 96:6	God leads Psm, 90:12 Psm. 90:15	Faithfulness Psm. 119:105 Psm. 119:151
Theme	God beside us	before us	around us	above us	among us
Same Ending praise	Psm. 41:13	Psm. 72:18	Psm. 89:52	Psm. 106:48	Psm. 150:1-6