

Name: .....

# **THE BOOK OF PSALMS**

## **Meditating on God's Circumstance-Defying Covenant Faithfulness in Christ**

**St. Helen's, Bishopsgate RML Overview groups**

**Weekend away**

**8—10 February 2019**

## OVERVIEW OF THE FIVE SESSIONS

Session 0 (Friday evening): Introductory brainstorming and initial scene-setting

Session 1 (Saturday morning): Introduction (Psalms 1-2):  
**“The Gospel Focus of the Book of Psalms”**

Session 2 (Saturday morning): Book I (Psalms 3-41), Book II (Psalms 42-72) and Book III (Psalms 73-89):  
**“The Gospel-Related Tension of the Book of Psalms”**

Session 3 (Saturday afternoon):  
*Meditating on – and Praying – Individual Psalms (as a Christian Believer)*

Session 4 (Sunday morning): Book IV (Psalms 90-106):  
**“The Gospel Heart of the Book of Psalms”**

Session 5 (Sunday morning): Book V (Psalms 107-144/145) and Conclusion (145-150):  
**“The Gospel Climax of the Book of Psalms”**

Session 6 (Sunday morning): Questions

INTRO (1-2)	BOOK I (3-41)	BOOK II (42-72)	BOOK III (73-89)	BOOK IV (90-106)	BOOK V (107-144/145)	CONCL (145/146-150)
Session 1	Session 2	Session 2	Session 2	Session 4	Session 5	Session 5

**SUGGESTED READING FOR YOUR QUIET TIMES**  
(ENTIRELY OPTIONAL!)

Saturday morning: Psalms 1-2, Psalm 72, Psalm 89

Question for meditation on Saturday afternoon/evening: How do Psalms 105-106 provide a response to the crisis of Book III (and, in particular, that of Psalm 89 which apparently calls into question God's covenant faithfulness)?

Sunday morning: Psalm 90, Psalm 103, Psalm 107, Psalm 110

## **SESSION 0:**

### **INTRODUCTORY BRAINSTORMING AND INITIAL SCENE-SETTING**

Why is the Overview exciting? [What excited Cleopas and his companion on the Emmaus Road (Lk 24)? What are the ways in which the OT builds up to Christ?]

Where do we find “Overviews” in the Bible?

Where is the Book of Psalms located in the Old Testament?

When was the Book of Psalms written?

Who were the original recipients of the Book of Psalms?

What indications of “shape” are there in the Book of Psalms?

## **The Shape of Jesus' Bible**

### **The Law**

Genesis  
Exodus  
Leviticus  
Numbers  
Deuteronomy

### **The Prophets**

#### ***The Former Prophets***

Joshua  
Judges  
Samuel  
Kings

#### ***The Latter Prophets***

Isaiah  
Jeremiah  
Ezekiel  
The Twelve (minor prophets: Hosea—Malachi)

### **The Writings**

Psalms  
Job  
Proverbs  
The Five Scrolls (Ruth, Song of Songs, Ecclesiastes, Lamentations, Esther)  
Daniel  
Ezra-Nehemiah  
Chronicles

*Supplement to Session 0: Optional Bible study for those wishing to interact with some of the data underlying the shape of the Psalter*

