

ONE STORY | ONE SAVIOR - UNIT 3 | LESSON 2a




WISDOM LITERATURE – The Promise Pictured Through Israel’s Struggle

God is a PROMISE Caring God

Through Israel’s Journey, God pictures 1) His **DESIGN** and **DESIRE** to 2) **RESCUE** His people from sin and death through a future 3) **KING** who will 4) **RESTORE** them to Himself in the **LAND** 5) for their **JOY**.

“Praise the LORD” Hallelujah! An Overview of Psalms

“Let everything that has breath praise the LORD! Praise the LORD!” (Psalm 150:6)

	<p>THE HEAD - To know that God is faithful to His promises even when life on the horizontal is hard.</p> <p>Q – Do you trust in God’s faithfulness even when you don’t understand life?</p>
	<p>THE HEART – To know that prayer (i.e. talking to God) can be full of lament. Honestly express your heart to God.</p> <p>Q – What are some different emotions expressed in prayer?</p>
	<p>THE HAND – To be moved to pray about anything and everything.</p> <p>Q – Is there someone you can pray for today?</p>

EMPHASIS

The Psalms are a collection of songs the Israelites used in worship. They express the many different emotions of a worshipper (joy, lament, praise, etc.), but collectively express the Psalmists ultimate hope in God and the future hope of the Messiah (i.e. the Seed Promise).

“Worship in the Psalms always looks back to what God has done and looks forward to what God will do in the future. The Worshiper therefore stands between these two events and must live on the foundation of the past and the hope of the future.”¹

LITERARY CONTEXT

“The Psalter is from first to last **poetry**, even though it contains many prayers and not all OT prayers were poetic”²

“Hebrew poetry lacks rhyme and regular meter. Its most distinctive and pervasive feature is parallelism. Most poetic lines are composed of two (sometimes three) balanced segments (the balance is often loose, with the second segment commonly somewhat shorter than the first). The second segment either echoes (synonymous parallelism), contrasts (antithetic parallelism) or syntactically completes (synthetic parallelism) the first.”³

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

“Psalms were written throughout the entire period of Old Testament history, from the time of Moses (Ps 90) through to the exile nearly a thousand years later (Ps 137). Psalms were collected over time into an anthology that could be used both individually and corporately. The people of God are encouraged to both learn the songs of the past and to “sing a new song,” expressing their praise to God in their current situation. Perhaps the best analogy we have is with a prayerbook or hymnbook.”⁴

“The Psalter is a collection of collections and represents the final stage in a process that spanned centuries. It was put into its final form by postexilic temple personnel, who completed it probably in the third century b.c. As such, it has often been called the prayer book of the “second” (Zerubbabel’s and Herod’s) temple and was used in the synagogues as well. But it is more than a treasury of prayers and hymns for liturgical and private use on chosen occasions. Both the scope of its subject matter and the arrangement of the whole collection strongly suggest that this collection was viewed by its final editors as a book of instruction in the faith and in full-orbed godliness—thus a guide for the life of faith in accordance with the Law, the Prophets and the canonical wisdom literature (see chart, pp. 1048–1051).”⁵

BIBLICAL CONTEXT

“The New Testament contains more than 100 quotations from the Psalms. With two small exceptions, every New Testament writer draws from the beloved hymnbook of God’s chosen people. In the opening line of the New Testament, Matthew declares that Jesus is “the son of David” and then uses 15 quotations from the Psalms to prove His Messiahship. Mark follows suit with 10 more quotations. In Luke’s Gospel, you find the Psalms absolutely everywhere.”⁶

STRUCTURE

“The standard Hebrew text divides the Psalms into five “books,” perhaps in imitation of the five books of the Pentateuch.”⁷

“In its present form, the book of Psalms consists of 150 poems divided into five books (1–41, 42–72, 73–89, 90–106, 107–150), the first four of which are marked off by concluding doxologies. Psalm 150 serves as a doxology for the entire collection.”⁸

“Whether or not we believe book one of the Psalms begins with Psalm 1 or with Psalm 3, it is clearly seen and taught by many that Psalm 1 and 2 are intentionally placed at the beginning to form an introduction the Psalms as a whole. Many of the early Church fathers go further and state these two Psalms are actually one Psalm and because of that shouldn’t be separated.”⁹

The five books represent the five books of the Torah, although how that is represented in each book varies from author to author.

A very helpful video is from the Bible Project: <https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/psalms/> It lays out the structure visually.¹⁰ [*recommend showing this in class*]

The Bible Project structure can be summarized as follows:

<i>Prelude</i>	<i>Book 1</i>	<i>Book 2</i>	<i>Book 3</i>	<i>Book 4</i>	<i>Book 5</i>	<i>Conclusion</i>
<i>1-2</i>	<i>3-41</i>	<i>43-72</i>	<i>73-89</i>	<i>90-106</i>	<i>107-145</i>	<i>146-150</i>
<i>The Torah and the Messianic King</i>	<i>Call to Covenant Faithfulness</i>	<i>Hope for future return to the temple and the Future Reign of the Messianic King</i>	<i>Promise of a Messianic Kingdom vs. Exile and Downfall of David’s Kingdom</i>	<i>The LORD reigns as King</i>	<i>The Messianic King brings God’s kingdom. Hope is found in Him.</i>	<i>Hallelu-YAH Praise YAHWEH</i>

Another video explains the various types of Psalms¹¹: <https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/art-biblical-poetry/>

Psalms are a varied and deep book of worship whose depths can never be exhausted.

