

Psalm Pstudy

Psalms 1-18

Opening prayer

Psalm 1 sets the tone for the whole book. It offers two paths and encourages the reader (or singer) to follow the right path of following the scriptures. As we read and follow, we are nourished by the word like trees planted by the streams receiving the water to grow and flourish. Let's see how we flourish as we go through this study.

Psalm 2 is a royal psalm perhaps used at the coronation of a new king. It is a nationalistic hymn promoting Israel (or perhaps Judah) over the other nations. Verse 11 teaches the people to serve the Lord in fear – or suffer the consequences. This was a common theme in ancient Israel.

Psalm 3 is noted as a psalm of David at a particular time when his son Absalom rebelled against him and proclaimed himself king. It begins with a description of the current difficulties, but quickly shifts to an affirmation of the Lord's deliverance. Note in the right margin the Hebrew word 'Selah' which is undefined, and scholars disagree on what it means. The thought is it was to signify the people to do something like pause, bow, or kneel.

Psalm 4 has a note about being accompanied by stringed instruments like harps. Like Psalm 3 it is a call or prayer to God for deliverance. It ends with sleeping in peace. Are you usually able to do that?

Psalm 5 is listed as a psalm of David, but there is an anomaly. In verse 7 it speaks of the holy temple which was not built until the reign of Solomon, David's son. Parts of the psalm may have come from David and parts added to it later or it may have been mislabeled.

Psalm 6's note about according to The Sheminith might refer to a tune for it to be sung to. We are introduced to Sheol, in verse 5. What do you know about it? This psalm is not about sleeping in peace but with tears. Verse 10 seems out of context in a psalm about illness and fear of dying from it.

Psalm 7 begins with another congregational response/repeat.

Psalm 8.1 might remind you of an older contemporary song. A great psalm of praise.

Psalm 9 affirms God's power over enemies.

Psalm 10 is similar but here the enemies seem to have the upper hand and this is a plea for God's help.

Psalm 11 is an affirmation of God's power and righteousness.

Psalm 12 is a plea for God's help.

Psalm 13 is similarly a plea for help.

Psalm 14 like Psalm 1 contrasts the wise and the foolish.

Psalm 15 may indeed be a psalm of David as it speaks of God dwelling in a tent not temple. It is a call to holy living.

Psalm 16 shows a contrast between those who follow God and those who follow false gods.

Psalm 17 is another call to God for help from enemies.

Psalm 18 has a specific context in the introduction. This is a royal psalm celebrating when David was no longer being hunted by the king, but with Saul's death, David becomes king.