

Women's Bible Study
"The Piety of the Psalms"

Week 2
Psalms: a Book of Songs

I. *How the songs of the Psalms self-identify*

1. Praises (17 times)

⁶ Sing praises to God, sing praises!

Sing praises to our King, sing praises!

⁷ For God is the King of all the earth;

sing praises with a psalm! (47:6, 7; cf Pss 30:12; 40:3; 42:4; 47:6; 68:4; 68:32; 71:22; 75:9; 84:4; 92:1; 95:2; 98:4, 5; 106:12; 108:3; 147:1; 149:1)

2. Thanks or thanksgiving (5 times)

The LORD is my strength and my shield;

in him my heart trusts, and I am helped;

my heart exults,

and with my song I give thanks to him. (Ps 28:7; cf 69:30; 95:2; 30:4; 147:7)

3. Songs of joy (13 times)

Clap your hands, all peoples!

Shout to God with loud songs of joy! (Ps 47:1; cf. 63:7; 71:23; 81:1; 84:2; 92:4; 95:1; 96:12; 98:4; 98:8; 100:2; 107:22; 149:5)

4. Prayers (21 times)

*By day the LORD commands his steadfast love,
and at night his song is with me,
a prayer to the God of my life. (Ps 42:8)*

5. Cries (23 times) – “groanings”

*Give attention to the sound of my cry,
my King and my God,
for to you do I pray. (Ps 5:2)*

II. *How the psalms are to be sung:*

*I give you thanks, O LORD, with my whole heart;
before the gods I sing your praise; (Ps 138:1; cf 9:1; 86:12; 111:1; 119:2, 10, 34,
69, 145)*

*Therefore my heart is glad, and my whole being rejoices;
my flesh also dwells secure. (Ps 16:9)*

*Bless the LORD, O my soul,
and all that is within me,
bless his holy name! (Ps 103:1)*

III. *The types of songs:*

1. Joyful praises (e.g. Pss 33, 135, 145-150; including Royal Psalms: 20, 21, 24, 45, 72, 110)

2. Penitential prayers (e.g. Pss 6, 25, 32, 38, 51, 102, 130, 143)

3. Anxious petitions (Pss 3, 4, 5, 10, 17, 26, 28, 30, 35, 39, 54, 57, 59, 61, 69, 86)

4. Sorrowful laments (e.g. Pss 42, 43, 69, 77, 88, etc.)

5. Questioning psalms (e.g. 10, 13, 22, 74, 79, 80, 89, etc.)

6. Wisdom psalms (Pss 1, 19, 119)

7. Messianic psalms (Pss 2, 8, 16, 22, 45, 102, 110, 118; Rev 14:3)

IV. *Lessons* (33:3; 40:3; 96:1; 98:1; 144:9; 149:1; Rev 14:3)

1. Christianity is a religion of song.

*² He drew me up from the pit of destruction,
out of the miry bog,
and set my feet upon a rock,
making my steps secure.*

³ He put a new song in my mouth,

*a song of praise to our God.
Many will see and fear,
and put their trust in the LORD. (Ps 40:2, 3)*

...and they were singing a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and before the elders. No one could learn that song except the 144,000 who had been redeemed from the earth. (Rev 14:3)

*⁹ And they sang a new song, saying,
“Worthy are you to take the scroll
and to open its seals,
for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God
from every tribe and language and people and nation,
¹⁰ and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God,
and they shall reign on the earth.” (Rev 5:9, 10)*

2. The psalms encourage us to express all our circumstances and moods with song.
3. The psalms teach us to be theological as well as experiential.
4. The psalms teach us to be concerned with the collective as well as the individual.