

Solid Rock Christian Church Manassas, Virginia

Bible Study - November 17, 2022

Prepared & Presented by: Pastor James G. Austin, Jr., PhD., D.Min.

Title: Introduction To The Book of Psalms - Part VII

I. Introduction

A. In our studies up this point, you have been introduced to some of the specific uses and purposes of various psalms. You were introduced to the five principal communicative purposes, and they are:

1. Petition
2. Thanksgiving
3. Praise
4. Instruction (Teaching),
5. Profession of Trust

B. Do you remember the two main types of Petition Psalms? List them.

- 1.
- 2.

C. We have also covered the five Books or Divisions of the Psalms. Complete the information below.

Books/Divisions

Numerical Sequence

Book I

Book II

Book III

Book IV

Book V

D. Besides the five major genres, there are some others considered "minor." Several other psalms that seem to have had a special, more specific purpose in the worship life of the people of Israel, whether for an individual or for the entire congregation, fall into one of these categories.

E. These psalms do not differ very much in terms of form (structure or style) from the psalms assigned to the major categories, but they do differ in purpose, especially the liturgical songs, and they are frequently distinct with respect to their content.

F. Some of the better known of these minor types are - songs of repentance, songs of remembrance, of retribution, of royalty, and songs of liturgy.

G. Again, it is important to emphasize that many psalms can not be identified clearly as one type or the other. They are "mixed."

II. Psalms of Repentance

A. The psalms of repentance (sometimes termed "penitential"), may be considered a subtype of the Petition Psalms, some of which give a special emphasis to the confession of sin.

B. In expressing repentance, the psalmist typically speaks of deep sadness over his own sin, guilt, and unrighteousness, and appeals to God to be merciful and to grant forgiveness.

C. Many different terms to designate human sinfulness, both literal and figurative, are found in such prayers, usually concentrated within several closely related verses. These are

accompanied by expressions of the deepest feelings of the sinner's heart, in particular, his great sorrow for his wicked thoughts and actions.

D. Similarly, sin's terrible results are also expressed in these psalms. Frequently, this is described in terms of some sickness or physical affliction, which may be spoken of as a punishment from the LORD.

E. Since sickness and sin are considered to be so closely related in this way, the fervent plea for healing includes within itself an unexpressed request for forgiveness from God.

F. There is always some prominent expression of hope in the psalms of repentance. They usually incorporate a number of explicit statements declaring that the individual, or the group, trusts completely in the LORD, the God of the covenant, to forgive their sins.

G. The psalmist may also mention the work of God's Spirit in his life, moving him to repent of his wickedness so that God might restore him to a right relationship with Himself (e.g., Ps. 51:11).

H. It is the Spirit of Yahweh Who creates or inspires a right spirit within the sinner, and a heart made right with God, desires to live a holy life in conformity with His will (Ps. 51:12).

I. The psalmist realizes that after God forgives his sin, saves him from his affliction, and heals his body, he is obligated then to live a life pleasing to the LORD. The result of recovery and restoration is often celebrated in words of praise that convey the forgiven sinner's great joy over what God has done for him.

III. Repentant/Penitential Psalms in The Psalter

- A. There are seven psalms in the Psalter which have traditionally been designated as "penitential." They clearly express the interrelated ideas of sickness being a result of sin and the confidence that recovery will follow repentance.
- B. Such statements are not to be taken too literally, that is, as referring only to physical illness and healing. The "sickness" might also be psychological, social, and/or spiritual in nature.
- C. A person may be suffering because of internal conflict or personal guilt, or because of enmity with relatives, friends, or neighbors, or even God Himself. Deep down, of course, the cause always has to do with sin and broken fellowship with God, which can be healed only through repentance and forgiveness.
- D. Having received assurance of forgiveness, the psalmist expresses his faith in the LORD and commits himself to live a consecrated life in service to God and his fellow believers. He is now able to rejoice because he has been restored to fellowship as an active member of God's people.

IV. Psalms of Remembrance

- A. The Psalms (or songs) of Remembrance , also known as *historical* psalms, are a special type of Thanksgiving Psalm. They speak about the LORD's faithful provision and protection of His chosen people in the past.
- B. They often include a strong expression of faith on the part of the psalmist or the worshipping congregation, and as a result, certain portions may also sound like a Profession of Trust.
- C. The two events in the history of Israel that the songs of

remembrance mention most often are the Exodus from Egypt (Exod. 14), and the promise of an eternal throne, or kingship, through the descendants of David (2 Sam. 7).

D. In both of these, what is in view is God's redemption of those in need by means of a wonderful deliverance worked by His chosen leader - by Moses on behalf of Israel in the first case and in the second case, by the Messiah at some future time and on behalf of all people.

E. The LORD's deliverance of His people from slavery on a national scale is seen in these psalms as a model and a guarantee of redemption on a personal level for each and every believer.

F. The historical psalms also call to bitter remembrance the people's repeated acts of unfaithfulness and disobedience, for which they had to be justly punished by their righteous LORD.

G. Therefore, these past events of God working in the lives of His people are recorded not as a mere history lesson, but rather as (1) examples to warn the present generation not to follow the wicked behavior of those who broke the covenant (Ps. 106:40-43); (2) a strong encouragement to keep walking in steadfast obedience to the LORD (Ps. 105:42-45); and (3) reminders to praise and thank the gracious and glorious King (Ps. 105:1-2).

H. He who once delivered their ancestors would one day do the same for all those who remain in faithful fellowship with Him.

Ok, it is once again Interactive Time. Read over the information covered in this lesson and respond to the questions that follow.

1. Pick out the seven Penitential Psalms from the following group by **drawing a circle** around the correct ones; Psalm 2, 6, 32, 33, 35, 38, 40, 45, 51, 100, 102, 125, 130, 143, 144.

2. Which of the Penitential Psalms include strong explicit pleas for the personal or communal forgiveness of sins? Give references for **three** such passages (e.g., Psalm xx and verses ...).
 - (1) _____
 - (2) _____
 - (3) _____

3. Examine Psalms 32, 51, and 143 in detail with reference to the seven stages (or parts) that are often present in a Psalm of Petition: (a) appeal, (b) problem, (c) request, (d) personal defense or confession of sin, (e) profession of trust, (f) promise, and (g) praise. On a separate sheet of paper, draw a chart with seven columns, each headed by the name of the respective stages. Then try to find a specific verse in each of these three psalms that expresses one or more of the seven stages. Write the verse number in the appropriate column.

4. Psalm 78 is a Historical Psalm, as vv 3-4 show, and it is also a song of another general type (see vv 1-2). Name this other type. Verses 42-43 remind the people of the LORD's salvation. What other sad fact do the following verses also emphasize: 78:8, 10-11, 17-18, 22?

5. According to Psalm 105, what should God's people "**remember**" (v 5)? What does the LORD Himself "remember" (vv 8-9)? In what verse is this important fact emphasized again in Psalm 105? How should the people respond to these acts of remembrance (v 45)?

6. Psalm 95 is a song of praise that includes a lengthy passage of remembrance. What are the people supposed to remember? Why should they remember this?

I sincerely trust that you have been blessed from and through this study, and perhaps even a little challenged by the Interactive Questions. My desire is that the LORD will bless your efforts as you continue to study and discover the vast riches and treasures in the Word of God.

Jude 3

Pastor Austin