## **APPROACHING THE BOOK OF PSALMS *AS A BOOK***

1. Look up Luke 24:44, Ephesians 5:18-19, Colossians 3:16.<sup>1</sup> Summarise what these references tell us about the significance of the Book of Psalms.
2. The Book of Psalms (or “Psalter”) is divided into five books. Look up the following references to see how the first four books finish: 41:13, 72:18-19, 89:52, 106:48. What do these four conclusions have in common?
3. In the light of your answer to question 2, where do you think the conclusion to Book Five (and the whole Psalter) begins?
4. Have a quick read of Psalms 1-2 (often considered to be the introduction to the Psalter). According to the beginning of Psalm 1 and the end of Psalm 2, what does it mean to be ‘blessed’?
5. There is a change of tone from Psalm 3 onwards. How would you express the difference between the tone of Psalms 3-7 and that found at the conclusion of the Psalter? What else do these early psalms have in common, according to their titles?
6. How should 72:20 shape our understanding of the Psalter? How might this verse be squared with, say, the title of Psalm 86?
7. The Psalter exhibits varying presentations or combinations of similar material. Note, for example, the following cases, and suggest how they inform our understanding of the nature of the Psalter:-
  - (a) Have a quick scan of 1 Chronicles 16:7-36, and observe how this comprises parts of what we know as Psalms 96, 105 and 106.
  - (b) Compare and contrast Psalms 14 and 53.
  - (c) Compare and contrast Psalms 108 and 60/57.
8. There are several groups of psalms that stand out. By what criteria have the following groups been arranged? 146-150, 120-134, 134-135-136 (“concatenation” or linking from one to the next), 96-99 (even 93-100). If you have time, see also the links in the following pairs/groups: 9-10, 20-21, 38-39, 42-43, 46-48, 50-51, 56-57, 111-112, 105-106 (or even 104-107).

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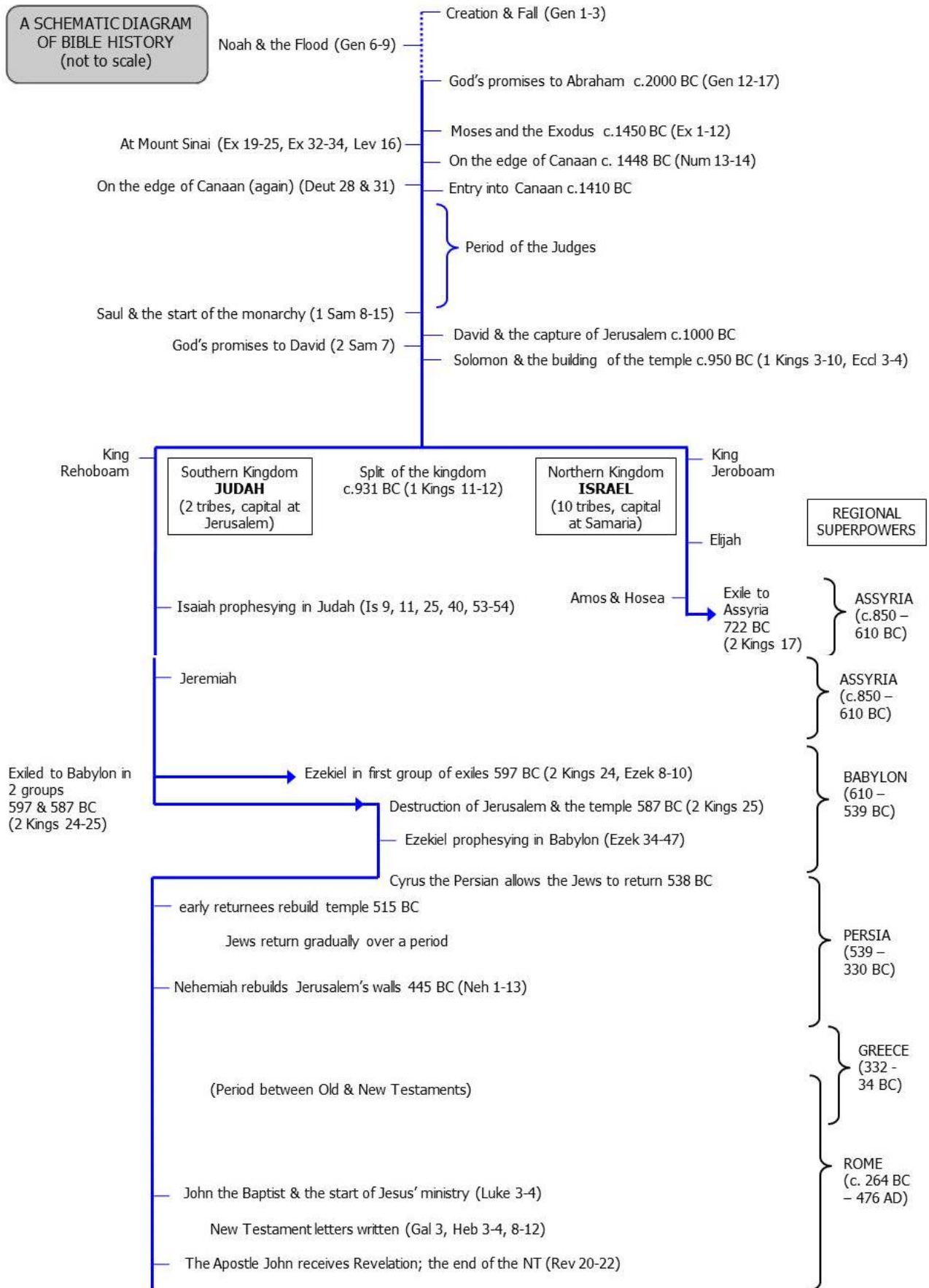
<sup>1</sup> It is recognised that the Ephesians & Colossians references do not speak exclusively of the Psalms of the OT.

