



PSALMS

A Snapshot of the Psalms

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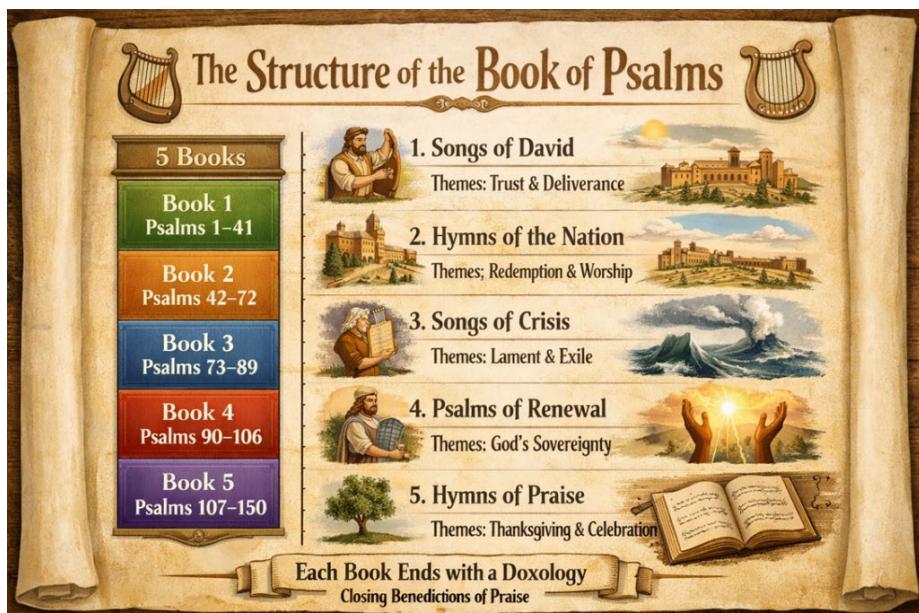
Words to Express Yourself to God

A. WHY THE PSALMS WERE WRITTEN

The Psalms were written to help God's people relate to Him in a very personal way.

- By teaching God's people how to worship and pray
- By giving language for joy, sorrow, confession, and praise
- By reminding believers of God's character, power, and faithfulness
- By pointing forward to the glorious return of Jesus
- By shaping our hearts, not just informing our minds
- By showing that God welcomes both our praise and our pain.

B. THE FIVE MAJOR THEMES IN THE PSALMS



The **Psalms** were intentionally arranged into **five major themes** ("books"). Each section parallels the five books of the Torah and ends with a **doxology** (a short praise to God),

reinforcing that Psalms is not just a hymnbook, but a practical book of worship, lament, and hope.

C. WHY THE PSALMS STILL MATTER

How do we bring our real emotions — joy, fear, anger, sorrow, doubt, gratitude, and hope — honestly before God? The book of Psalms answers that question. The Psalms give believers inspired words to express the full range of human experience in the presence of God.

Psalms show us that faith is not only about what we believe, but how we respond to God during life. It teaches us how to pray, how to worship, how to lament, how to trust, and how to rejoice. In every season of life, Psalms give us language for the soul.

D. WHAT THE PSALMS ARE REALLY ABOUT

Psalms are not mainly about music, poetry, or emotion — they are about our relationship with God. It shows us:

- A God who listens, not ignores
- A faith that is honest, not pretend
- A worship that includes both joy and tears
- A heart that learns to trust God in every circumstance
- A hope that rests in God's character, not circumstances
- That true faith brings every part of life into God's presence

E. BY READING THE PSALMS, YOU GAIN

- A more intimate prayer life shaped by Scripture
- Language to express your emotions before God
- Comfort in suffering and hope in difficulty
- A richer understanding of God's character
- A greater desire to worship God sincerely
- A stronger, more honest relationship with the Lord

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TAKE-HOME EXERCISE

READ PSALM 23

True / False Questions

1. The psalm promises believers a life without danger or hardship.
2. God's guidance includes both rest and discipline.
3. "The valley of the shadow of death" means God has abandoned the psalmist.
4. God's presence is the main reason the psalmist does not fear.
5. God's goodness and love are temporary blessings.

Answers

1. **False** — The valley is real; danger exists.
2. **True** — Green pastures *and* paths of righteousness.
3. **False** — God is *with* him in the valley.
4. **True** — "For you are with me."
5. **False** — They follow him **all the days of my life**.

Reflection: Which phrase in this psalm brings you the most comfort—and why?

READ PSALM 51

True / False Questions

1. David blames others for his sin in this psalm.
2. God desires honesty more than religious rituals.
3. Forgiveness removes all consequences of sin.
4. God can restore joy after serious failure.
5. A broken and contrite heart is something God despises.

Answers

1. **False** — David takes full responsibility.
2. **True** — “You desire truth in the inward being.”
3. **False** — Forgiveness does not erase all consequences.
4. **True** — “Restore to me the joy of your salvation.”
5. **False** — God **does not despise** it.

Reflection: Why do we sometimes prefer religious activity over honest repentance?

READ PSALM 1 — TWO PATHS, TWO OUTCOMES

True / False Questions

1. Everyone who reads the Bible regularly automatically lives wisely.
2. The righteous delight in God’s law, not merely obey it.
3. The psalm presents more than two life paths.
4. The wicked appear stable in the long run.
5. God is personally aware of the way the righteous live.

Answers False — Reading alone is not the same as delight or obedience.

1. **True** — Delight precedes behavior.
2. **False** — Only two paths are shown.
3. **False** — They are like chaff that blows away.
4. **True** — “The Lord knows the way of the righteous.”

Reflection: What does it practically look like to “delight” in God’s Word today?

READ PSALM 42 — THIRSTING FOR GOD IN DISCOURAGEMENT

True / False Questions

1. The psalmist hides his emotional pain from God.
2. The psalmist’s circumstances have shaken his confidence in God.

3. The repeated question “Why are you downcast?” shows self-awareness.
4. Remembering past worship increases the psalmist’s sorrow but offers no help.
5. The psalm ends with unresolved despair.

Answers False — The psalmist openly pours out his soul to God.

1. **True** — Mockery and suffering deeply trouble him.
2. **True** — He recognizes his inner turmoil and addresses it honestly.
3. **False** — Remembering worship is painful *but* strengthens hope.
4. **False** — The psalm ends with hope: “Put your hope in God.”

Reflection: What does this psalm teach us about talking to God when faith feels weak?

READ PSALM 73 — WHEN FAITH IS TESTED BY INJUSTICE

True / False Questions

1. The psalmist believes the wicked always suffer in this life.
2. Envy nearly causes the psalmist to abandon his faith.
3. The turning point of the psalm occurs in God’s presence.
4. The psalmist concludes that living faithfully brings no benefit.
5. Nearness to God is presented as the psalmist’s ultimate good.

Answers

1. **False** — The wicked appear to prosper and live carefree lives.
2. **True** — “My feet had almost slipped.”
3. **True** — Understanding comes when he enters the sanctuary of God.
4. **False** — He realizes faith is not pointless after all.
5. **True** — “God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.”

Reflection: Why does our perspective often change only after we enter God’s presence?

True/false answers can be found at: www.TaylorNotes.Info/snapshots

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