

# DAVID

## The Prayers of the King

Pastor's Bible Study 2020

By Dr. Bob Fuller

### Episode 1: David's Prayer Journal

#### I. The Psalms of David

- a. The Old Trick: Right in the Middle
- b. When we open the Psalms, **we open the prayer Journal of David (Private thoughts)**. Reading someone else's Prayer Journal
  - i. First, they tell us about his HEART. They tell us what was going on in David's mind, heart and soul.
  - ii. But the Psalms also inform his HISTORY. Although David's history is well-accounted in Kings and Chronicles, the Psalms still have much to teach us about the historical events in which they were cast.
- c. The Hymnbook of Israel: Public Resource
  - i. Not just a journal, but a journal for publication. This collection of prayers was not "discovered." It was meant to be shared.
    1. George Sturch never wanted his prayers published
    2. Walthall
  - ii. A Musical Statement of Faith. Public profession (Anthem) of "What We Believe." Baptists don't have Creeds (of course they do—it's called the hymnbook)

#### II. The History of the Psalms

- a. The origin of the word "Psalm": The Greek word is "psalmos," meaning "to pluck," i.e., taking hold of the strings of an instrument with the fingers. It implies that the psalms were originally composed to be accompanied by a stringed instrument. "Psalms are songs for the lyre, and therefore lyric poems in the strictest sense." (Delitzsch, Psalms, Vol. I, p. 7) David and others, therefore, originally wrote the Psalms to be sung to the accompaniment of the harp.
- b. In New Testament worship, we are told to sing the psalms to the accompaniment of the heart:
  - i. "...in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord" (Ephesians 5:19)
  - ii. The phrase, "making melody," comes from the Greek word "psallontes" (literally, plucking the strings of). Therefore, we are to "pluck the strings of our heart" as we sing the psalms (i.e., to sing with emotion).
- c. The oldest of the Psalms originate from the time of Moses (1400 B.C.). We have three psalms penned by Moses:
  - i. Exodus 15:1-15 - a song of triumph following the crossing of the Red Sea
  - ii. Deut. 32, 33 - a song of exhortation to keep the Law after entering Canaan
  - iii. Psalm 90 - a song of meditation, reflection, and prayer
- d. After Moses, the writing of Psalms had its "peaks" and "valleys":

- i. With David (1000 B.C.), the sacred lyric attained to its full maturity.
- ii. With Solomon, the creation of psalms began to decline; this was “the age of the proverb.”
- iii. Only twice after this did the creation of psalms rise to any height, and then only for a short period: under Jehoshaphat (875 B.C.) and again under Hezekiah (725 B.C.).
- e. The Authors of the Psalms
  - i. David - Commonly thought to be the author of the book of Psalms, but he actually wrote only about seventy-three (73), less than half.
  - ii. Asaph - The music director during the reigns of David and Solomon (1 Chronicles 16:1-7). He wrote twelve (12) psalms.
  - iii. The Sons of Korah - These were Levites who served in the Temple (1 Chronicles 26:1-19). They wrote twelve (12) psalms.
  - iv. Solomon - At least two (2) psalms are attributed to him (Psalms 72, 127). That he wrote many more is stated in 1 Kings 4:29-32.
  - v. Moses - As indicated above, he wrote the earliest psalms; one is included in Psalms (Psalm 90).
  - vi. Heman - Contemporary with David and Asaph, and is known as “the singer” (1 Chronicles 6:33). He wrote one psalm (Psalm 88) that has been preserved.
  - vii. Ethan - A companion with Asaph and Heman in the Temple worship (1 Chronicles 15:19). He wrote one psalm (Psa 89).
  - viii. **Anonymous - The authorship of forty-eight (48) of the psalms is unknown.**
- f. The Arrangement of the Psalms: The Psalms were originally collected into five “books,” apparently according to the material found within them: Book I (Ps 1-41), Book II (Ps 42-72), Book III (Ps 73-89), Book IV (Ps 90-106) and Book V (Ps 107-150).

## THE PSALMS- THE HEBREW HYMNBOOK

- I. Scholars have tended to identify psalms according to their types (praise, lament, etc.).
  - A. *Hymns of praise* (Psalms 145, 93, 8).
  - B. *Laments* (Psalms 12, 13). This category is the largest by far, including as much as a third of the whole Psalter.
  - C. *Psalms of thanksgiving* (Psalms 9, 30)
  - D. *Psalms celebrating God’s law* (Psalm 119).
  - E. *Wisdom psalms* (Psalms 1, 37).
  - F. *Psalms of confidence* (Psalm 23).
  - G. *Royal psalms* (Psalms 2, 20, 21, 72, 110).
  - H. Songs of Ascent (or Songs Of Degrees) - These psalms were possibly sung by pilgrims on the way to Jerusalem to observe the feasts. They are grouped together as Psalms 120-134.
  - I. *Historical psalms* (Psalm 78).
  - J. *Prophetic hymns* (Psalm 81).
- II. **HEADING-** Includes authorship titles, historical titles and the type of psalm. It may also include musical “notations.”