9. What kind of information is supplied by the titles of the psalms in Book II? How does this differ from the openings/titles of the psalms in Books IV and V (as you have already partly noted in answer to question 8)? [Bear in mind that the title is in fact simply the opening verse of the psalm in the original, being neither set apart from the psalm itself nor given a different font size or capital letters!]
10. How important is chronology (or the order of historical events) in the order of the Psalms in Book II, according to the information in the titles and what you know from the historical background in 1-2 Samuel? Does your answer add anything to your understanding of how the Psalter has been shaped?
11. What stage in Israel's history is the earliest at which the Psalter could have reached its final form? Take account of the following data: Pss 85; 102; 107:3; 126; 137; 147:2. To what extent do we need to take account of the original recipients of the Psalter as we interpret this Book in a way that is sensitive to its final form?
12. The Psalter is the most frequently-quoted OT book in the NT. How is the Psalter used in the NT, according to Hebrews 1 and Romans 3? To what extent does this challenge the way in which you have tended to handle the psalms?
13. Which of these statements is the *least* defective, according to what you have seen in this study?
- (a) *The individual psalms have been cut off from their original historical settings and have been put together with other psalms according to criteria other than history. Therefore re-establishing the original historical context of a given psalm is of only minimal significance in the process of interpretation.*
- (b) *The psalm-titles provide us with much historical information, both in their titles and (less directly) within their main body. As with any other OT book, it's essential that we work hard to reconstruct the historical setting that lies behind a given psalm.*
- (c) *The psalms all speak of Christ and present us with timeless truths. Both the framework of the Psalter and the NT point to the fact that the historical background has now been transcended for us Christian believers. Hence the original historical setting lying behind a given psalm is no longer relevant.*

