

Solid Rock Christian Church Manassas, Virginia

Bible Study - October 27, 2022

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Title: Introduction To The Book of Psalms - Part IV

I. Review

A. In our previous study, we discussed the five major or principal communicative purposes or functions of the Psalms, and they are: **petition, thanksgiving, praise, instruction, and profession of trust.**

B. Don't confuse the communicative purposes of the psalms with the Seven broad categories of psalms, which are: (1) Doxological, (2) Devotional, (3) Liturgical, (4) Theological, (5) Confessional, (6) Evangelical, and (7) Relational.

Comment: Review the notes from Part II of our study for the explanation of the broad categories of the psalms.

B. It was also pointed out that there are five minor functions of the Psalms and they are: **repentance, remembrance, retribution, royalty, and liturgy.**

C. The largest number of psalms (or major portions of complete psalms) in the Psalter belong to the category of petition. The two main types of petition psalms are **Individual Prayers** and **Communal Prayers.**

D. Intense emotion is often manifested in psalms of petition: **despair, anger, sorrow, frustration.**

E. It was also pointed out in our previous study that a typical petition contains most of the following seven functional stages, but not necessarily in the same order:

1. Appeal
2. Problem
3. Request

4. Defense or Confession
5. Profession of faith
6. Promise, or
7. Praise

F. Also, please remember that the psalms are Hebrew poetry. As such, they often contain a great deal of nonliteral language, figures of speech, and hyperbole (i.e., deliberate exaggeration).

G. Additionally, Poetic Discourse allows the poet to express his feelings to the LORD in the strongest manner possible, according to the available form of literary speech.

Note: Strong language is not surprising in a tense religious setting.

H. Let us now move into this session of our study and discuss the second major communicative functions of the psalms that was previously introduced, and that will be **thanksgiving**.

II. Thanksgiving Psalms

A. Just as a psalm of petition can be either individual or a communal prayer, so also a psalm of thanksgiving (sometimes termed a "eulogy"). It may also be either personal or corporate, with the psalmist thanking God either for His gracious help to him as an individual or for what He has done for His chosen people.

B. Never-the-less, there are some key differences between a song of petition and a song of thanksgiving.

1. First, while a note of praise is usually included in most of the psalms of petition, this function is the primary compositional element of a psalm of thanksgiving (and of praise as well).

Comment: In other words, one major difference or distinguishing marker between a pure petition and a thanksgiving psalm is, the relative amount of praise that is present. //Stay with me!//

C. Words ascribing glory to God occur both at the beginning and the end of the thanksgiving psalm, whereas they are found only at the end of a typical petition.

D. As a result, thanksgiving psalms tend to be more optimistic in outlook and happy in emotive tone (i.e., arousing intense feeling).

E. This made the thanksgiving psalms particularly suitable for a public service of worship in ancient Israel, and these songs may have been sung during the priests' Thanks Offerings (e.g., Psalm 30).

F. Another key difference between the petition and the song of thanksgiving involves the time perspective. The thanksgiving psalm commemorates something specific that God has already done to help the psalmist himself or the people as a whole.

G. The time orientation is past, looking back at the time of distress and deliverance rather than present, as in the petition for salvation right now.

H. In the song of thanksgiving the crisis is over, the problem has been resolved. As a result, it is only fitting, that the LORD be greatly praised and gratefully thanked.

I. In the prayer of petition, the singer may make a vow to praise God; in the thanksgiving psalm he fulfills that vow.

J. A special group of thanksgiving songs are those which tell how God preserved his people in the past, the so-called salvation history psalms. Examples: Psalm 105, 106, 135, and 136.

III. The Four Main Parts or Stages of Thanksgiving Psalms

Note: It is sometimes difficult to separate the two middle sections of a Thanksgiving Psalm.

A. **First**, the psalm **begins** with a declaration of praise and thanksgiving to God for his glorious attributes and/or acts of deliverance (Psalm 34:1).

1. Sometimes it leads off with a word of "**blessing**" with reference to the person who was helped by Yahweh (Psalm 32:1).
2. Often the opening segment includes **an invitation to the congregation to join in joyous worship of the Lord** (Psalm 30:4).

B. **Second**, there follows a **description of the distress** (a "narrative segment"), the dangerous situation that the psalmist or God's people were in.

1. It states why they needed God's help (their problem) and how they called upon God (their prayer) as in Psalm 18:5-6.

C. Often combined with the second stage (B), the **third stage** is a **profession of trust or a testimony** that God has indeed helped and delivered. There is also often an expression of the psalmist's fervent trust that the LORD will certainly continue to act on his behalf in the future (Psalm 30:11).