JESUS IN THE TEXT

“The connection we’re to glean between Psalm 1 and Psalm 2 then is one of instructing us in wisdom and pointing us to the King in whom wisdom is found and the King in whom we’re to take refuge. We could say Psalm 1 instructs us in wisdom by contrasting a wise and foolish man, while Psalm 2 shows us the King in whom such wisdom is personified. We could also say in Psalm 1 the blessed are those who trust the Lord and rest in His Law, while in Psalm 2 the blessed are those who trust the Lord to establish His righteous King who gives us His Law. Or we could say we find the theme of instruction in Psalm 1, while finding the content of this instruction in the Lord’s kingly reign in Psalm 2.”¹²

The overall structure celebrates the Torah, yet continually looks to the Messiah. The coming Messiah is the ultimate source of hope and deliverance from pain and evil, the one that turns lament into praise.

“The New Testament continually uses the book of Psalms to fix our gaze upon the excellencies of Christ, upon the majesty, beauty, and glory of the One who through his humiliation and exaltation reigns over the nations, leading

them to the heavenly Mount Zion so that, lost in wonder, love, and praise, they may proclaim eternally the glory of the triune God.”¹³

¹⁴The Book of Psalms is the most read book of the Bible and its words were quoted more often by Jesus than the words from any other book. Jesus used the psalmists’ words when...

- He was asked for a sign to show who He is (Ps 78:24, John 6:32-33)
- The Jews wanted to stone Him for claiming to be God (Ps 82:6, John 10:34).
- He called Himself the chief cornerstone (Ps 118:22-23, Matt 21:42, John 2:10, Luke 20:17).
- Countering the Pharisees on several occasions (Ps 8:2, 110:1, Matt 21:16, 22:44, Mark 12:36, 14:62, Luke 20:42-43).
- Foretelling Jerusalem’s destruction (Ps 118:26; Matt 23:39, Luke 13:35).
- Talking about his betrayal (Ps 41:9, John 13:18).
- Telling that He would be hated without cause (Ps 35:19, 69:4, John 15:25).
- Pilate asked if He is the son of God (Ps 110:1, Matt 22:44, Mark 12:36).
- Dying on the cross: (Ps 22:1; Matt 27:46, Mark 15:34).
- Committing his spirit to His Father (Ps 31:5, Luke 23:46).
- Speaking about those who try to work their way into the Kingdom (Ps 6:9, Matt 7:23).
- Speaking of the hate the world has for Him (Ps. 35:19; 69:4, John 15:25)
- Speaking of the sorrow of His soul (Ps 42:5,9-11, 43:5, Matt 26:38, Mark 14:34)
- Speaking of Man’s reward for his works (Ps 62:12, Matt 16:27)
- Speaking of the manna God gave to their forefathers (Ps 78:24, John 6:31)
- Telling about the time they will see Him again (Ps 118:25-26, Matt 23:39)

It is for this reason, we believe the Bible tells a single story and at the center of this story is JESUS.

APPLICATION

- Life on the horizontal is hard, as indicated by all the laments.
- Yet, trusting in the faithfulness of God brings hope and instills praise into our prayers.
- The world is full of both the righteous and the wicked (Ps. 1), yet our hope is to be placed in the promised messiah (Ps. 2).
- When reading the Psalms, look for Jesus.

VISUALS

MEMORY VERSE

Psalm 150:6

“Let everything that has breath praise the LORD! Praise the LORD!”

RESOURCES

<https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/psalms/>
<https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/art-biblical-poetry/>

ENDNOTES

- ¹ <https://readingacts.com/2011/07/25/psalm-1-and-2-as-an-introduction-to-the-psalter/>
- ² <https://www.biblica.com/resources/scholar-notes/niv-study-bible/intro-to-psalms/>
- ³ <https://www.biblica.com/resources/scholar-notes/niv-study-bible/intro-to-psalms/>
- ⁴ https://www.preachingtoday.com/exegesis/psalms/preaching-on-psalms.html?gclid=Cj0KCQjw5oiMBhDtARIsAJi0qk15nWZtiWFFH19KWLYuuOiJDIO1umwbqCQ5JdfOCsw_ftLcbcyZrnYaAiYpEALw_wcB
- ⁵ <https://www.biblica.com/resources/scholar-notes/niv-study-bible/intro-to-psalms/>
- ⁶ <https://accordancebible.com/psalms-new-testament/>
- ⁷ ESV Study Bible
- ⁸ <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Psalms>
- ⁹ <https://thepublicans.org/2020/07/09/why-we-should-take-psalm-1-2-together/>
- ¹⁰ <https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/psalms/>
- ¹¹ <https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/art-biblical-poetry/>
- ¹² <https://thepublicans.org/2020/07/09/why-we-should-take-psalm-1-2-together/>
- ¹³ <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/jesus-and-the-psalms/> The following article would also be of interesting in studying the use of the Psalms in the Life of Jesus. <https://hrcak.srce.hr/file/235971>
- ¹⁴ <https://reasonsforhopejesus.com/old-testament-book-jesus-quote-often/>