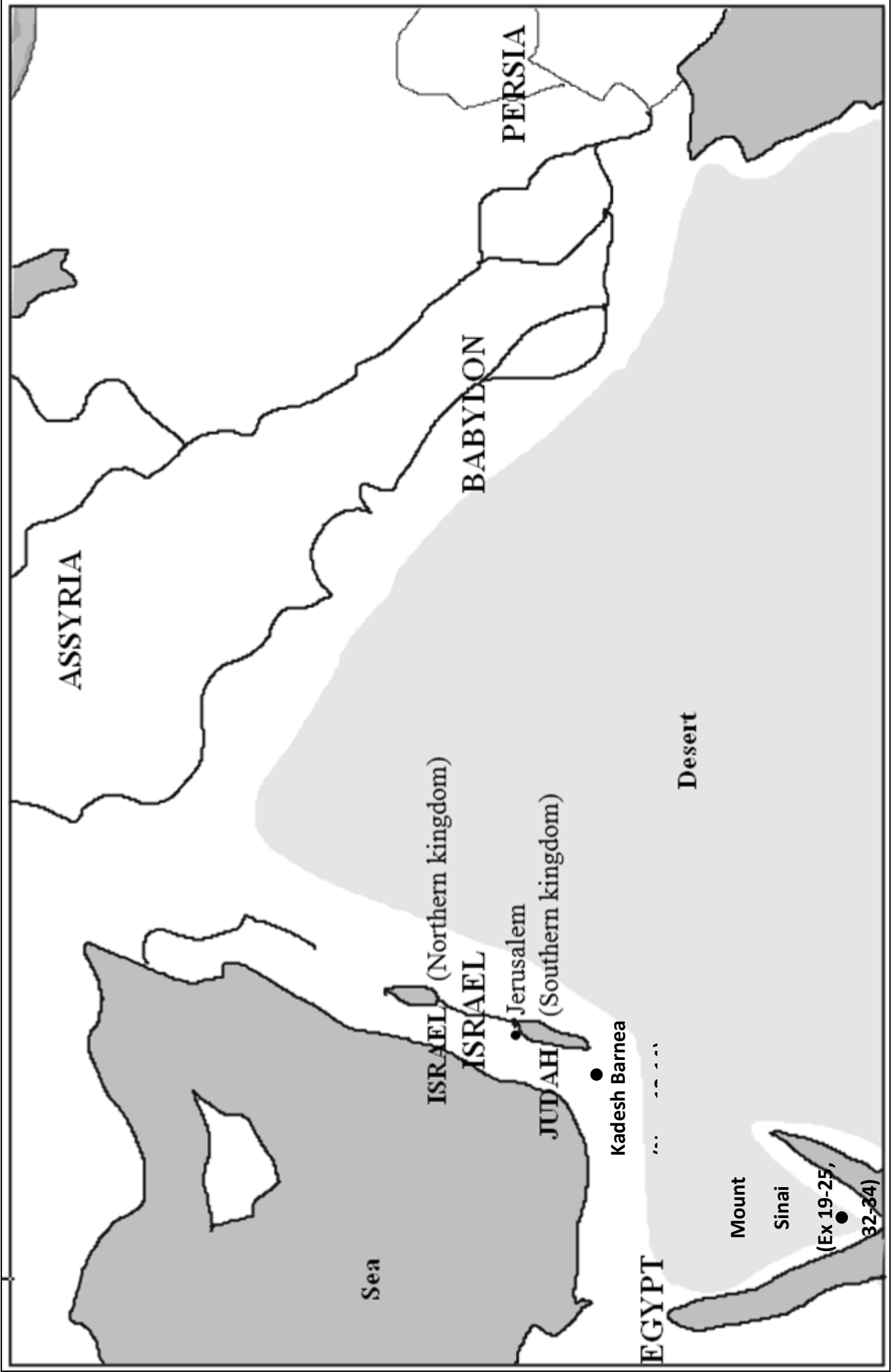
**The “bottom line” of these data is this: we need to understand the Book of Psalms as being more *fundamentally* “God’s word to us” than “our words to God”. This does *not*, however, mean that we should not benefit from individual psalms in our prayer lives. We *can*, as it were, step into the psalmists’ shoes and appropriate their words as we speak to God. It’s a case of “both-and”, not “either-or”.**

- **Why? What principles of sound Bible-handling provide for the practice of taking the psalms on to our lips?**
- **As we do so, what dangers should we be alert to?**
- **What are the differences between “context” in the Book of Psalms and context in Mark or Romans?**

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# SESSION 1

## INTRODUCTION (PSALMS 1-2):

### “The Gospel Focus of the Book of Psalms”

#### 1. “Bible-Overview Dynamic”

Lk 24:32: ‘Did not our hearts burn within us...?’

\*God’s story told in God’s way: progressive revelation

- Tension
- Transparency
- Typology

\*Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ whose consummation lies in a new cosmos

\*Mindsets reconfigured by the Holy Spirit

#### 2. The Key Ideas of Psalm 2

Verses 1-3	
Verses 4-6	
Verses 7-9	
Verses 10-12	

#### 3. The Importance of Psalm 2:7

Its background in a key chapter (.....)

