

DIVISIONS AND CLASSIFICATIONS OF THE PSALMS

DIVISIONS

1. The divisions of the Psalms appear to be analogous with the Pentateuch
2. Each of the five divisions ends with a doxology of praise
3. The names of Jehovah and Elohim have crescendos in emphasis

BOOK ONE Psalms 1-41

1. Suggests Genesis in content - man is seen in a state of blessedness, fall, and recovery
2. Davidic authorship (1 and 2 have not titles; 10 and 33 are continuations of the previous)
3. The name Jehovah predominates (usage: Jehovah 177; Elohim 48)

BOOK TWO Psalms 42-72

1. Suggests Exodus in content - man is seen in ruin and redemption
2. Mostly Davidic in authorship
3. The name Elohim predominates (usage: Jehovah 31; Elohim 188)

BOOK THREE Psalms 73-89

1. Suggests Leviticus in content - emphasizes the sanctuary, tabernacle, temple, house, assembly, and the congregation. Largely liturgical, these psalms reveal how God in His holiness deals with His people
2. Mostly ascribed to Asaph
3. Both names Jehovah Elohim predominate (usage: Jehovah 43; Elohim 59)

BOOK FOUR Psalms 90-106

1. Suggests Numbers in content - peril and protection are prominent. Many are prophetic in looking to the time when wanderings for Israel will cease
2. Mainly anonymous
3. The name Jehovah predominates (usage: Jehovah 101; Elohim 19)

BOOK FIVE Psalms 107-150

1. Suggests Deuteronomy in content - the Word of God, perfection, and praise are predominant. The heart of the section ends with the "Hallelujah chorus" of Psalm 150
2. Various authors
3. The name Jehovah predominates (usage: Jehovah 226; Elohim 28)

CLASSIFICATIONS

REFLECTING THE HUMAN SOUL - in its cry for God

1. Extreme distress 6; 77; 69
2. Confession of sin 6; 32; 38; 51; 78; 88; 95; 106; 130
3. Joy of the righteous 1; 15; 16; 24; 40; 101; 103; 107
4. Thirsting for God 42; 43; 63
5. Trust and resting in God 23; 27; 37; 62; 91; 121
6. Praise 30; 40; 103; 107; 144; 150
7. Prayer 13; 25; 28; 55; 141; 143
8. When provoked 35-37; 52; 69; 109; 137
9. Fellowship 133

FOCUSED ON JEHOVAH - as God

1. Adoration 34; 45; 48; 95-100
2. Praise (Hallelujah) 107; 111-118; 135; 146-150
3. Thanksgiving 30; 75; 92; 103; 105; 136
4. God as a refuge 18; 46; 61; 62; 90; 91
5. Contrasting God with idols 115; 135; (Atheistic: 14; 53)
6. Petitions for help 3; 4; 12; etc.
7. Practicing God's presence 23; 91; 121
8. God as eternal King 47; 93; 97; 99
9. God as a Shepherd 22; 23; 24
10. Characteristics of God 90; 100

WITH MESSIANIC OVERTONES - written to express various messianic prophecies

1. Messiah's humiliation 22; 31; 41; 63; 69
2. Messiah's resurrection 16; 118
3. Messiah's present priestly ministry 23
4. Messiah's coronation 24; 45; 132
5. Messiah's kingdom 72; 89; 93; 145
6. Others 2; 8; 34; 40; 61; 68; 96-98; 102; 109; 110;

RECALLING ISRAEL'S HISTORY - depicting outstanding events in Hebrew history

33; 44; 60; 68; 77-81; 105; 106; 114; 126; 136; 137; 141

FOR SPECIFIC OCCASIONS

1. Celebrate a victory 9; 20; 21; 60; 61
2. Laying of the temple foundation 66
3. Pilgrimages to Jerusalem for feasts 122
4. Sung at various feasts 113-118

EMPHASIZING GOD'S WORD

19; 119; 138:2

EMPHASIZING THE SANCTUARY

27; 72; 84; 122;

FOCUSED ON GOD'S CREATION - describing the wonders of creation

8; 19; 33; 65; 90; 104; 124

IMPRECATORY PSALMS - calling down Divine wrath against the wicked

35; 58; 59; 69; 83; 109; 137

HALLEL PSALMS - sung by families on the night of Passover

113-118

HALLELUJAH PSALMS - each begins and ends with the word "hallelujah" (praise the Lord)

146-150

ON RAGE AND THE PRIDE OF THE WICKED

2; 10; 58; 73; 94

ACCROSTICS - alphabetic

9; 10; 25; 34; 37; 111; 112; 119; 145

PSALMS OF DEGREES - thought by some to have been composed by Hezekiah when the shadow of the sundial went back 10 degrees

120-134