

Wisdom for Today

Psalms - How to pray and praise

Psalm 1 and 150

"No single book of Scripture, not even of the New Testament, has, perhaps, ever taken such hold on the heart of Christendom."

Which book is most beloved? - Psalms

Which book is most quoted in the New Testament? - Psalms (about 100 times)

Which book is quoted most by Christ? - Psalms (At least 11 times)

What does Psalms mean?

Hebrew title is the **Songs of Praises** or just **Praises**.

Greek title means **"to pluck"** or play on an instrument.

Who wrote them?

All but 34 have an author in the prelude named

David 73, Asaph 12, Sons of Korah, 11 then 10 others including Moses and Solomon. 50 Psalms anonymous

Two problems -1. Introductions not in the oldest manuscripts

2. The word **of** could mean - *written by or for, belonging to, in the time of, or under the direction of*

When were they written?

Since at least one is attributed to Moses and several speak of the time after the captivity of Israel we can say they were written over a period of some 1500 years.

How are they arranged?

Introduction **Psalms 1-2**

5 Books **Psalms 3-41** David - experiences of David
Psalms 42-72 David and Sons of Korah - Temple use
Psalms 74-89 Asaph - Lamentations and complaints
Psalms 90-106 Anonymous - Human mortality
Psalm 107-145 Anonymous - Celebration

Conclusion **Psalms 146-150** Anonymous - Praise

Who collected them into the 5 books?

Since they come from different times in the history of Israel and since they were gathered before the time of Christ they were probably collected under the direction of key leaders of Israel. Possibly the first two books collected by David, the third and fourth by Solomon or Hezekiah and the fifth by Ezra.

Why 150 and in 5 books? We do not know but it is suggested 150 for the temple and synagogue Sabbath cycles

5 as the new Torah (5 books of Moses)

What are the major themes and purpose?

Simply stated in an acrostic (like Psalm 119)

P Prayerful greetings

S Sacrifices of Praise

A Always thankful

L Lay yourself open before God

M Meditate on God's Word

S Speak your heart's desire to God

Three major themes

Praise - both individual and corporate

Lament - both individual and national

Wisdom - how to live a happy content life

Include Hymns of

Praise, Thanksgiving, Lament, Kingship, Zion, Liturgy, Faith and the condemnation of false gods

Wisdom for Us

The Psalms are filled with wisdom because:

They speak to us

- in them we find our deepest thoughts and feelings

They speak for us

- in them we find the very emotions and deep feelings we want to express to God. Our sorrows, laments, prayers and praises

They speak for our souls - in them we find the words and songs of worship to our God

How should we use them?

Read them - (Billy Graham reads 5 each day so he reads all in a month)

Meditate on them - Memorize, Personalize, Visualize, Harmonize and Actualize

Pray them - use Psalms to express your sorrow, desires and praises to God (2/3 of them speak directly to God)

Sing them - after all they are songs and many choruses come directly from them

Live them - the theology of the Psalms is complete. They speak of an Almighty God who is over all and everywhere present as a shepherd who cares, a king who is just and holy, a friend who loves and a savior who forgives. When we walk in the light of what they teach we will walk in close contact with God.