How does Psalm 2 go *further* than that key chapter in its portrait of the king?

Quotations of, and allusions to, Psalm 2 in the NT<sup>2</sup>

*Quotations* : Acts 4:25-26 (Ps 2:1-2); Acts 13:33 (Ps 2:7); Heb 1:5 (Ps 2:7); Heb 5:5 (Ps 2:7)

*Allusions* : Rev 11:18 (Ps 2:1); Rev 19:19 (Ps 2:2); Matt 3:17 (Ps 2:7); Matt 17:5 (Ps 2:7); Mk 1:11 (Ps 2:7); Mk 9:7 (Ps 2:7); Lk 3:22 (Ps 2:7); Lk 9:35 (Ps 2:7); Jn 1:49 (Ps 2:7); Heb 1:2 (Ps 2:8); Rev 2:26-27 (Ps 2:8-9); Rev 12:5 (Ps 2:9); Rev 19:15 (Ps 2:9); Phil 2:12 (Ps 2:11)

Acts 13:32-33: when Jesus ....., he is placarded before the world as its ruler

The *gospel* (Rom 1:3-4, 2 Tim 2:8)!

The connection between Ps 2:7 and Ps 2:8-9 (cf. Acts 17:31)

#### **4. The Flow of Psalm 2 and its Application to Us**

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<sup>2</sup> Barbara ALAND *et al.*, ed., *The Greek New Testament*. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2014<sup>5</sup>, pp. 858, 871.