D. The psalm **ends** with a thanksgiving and/or a promise to give praise to God forever (Psalm 30:12).

1. This may include the mention of an offering of the appropriate sacrifices (Psalm 116:17).
2. There may also be an exhortation for others to join in this song of praise, for example, that even "all the kings" on earth should glorify the LORD (Ps. 138:4).

Comments:

- 1) From the psalms of thanksgiving, we can see that Yahweh intends also to deliver the *Gentiles*, that is, the people of every tribe and nation in the world who will ultimately put their trust in Him.
- 2) Yahweh earnestly desires them all to be brought into His kingdom so that they might worship, praise, and give thanks to Him for all the wonderful things that He has done for them as Creator, Provider, Savior, and Sovereign King of the universe.

Note: Listen to the words of the Apostle Paul recorded in 1 Timothy 2:4, as I offer this insight into the two comments just stated.

"[God] Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth."

- 1) Please pay close attention. This verse does **NOT** teach universal salvation. The phrase "**Who will have all men to be saved,**" can be translated "***desires all men to be saved.***" The Greek word for "desires" is not that which normally expresses God's will of decree (i.e., His eternal purpose), but rather God's will of desire.
- 2) There is a distinction between God's desire and His eternal saving purpose, which must transcend His desire.
- 3) God does not want men to sin. He hates sin (Ps. 5:4; 45:7); thus, He hates its consequences - eternal wickedness in hell.
- 4) God does not want people to remain wicked forever in eternal

remorse and hatred of Himself. But for those who reject God's warnings, When Christ returns the Second time (not the Rapture but His **Second Coming**), Rev. 22:11 expresses God position on the matter - **"He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still."** (Rev. 22:11)

- 5) Even so, while the opportunity is still available, to the sin-sick soul, for God's own glory, and to manifest that glory in wrath, the Apostle Paul recorded the following: **"What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: (i.e., Ripe for destruction because of their own actions of rejecting the truth)."**

//Ladies and gentlemen, boys, and girls - NOW is the acceptable time to confess that you are a sinner in need of a Savior, ask the Lord for forgiveness, and then invite Jesus Christ into your heart **and receive the wonderful gift of Salvation!**//

E. Psalm 30 (KJV) is good example of a song of thanksgiving: (The Letters in parentheses on the right refer to the four stages listed above.)

- | | |
|---|--|
| [1] I will extol thee, O Lord, for thou hast lifted me up, and hast not made my foes to rejoice over me. | INITIAL PRAISE
(A) |
| [2] O Lord my God, I cried unto thee, and thou has healed me. | GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE DISTRESS
(B) |
| [3] O Lord, thou hast brought up my soul from the grave, thou hast kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit. | TESTIMONY
(C) |
| [4] Sing unto the Lord, O ye saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness. | INVITATION TO PRAISE
(A.2) |
| [5] For his anger endureth but a moment: in his favor is life; Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. | |
| [6] And in my prosperity, I said "I shall never be moved" | SPECIFIC DESCRIPTION OF THE DISTRESS
(B) |
| [7] Lord, by thy favor thou hast made my mountain to stand strong; thou didst hide thy face, and I was Troubled. | |
| [8] I cried to thee, O Lord; and unto the Lord I made supplication. | DESCRIPTION OF THE APPEAL
(B) |
| [9] "What profit is there in my blood, when I go down to the pit? Shall the dust praise thee? Shall it declare thy truth?" | |

[10] Hear, O Lord, and have mercy upon me Lord, be thou my helper.

[11] Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing: thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness;

[12] To the end that my glory may sing praise to thee, and not be silent.

O Lord my God, I will give thanks
Unto thee forever.

**TESTIMONY OF
DELIVERANCE**
(C)

**PROMISE OF
PRAISE**
(D)

I pray that this has been another informative and blessed lesson for you. Please apply what you have learned by responding to the three items below.

1. Determine whether the following psalms are "individual" or "communal" songs of thanksgiving:

Psalm 34 _____

Psalm 41 _____

Psalm 66 _____

Psalm 75 _____

Psalm 92 _____

Psalm 107 _____

Psalm 116 _____

Psalm 118 _____

Psalm 124 _____

Psalm 136 _____

Psalm 138 _____

2. List beside each of the following psalms the Book or Division of the Psalter in which they are found.

Psalm 34 _____

Psalm 66 _____

Psalm 75 _____

Psalm 136 _____

3. The song of thanksgiving in Psalm 18 includes two stages that are generally seen in a petition psalm, namely, the "defense" and the "profession of trust." In which verses do you find these?

a. Defense _____

b. Profession of trust _____

Thank you so much for your participation and my prayer is that you have been blessed.

Jude 3

Pastor Austin