

The Wisdom Literature:  
Psalms "The Songs of God's People" *Psalms 1:1-150:6*

The book of Psalms is a collection of the Old Testament songs used in the temple for worship. The key word in the Psalms is "**Hallelujah**" or as it is often translated, "**Praise the Lord.**" The section of the Hebrew Bible where the Psalms are located is the wisdom section. This book spans literally thousands of years and does not fit well in our chronological study. Psalms along with Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon will be considered as undated books of wisdom in our study.

There were various authors of the psalms. David (77), anonymous or orphanic, (37) many of which may have been written by David, Asaph (12), Korah (10), Hezekiah (10), Moses (1), Solomon (1), Herman (1), and Ethan (1). [Note: Asaph, Heman, and Ethan were Levite musicians. [See **I Chron 15:17,19; I 6:39; II Chron 5:12**]

The study of the book of Psalms is very difficult to do in a short setting and we will attempt to only understand how to study the book. There are various ways to do this. We can study by book division, by author, by subject, by theme, by key verses or by possible historic setting. I have compiled the

Study Guide to the Psalms that makes up most of this **STEP** from various sources that I analyzed and compiled to make an analytical chart of the Psalms.

You will notice that each section has a heading of Book 1- Book 5. This is one way of studying the Psalms.

This chart was developed to enhance our understanding of the Psalms as we read and study them in our personal bible study. The chart reads from left to right.

After the Psalm *Number* is the *Author* if known. A blank here indicated the author is unknown.

The *Subject* column is the subject matter of the Psalm. Not all will have a subject.

*Possible Historic Setting* will occasionally give scripture that can give historic insight into the events that may have impacted this Psalm. A question mark indicates this may not be the case.

The *Theme* column is the theme of the psalm.

The *Type* section is only for the Davidic Psalms. They are typed as shepherd, suffering, etc.

*Note: You will notice the direction of the text for the next few pages is different. This is due to the different format used to provide the chart.*

**Study Guide to the Psalms:**

NOTE: The Author, Subject and Type are based on *Wilmington's Guide to the Bible*. The Possible Historic Setting is found in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*. The Theme is from *Thru the Bible with J. Vernon McGee*. To help understand the Subject area I offer the following:

*Devotional*- contains precious and personal promises, which all believers can feed upon.

*Penitential*- contains repentance from the heart.

*Imprecatory*- To imprecate is to pray against, or to invoke evil upon someone or something.

*Degree or Ascent*- An old Jewish tradition explains they were sung when the choir ascended the semicircular flight of stairs leading up to the court of men in the Temple. They may have been sung along the way by travelers en route to various annual feast days. Ascent means "A song of the higher choir," the singers being on the stairs of some high place.

*Hallel (Hallelujah)*- Were sung on the night of Passover.

*Historical*- Depict the history of Israel concerning the sins of Israel and grace of God.

*Acrostic*- Called alphabetical Psalms. Each line of these Psalms begins with a successive letter of the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet.

*Messianic*- These Psalms are prophetic of Messiah.

**BOOK 1 Psalms 1-41 (Correspond to Genesis) Key Word is "Man."**

<i>Psalms</i>	<i>Author</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Possible Historic Setting</i>	<i>Theme</i>	<i>Type</i>
1				Two men, two ways, two destinies .	
2	David	Messianic		Drama of the ages- man's rebellion against God.	Satisfied
3	David		<i>II Samuel 15-18</i>	A morning prayer: the trial of the godly of Israel.	Suffering
4	David	Devotional		An evening prayer: the plea of the Son of man and those who plead in His name	Suffering
5	David			A morning prayer: A cry of the godly in the time of trouble	Suffering
6	David	Penitential		A cry for mercy	Suffering
7	David		<i>I Samuel 23:24-29 (?)</i>	A cry for revenge.	Suffering
8	David	Messianic		Emphasizing the humanity of Christ & His ultimate victory	Shepherd
9	David	Devotional/Acrostic		Satan's man	Satisfied
10		Acrostic		Satan's man	
11	David			Testing of the righteous	Suffering
12	David	Devotional		The godly in the mist of godlessness of the great tribulation	Suffering