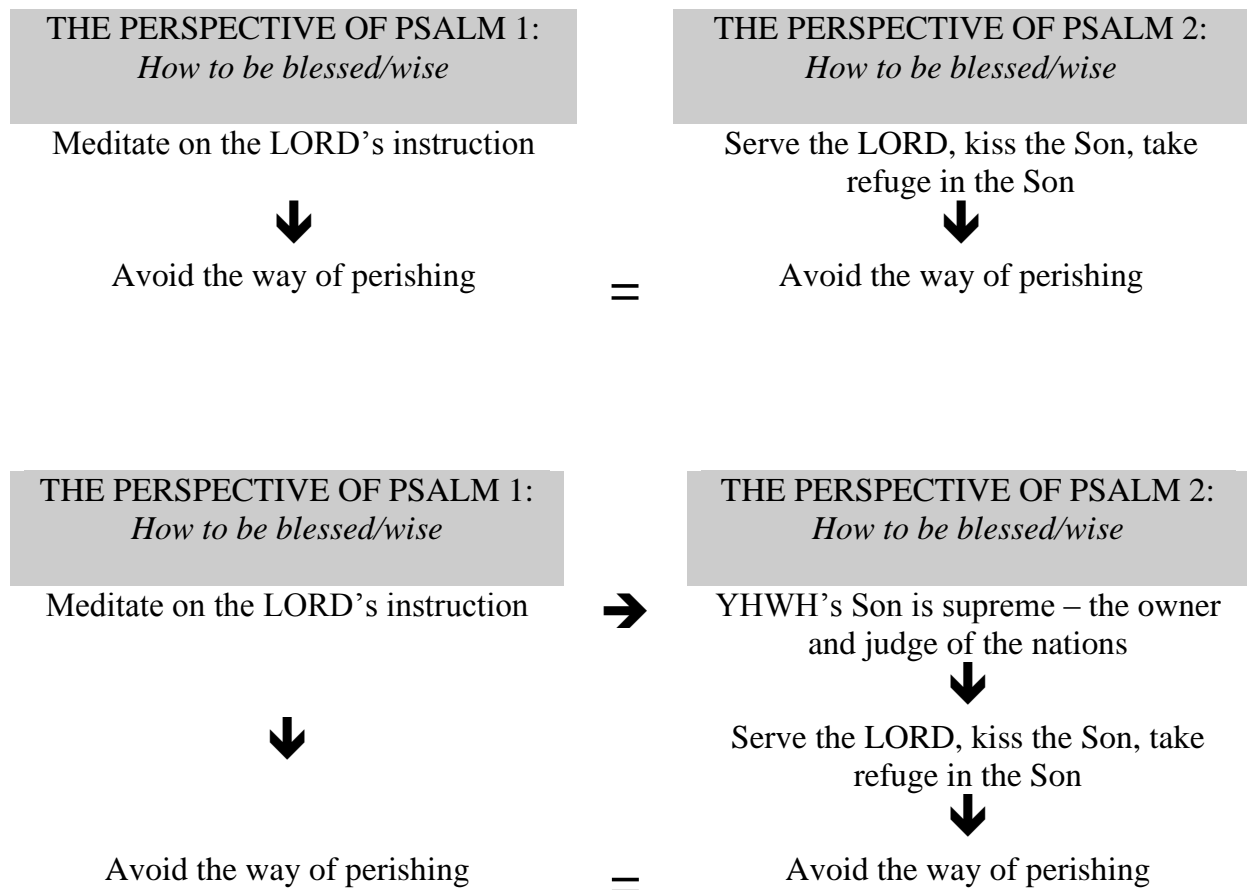
## 5. The Key Ideas of Psalm 1

One-sentence summary of Psalm 1

## 6. How Psalms 1-2 Function as the Psalter's Introduction

'Law'?

Book-ends ('blessed') and vocabulary links between Pss 1-2



*Psalm 1 portrays the blessed person who meditates on God's instruction day and night; Psalm 2 shows us the content of that instruction – the fact that God's king is supreme and will judge the world.*

## 7. The Psalter as a Carefully-Crafted Book

- Numerous links between adjacent psalms
- Several groups of psalms
- Five Books, each ending in a flourish of praise (or “doxology”)
- Introduction & conclusion
- Themes of Psalms 1-2 recur at seams between Books (“W” = wisdom psalm; “R/C” = royal/covenantal psalm)

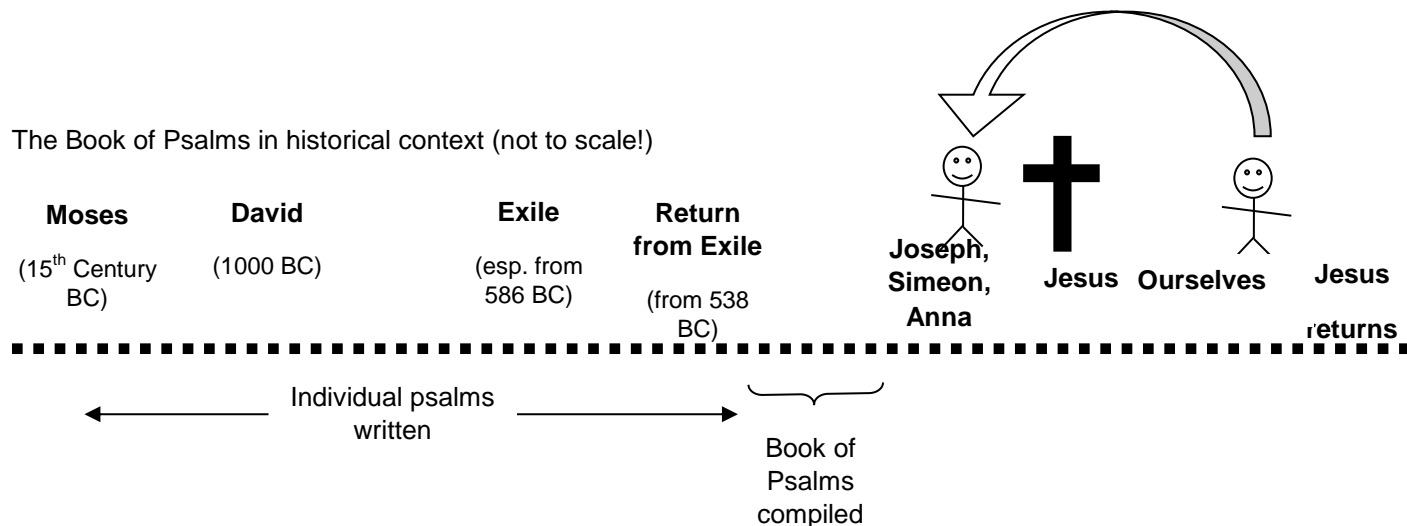
INTRO (1-2)	BOOK I (3-41)	BOOK II (42-72)	BOOK III (73-89)	BOOK IV (90-106)	BOOK V (107-144/145)	CONCL (145/146-150)
W R/C		R/C	W R/C	(W) R/C	(W) R/C	R/C