III. MUSICAL NOTATIONS- *Lyrics (from “Lyre,” as in “to be sung with a lyre”)*

- Selah (pause?)
- Mizmor (sing)
- Shir (song)

IV. HEBREW POETRY: The Anatomy of a Psalm (or, How can you have poetry without rhyme?)

A. *“Poetry, ...rises above prose and verse by its heightened expression, through capturing some intensely emotional mood or feeling, often expressed through felicitous words or phrases, such as figures of speech.” – Samuel Sandmel, *The Enjoyment of Scripture**

B. PARALLELISM (“*THOUGHT RHYME*”)

C. COMMON TYPES OF PARALLELISM

- i. Are they **Synonymous**? (Are they saying the same thing; is it just **repeating** the same thought?)

*113:7 He raises the poor from the dust, and lifts the needy from the ash heap,*

*147:10 His delight is not in the strength of the horse, nor his pleasure in the speed of a runner;*

- ii. Are they **Antithetic**? (Do they **counter** or **oppose** one another?)

*1:6 for the LORD watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.*

- iii. Are They **Synthetic**? (Does one line **develop** or **extend** the meaning of the other?)

*52:9 I will thank you forever, because of what you have done. In the presence of the faithful I will proclaim your name, for it is good.*

*(Less frequent types of parallelism)*

- iv. Are they emblematic? (One line is symbolic, or a **figure of speech**, the second states the idea **literally**)

*Prov. 25:4-5 Take away the dross from the silver, and the smith has material for a vessel;  
take away the wicked from the presence of the king, and his throne will be established in righteousness.*

- v. Are the lines in a Step, staircase, or climactic parallelism?

*29:5-6 The voice of the LORD breaks the cedars; the LORD breaks the cedars of Lebanon.*

*6 He makes Lebanon skip like a calf, and Sirion like a young wild ox.*

*65:4 Happy are those whom you choose and bring near to live in your courts. We shall be satisfied with the goodness of your house, your holy temple.*

## RHETORICAL DEVICES

- **acrostic-** Psalms 111, 112

Praise the LORD!

- A I will give thanks to the LORD with my whole heart,  
 B in the company of the upright, in the congregation.  
 C Great are the works of the LORD,  
 D studied by all who delight in them.

Psalm 111:1-2

- Psalm 119- The Mega-Acrostic (see your Study Bible) – all of the lines in each stanza begin with the same first Hebrew Letter (Wow!)
- Puns-  
 The foolish man’s name was “Nabal”(Which means fool)

## FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

- Personification
- Simile: a figure of speech in which one thing is likened to another, dissimilar thing, by the use of the word “like” or “as” etc. Distinguished from a metaphor in that a comparison is made explicit. Example: “The man had a head *like* a melon.” “The Kingdom of God is *like* a city set on a hill...”
- Metaphor: a figure of speech in which one thing is likened to another, dissimilar thing, by being spoken of as if it were that other. This is an implied comparison in which a word or phrase ordinarily or primarily used of one thing is applied to another.

- D. WHEN STUDYING A PSALM...(Remember—It is more about more about expression than information)
- A. What type of Psalm is this (Does the Introduction tell us?)
  - B. Who was the Psalmist: Author/ Poet/Songwriter?
  - C. What is the background of this Psalm? (What is its context?—Study Bible notes or a commentary would be helpful here)
  - D. What is the mood or tone of the psalm (is the psalmist shoutin’ for joy or singin’ the blues?)
  - E. Are there any metaphors, similes, personifications or other figures of speech? What do they mean?
  - F. Does it tell us anything about God (Theology?)
  - G. Does it tell us anything about people (Anthropology?)
  - H. Does it tell us anything about the past (History?)
  - I. Does it tell us anything about the present or future? (Prophecy?)
  - J. Does it pronounce a blessing, a warning or a curse?
  - K. Does it give any instruction (do this...; don’t do that...?)
  - L. In what type of worship situation would you use this Psalm?
  - M. When would this Psalm be helpful to you?

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Calvin’s Comment: “*The Psalms may appropriately be called ‘An Anatomy of all the Parts of the Soul,’ for there is not an emotion of which anyone can be conscious that is not here represented as in a mirror. ...The other parts of scripture contain the commandments which God enjoined his servants to announce to us. But here they are exhibited to us as speaking to God,*

*laying open their inmost thoughts and affections , calling, or rather drawing, each of us into examination of himself in particular.”*