

The Book of Psalms – *Some Background*

There are few books in the Bible more beloved than the Book of Psalms. Whether in corporate worship or in personal devotions, the Psalms have encouraged Jews and Christians for centuries.

The 150 Psalms in the Bible are “prayed poetry,” expressing praise, lament, thanksgiving, penitence, trust, and royal enthronement. The poems range from intimate beauty to fierce nationalism, and from simple to complex form.

In the Hebrew Scriptures the book is titled *Sepher Tehillim*, “Book of Praises.” The word “Psalm” is a translation from the Greek, while “Psalter” comes from the Latin. Both titles are references “to songs accompanied by string instruments.”

The Book as we know it was created during the time of the Second Temple, the period following the return of the Hebrew people from Exile. Like a modern hymn book, it is a collection of collections, based on previous editions of hymns, and includes the influence of other ancient cultures.

The Psalter is organized into five divisions reflecting the five books of the Torah: Book I - Psalms 1-41; Book II - Psalms 42-72; Book III - Psalms 73-89; Book IV - Psalms 90-106; Book V - Psalms 107-150. Each book ends with a Benediction. Most Psalms are anonymous.

Many turn to the Psalms in the most sacred moments of our lives to find the words that express our faith, that nurture our spirits in every conceivable human experience, and that give us guidance, comfort and the assurance of God, a presence greater than ourselves.

Sources:

“Out of the Depths - The Psalms Speak for us Today” Bernard W. Anderson
“The Psalms” A Commentary by Artur Weiser, translated by Herbert Hartwell
“The Testimony of Poets and Sages” W.H. Bellinger Jr.
“Kerygma the Bible in Depth” revised edition - James A. Walther
“The Oxford Companion to the Bible” Editors, Bruce E. Metzger, Michael D. Coogan

Summer Psalms for the Soul

A Journey through the Book of Psalms

Services and sermons each Sunday this summer explore a variety of Psalms from the Bible.

An all-ages **children’s program** will be offered each week.

Sundays at 10.30am:

July 1	Psalm 72 “Living Together”	Rev. Terry Dempsey
July 8	Psalm 67 “All Good Gifts”	Rev. Terry Dempsey
July 15	Psalm 90 “A Wise Heart”	Rev. Terry Dempsey
July 22	Psalm 84 “The Comforts of Home”	Rev. Michael Brooks
July 29	Psalm 10 “A Road Map for Social Justice”	Rev. Michael Brooks
August 5	Psalm 96 “Sing for Joy”	Rev. Terry Dempsey
August 12	Psalm 77 “Wondering about God and Recalling God’s Wonders”	Rev. Martha Reynolds
August 19	Psalm 121 “The Lord is Your Keeper”	Rev. Terry Dempsey
August 26	Psalm 137 “When Hope Seems but a Dim Memory”	Rev. Michael Brooks
September 2	Psalm 150 “The Grand Conclusion!”	Rev. Michael Brooks

The Book of Psalms – *Some Background*

There are few books in the Bible more beloved than the Book of Psalms. Whether in corporate worship or in personal devotions, the Psalms have encouraged Jews and Christians for centuries.

The 150 Psalms in the Bible are “prayed poetry,” expressing praise, lament, thanksgiving, penitence, trust, and royal enthronement. The poems range from intimate beauty to fierce nationalism, and from simple to complex form.

In the Hebrew Scriptures the book is titled *Sepher Tehillim*, “Book of Praises.” The word “Psalm” is a translation from the Greek, while “Psalter” comes from the Latin. Both titles are references “to songs accompanied by string instruments.”

The Book as we know it was created during the time of the Second Temple, the period following the return of the Hebrew people from Exile. Like a modern hymn book, it is a collection of collections, based on previous editions of hymns, and includes the influence of other ancient cultures.

The Psalter is organized into five divisions reflecting the five books of the Torah: Book I - Psalms 1-41; Book II - Psalms 42-72; Book III - Psalms 73-89; Book IV - Psalms 90-106; Book V - Psalms 107-150. Each book ends with a Benediction. Most Psalms are anonymous.

Many turn to the Psalms in the most sacred moments of our lives to find the words that express our faith, that nurture our spirits in every conceivable human experience, and that give us guidance, comfort and the assurance of God, a presence greater than ourselves.

Sources:

“Out of the Depths - The Psalms Speak for us Today” Bernard W. Anderson
“The Psalms” A Commentary by Artur Weiser, translated by Herbert Hartwell
“The Testimony of Poets and Sages” W.H. Bellinger Jr.
“Kerygma the Bible in Depth” revised edition - James A. Walther
“The Oxford Companion to the Bible” Editors, Bruce E. Metzger, Michael D. Coogan

Summer Psalms for the Soul

A Journey through the Book of Psalms

Services and sermons each Sunday this summer explore a variety of Psalms from the Bible.

An all-ages **children’s program** will be offered each week.

Sundays at 10.30am:

July 1	Psalm 72 “Living Together”	Rev. Terry Dempsey
July 8	Psalm 67 “All Good Gifts”	Rev. Terry Dempsey
July 15	Psalm 90 “A Wise Heart”	Rev. Terry Dempsey
July 22	Psalm 84 “The Comforts of Home”	Rev. Michael Brooks
July 29	Psalm 10 “A Road Map for Social Justice”	Rev. Michael Brooks
August 5	Psalm 96 “Sing for Joy”	Rev. Terry Dempsey
August 12	Psalm 77 “Wondering about God and Recalling God’s Wonders”	Rev. Martha Reynolds
August 19	Psalm 121 “The Lord is Your Keeper”	Rev. Terry Dempsey
August 26	Psalm 137 “When Hope Seems but a Dim Memory”	Rev. Michael Brooks
September 2	Psalm 150 “The Grand Conclusion!”	Rev. Michael Brooks