- Editorial note at 72:20

## 8. The Psalter as the Story of Joseph’s Meditating on Psalm 2

Our era lies between the time of the fulfilment of 2:7 (the resurrection) and the time of the fulfilment of 2:8-9 (the judgment)...

...but the Book was first addressed to Israelites living in between the return from Exile and the first coming of Jesus



## PSALMS 1 & 2: LINKS AT THE LEVEL OF VOCABULARY

Psalm 1:1 **O the happiness of** that one, who Hath not walked in the counsel of the wicked. And in the **way** of sinners hath not stood, And in the seat of scorners hath not **sat**; 2 But -- in the law of Jehovah *is* his delight, And in His law he doth **meditate** by day and by night: 3 And he hath been as a tree, Planted by rivulets of water, That giveth its fruit in its season, And its leaf doth not wither, And all that he doth he causeth to prosper. 4 Not so the wicked: But -- as chaff that wind driveth away! 5 Therefore the wicked rise not in **judgment**, Nor sinners in the company of the righteous, 6 For Jehovah is knowing the **way** of the righteous, And the **way** of the wicked **is lost**!

Psalm 2:1 Why have nations tumultuously assembled? And do peoples **meditate** vanity? 2 Station themselves do kings of the earth, And princes have been united together, Against Jehovah, and against His Messiah: 3 'Let us draw off Their cords, And cast from us Their thick bands.' 4 He who **is sitting** in the heavens doth laugh, The Lord doth mock at them. 5 Then doth He speak unto them in His anger, And in His wrath He doth trouble them: 6 'And I -- I have anointed My King, Upon Zion -- My holy hill.' 7 I declare concerning a statute: Jehovah said unto me, 'My Son Thou *art*, I to-day have brought thee forth. 8 Ask of Me and I give nations -- thy inheritance, And thy possession -- the ends of earth. 9 Thou dost rule them with a sceptre of iron, As a vessel of a potter Thou dost crush them.' 10 And now, O kings, act wisely, Be instructed, O **judges** of earth, 11 Serve ye Jehovah with fear, And rejoice with trembling. 12 Kiss the Chosen One, lest He be angry, And ye **lose the way**, When His anger burneth but a little, **O the happiness of** all trusting in Him!

[Young's Literal Translation]

## SESSION 2

### BOOK I (PSALMS 3-41), BOOK II (PSALMS 42-72) AND BOOK III (PSALMS 73-89):

#### “The Gospel-Related Tension of the Book of Psalms”

#### 1. The Importance of the Packaging...

*Ps 72,20*

*Indicators of Form in Book I*

See Supplement

#### 2. The Content of Book I

*A rough overall guide*

Pss 3-14: the problem of enemies

Pss 15-24: the exemplary and victorious king

Pss 25-34: the king pardoned and delivered

Pss 35-41: the problems of enemies, sin and sickness

*Big idea 1: David is exemplary and victorious*

- David as righteous
  - Ps 15
  - Ps 24:3-6
  - Ps 19:7-14
  - Ps 18:20-24
  - Ps 23:6
- David as triumphant over enemies
  - Ps 18 title
  - Ps 18:37-50
  - Pss 20-21

- David's sufferings as a prelude to victory/satisfaction  
Ps 18  
Ps 22

**Big idea 2: David is an embattled sinner**

THIS IS THE DOMINANT NOTE OF BOOK I!

Pss 3-14	ENEMIES		
Pss 25-34	ENEMIES	SIN	
Pss 35-41	ENEMIES	SIN	SICKNESS

Start of Book (Ps 3): .....