<i>Psalm</i>	<i>Author</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Possible Historic Setting</i>	<i>Theme</i>	<i>Type</i>
13	David	Devotional		David's desperate plight	Suffering
14	David	Devotional		Depravity of man in the last day-atheistic, filthy, rebellious	Suffering
15	David			Description of those who will be in the presence of God	Satisfied
16	David	Devotional/Messianic		The resurrection of the Messiah	Satisfied
17	David	Devotional		A prayer of David when in great danger	Suffering
18	David	Devotional	<i>II Samuel 2</i>	David's praise when God delivered him from the hand of Saul	Satisfied
19	David	Devotional		The revelation of God in His creation, in His commandments, and in Christ	Shepherd
20	David			Plea of Israel for the success of Messiah	Satisfied
21	David			The ascension of Christ	Satisfied
22	David	Devotional/Messianic		The crucifixion of Christ	Suffering
23	David	Devotional/Messianic		Christ as the great Shepherd	Shepherd
24	David	Devotional/Messianic		Christ as the Chief Shepherd	Satisfied
25	David	Acrostic		Plea for mercy and deliverance	Suffering
26	David			Plea on the basis of personal righteousness	Suffering
27	David	Devotional		Prayer	Suffering
28	David			A cry in the time of trouble	Suffering
29	David			The voice of the Lord in a thunderstorm	Shepherd
30	David	Devotional	<i>I Chronicles 21:1-22:1</i>	Hallelujah for healing	Satisfied
31	David	Devotional/Messianic		A prayer of deliverance from trouble	Suffering
32	David	Penitential		A psalm of instruction	Sinner
33	David	Devotional		A song of praise from a redeemed people	
34	David	Dev/Acr/Mes	<i>I Samuel 21:10-22:2</i>	A song of praise for deliverance	Suffering
35	David	Devotional/Imprecatory		A plea for deliverance from his enemies	Suffering
36	David			A picture of the wicked	Satisfied
37	David	Devotional/Acrostic		A promise of future blessing	Satisfied
38	David	Penitential		A penitential psalm involving physical disease	Sinner
39	David			A psalms for funerals	Suffering
40	David	Devotional/Messianic		A messianic psalm predicting the crucifixion of Christ	Suffering
41	David	Messianic		A messianic psalm predicting the betrayal of Judas	Suffering

**BOOK 2 Psalms 42-72 (Correspond to Exodus) Key Word is "Deliverance."**

<i>Psalm</i>	<i>Author</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Possible Historic Setting</i>	<i>Theme</i>	<i>Type</i>
42	Korah	Devotional		Heart cry of the God-fearing remnant	
43		Devotional		Heart cry of the God-fearing remnant	
44	Korah			Israel's cry during the Great Tribulation	
45	Korah	Messianic		The coming of Christ to establish His kingdom on this earth	
46	Korah	Devotional		God is our refuge, a song of the Millennium	
47	Korah			Praise and worship in the Millennium	
48	Korah			Messiah's final victory upon the earth	
49	Korah			The end of those who boast themselves in riches	
50	Asaph	Devotional		A psalm of judgment	
51	David	Penitential	<i>II Samuel 11-12</i>	David's great penitential psalm	Sinner
52	David		<i>I Samuel 22:9</i>	Antichrist, the might man of mischief	Satisfied
53	David			The fool, foreshadowing Antichrist, denies the existence of God	Suffering
54	David		<i>I Samuel 23:15-23</i>	A cry of faith in the time of Antichrist	Suffering
55	David	Devotional/Imprecatory/Messianic		The darkest days under Antichrist	Suffering
56	David	Devotional	<i>I Samuel 21:10-15</i>	David's fear and trust	Suffering
57	David		<i>I Sam 22:1-2 or I Sam 24</i>	A cry for mercy	Suffering
58	David	Imprecatory		An imprecatory prayer against the enemy	Suffering
59	David	Imprecatory	<i>I Samuel 19:11</i>	God's people surrounded by enemies	Suffering
60	David		<i>II Sam 8:8,13; I Chr 18:9-12</i>	God's people surrounded by enemies	Satisfied
61	David	Devotional		Cry and confidence of the godly	Suffering
62	David	Devotional		The only psalm	Suffering
63	David	Devotional	<i>II Samuel 15:13 (?)</i>	Thirst for the Water of Life	Suffering
64	David			The evil may win, but God will judge them	Suffering
65	David			Song of the Millennium	Satisfied
66	David	Devotional		Song of the Millennium	
67	David			Blessing and praise for the Millennium	
68	David	Devotional/Messianic		Song of deliverance that ushers in the kingdom	Satisfied
69	David	Devotional/Imprecatory/Messianic		The silent years in the life of Christ	Suffering
70	David			Urgent cry for deliverance	Suffering
71	David	Devotional		A psalm for old age	
72	David	Messianic		The King and the kingdom are coming	Satisfied

**BOOK 3 Psalms 73-89 (Correspond to Leviticus) Key Word is "Sanctuary."**

<i>Psalm</i>	<i>Author</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Possible Historic Setting</i>	<i>Theme</i>	<i>Type</i>
73	Asaph	Devotional		Perplexity about prosperity	
74	Asaph			A cry for deliverance when the temple is defiled by the enemy	
75	Asaph	Devotional		A song of deliverance	
76	Asaph	Devotional		Prophecy of the Messiah upon the throne	
77	Asaph	Devotional		Perplexity about the mercy and goodness of God	
78	Asaph	Historical		The history of Israel from Moses to David	
79	Asaph			Future of Israel in the Great Tribulation	
80	Asaph	Devotional		Prayer to the Shepherd of Israel	
81	Asaph	Devotional		A song of deliverance	
82	Asaph			God judges the judges of His people	
83	Asaph	Imprecatory		A cry for judgment	
84	Korah	Devotional		A deep desire for God's house	
85	Korah	Devotional		Future restoration of Israel	
86	David			David prays for the future kingdom	Suffering
87	Korah			Zion, the city of God	
88	Heman	Devotional		Confidence in God in the midst of suffering	
89	Ethan	Messianic		Psalm of the David covenant	

**BOOK 4 Psalms 90-106 (Correspond to Numbers) Key Words are "Unrest, Wandering."**

<i>Psalm</i>	<i>Author</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Possible Historic Setting</i>	<i>Theme</i>	<i>Type</i>
90	Moses	Devotional		The prayer of Moses	
91		Devotional		Song of life and light	
92				Song of praise for the sabbath day	
93				Millennial psalm of sheer praise	
94		Devotional		A call upon God to intervene against the wicked	
95	David	Devotional		Song of joy	Satisfied
96				Song of joy	
97				Song of joy	
98				Song of joy	
99				Song of joy	
100		Devotional		Chorus of the hymn to Him	
101	David			Song to the King who rules in	Satisfied

righteousness and judgment

<i>Psalm</i>	<i>Author</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Possible Historic Setting</i>	<i>Theme</i>	<i>Type</i>
102		Penitential/Messianic		Prayer of trouble and sorrow	
103	David	Devotional		eat psalm of praise for the tender mercies of God	Satisfied
104				Psalm to the God of creation	
105	David		<i>I Chronicles 16:8-22</i>	Historic psalm	Satisfied
106		Devotional/Historical		Historic psalm	

<b>BOOK 5 Psalms 107-150 (Correspond to Deuteronomy) Key Phrase is "Word of God."</b>
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<i>Psalm</i>	<i>Author</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Possible Historic Setting</i>	<i>Theme</i>	<i>Type</i>
107		Devotional/Historical		God is good	
108	David			Israel's praise and possession	Satisfied
109	David	Imprecatory/Messianic		Messianic- the humiliation of Christ	Suffering
110	David	Messianic		Messianic- the exaltation of Christ	Satisfied
111		Devotional/Acrostic		Hallelujah for the works of God	
112		Acrostic		Hallelujah for the righteousness of God	
113		Hallel or Hallelujah		A hallelujah chorus to God as Creator and Redeemer	
114		Hallel or Hallelujah		God leads His dear children along	
115		Devotional/Hallel or Hallelujah		Glory to God because He is the opposite of heather idols	
116		Devotional/Hallel or Hallelujah		A love song because God swallows death in victory	
117		Hallel or Hallelujah		Hallelujah for the universal praise of God	
118		Devotional/Hallel or Hallelujah		The hymn of Christ sang with His disciples before His death	
119		Devotional/Acrostic		Praise to the Word of God	
120	Hezekiah	Degree or Ascent		The living conditions of the pilgrim	
121	Hezekiah	Degree or Ascent		The pilgrim sees the hills of Judea come into view	
122	David	Devotional/Degree or Ascent		The pilgrim comes within sight of Jerusalem	Satisfied
123	Hezekiah	Devotional/Degree or Ascent		The pilgrims see the temple, then Mount Zion, and finally stand in the security of Jerusalem	
124	David	Degree or Ascent		The pilgrims see the temple, then Mount Zion, and finally stand in the security of Jerusalem	Satisfied
125	Hezekiah	Degree or Ascent		The pilgrims see the temple, then Mount Zion, and finally stand in the security of Jerusalem	

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<i>Psalm</i>	<i>Author</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Possible Historic Setting</i>	<i>Theme</i>	<i>Type</i>
126	Hezekiah	Devotional/Degree or Ascent		A song of joy after their return from Babylonian captivity	
127	Solomon	Degree or Ascent		The vanity of building without God	
128	Hezekiah	Degree or Ascent		Home sweet home	
129	Hezekiah	Messianic/Degree or Ascent		Burned but not consumed	
130	Hezekiah	Penitential/Degree or Ascent		Burned but not consumed	
131	David	Degree or Ascent		Childlike faith and simplicity of the pilgrim	Satisfied
132	Hezekiah	Degree or Ascent		A messianic psalm looking forward to the time of Christ will be king in Jerusalem	
133	David	Devotional/Degree or Ascent		Rejoicing in the fellowship of believers	Satisfied
134	Hezekiah	Degree or Ascent		The pilgrim's final song of praise	
135				Praise the Lord	
136		Devotional		Thanks to God for His mercy	
137		Imprecatory		Singing the Lord's song in a strange land	
138	David	Devotional		A song of wholehearted praise	
139	David	Devotional		A song of praise to the attributes of God	Satisfied
140	David	Imprecatory		A prayer for deliverance from evil men	Suffering
141	David	Devotional		A prayer to be delivered from evil	Suffering
142	David	Devotional	<i>I Sam 22:1-2 or I Sam 24</i>	The beginning of David's suffering	
143		Penitential		David's urgent appeal for help	
144	David	Devotional		Praise and prayer to God because of who He is	Shepherd
145	David	Acrostic		Praise for what God is and for what He does	Satisfied
146				A Hallelujah psalm, praise to God for His goodness	
147		Devotional		A hallelujah chorus because of God's goodness to the earth and to Jerusalem	
148		Devotional		A hallelujah chorus of all God's created intelligences	
149		Devotional		A hallelujah chorus because the kingdom has come through redemption by blood, and judgment by power	
150		Devotional		The grand finale of the hallelujah chorus, with choir and orchestra	