End of Book (Ps 41): .....

How does Psalm 3 highlight the fact that David is NOT the king of Psalm 2?

- David facing enemy opposition  
Pss 3-14
- David facing up to enemies *and* his sinfulness  
Ps 25:11, 18  
Pss 32-33 (sins forgiven)
- David facing up to enemies *and* sin *and* sickness  
Ps 38:1-5, 18  
Ps 39:1, 8  
Ps 40:12  
Ps 41:3-5

**3. Joseph's Meditating at the End of Book I**

Two camera angles/portraits – like and unlike the Ps 2 king

- Sufferings → victory
- Sufferings ← sin



*Quick interlude on the what and why of this overview...*

#### **4. Book II as Recapitulation of Book I**

Another David book

Some written by David's musicians

Don't forget 72:20

Many titles refer to particular historical incidents

Compare Psalm 40:13-17 with Psalm 70.

What is striking regarding (a) content and (b) placement within the Book of Psalms?

David again

→ not established as God's king on Zion, God's holy hill (Pss 46-48)

→ beleaguered by his enemies – often as righteous sufferer, but also troubled by his sins (Pss 51-64; 69-71)

#### **5. Book II Distinctives relative to Book I**

##### ***(1) A wider gap between David and Ps 2***

First psalm of David (51): murderer, adulterer

Last psalm of David<sup>3</sup> (71): at the end of his life

In between:

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<sup>3</sup> See supplementary notes re relationship between Psalm 70 ('Of David') and Psalm 71.

According to the historical information in the titles, where is David located?

[If you're reasonably new to the Psalms, note the difference between our modern editors' headings which are not part of Scripture (ESV: **bold**) and psalm titles *which are part of the text of Scripture* (ESV: SMALL CAPS).]

## **(2) Eyes now on Solomon**

- The problem: spiritual depression and enemy oppression at both individual and national levels (Pss 42-44)
- The solution: 42:8, 44:26 (God's loving covenant commitment – background in 2 Samuel 7 [also Psalm 2])
- The solution writ large at the beginning and end of the rest of the Book (Pss 45, 72 – the figure of *Solomon*)

## **(3) .....**

Compare and contrast the flourish of praise (or “doxology”) at the end of Book I with the flourish of praise at the end of Book II. Ps 41:13 and Ps 72:18-19.

NB NB NB! *According to Ps 72, the Abrahamic covenant will find its fulfilment in the king of Ps 2...*

## **6. Joseph's Meditating at the End of Book II (and Ours)**

David's son to be THE Son

Rom 15:4

## **7. The Boundaries of Book III: Crisis, Near-Despair and Calling into Question of Psalms 1-2**

### ***First half of Ps 73: Ps 1 called into question***

An individual's crisis

180° shift: negative → positive

### ***Second half of Ps 89: Ps 2 called into question***

180° shift: positive → negative (turning-point verse 38)

God almost accused of covenant *disloyalty*: what has happened to the promises of 2 Samuel 7?

National catastrophe (Exile)

### ***Adjacent psalms (Pss 74, 88) outstandingly gloomy***

Ps 88 the bleakest psalm (one individual)

Ps 74 one of the gloomiest psalms (perspective of nation)

Background of Exile (though not every psalm)

## **8. The Middle of Book III**

### ***(1) More of that anguished pleading***

Ps 76:7

Ps 77:7-9

Ps 79:5

Ps 80:4

Ps 85:5-6

What has happened to God's loving covenant commitment?

## **(2) Clues as to why the Exile has occurred**

Ps 78:5-10

Ps 81:8-16

The Sinai covenant was conditional on obedience!

## **(3) Some shafts of light**

Ps 86 a psalm 'of David'?! And affirmation of God's covenant loyalty (verses 5, 15)

Optimism in relation to temple (Ps 84), land (Ps 85), king (Ps 86), city (Ps 87)?

Gentiles as citizens of God's city (Ps 87)?!

And the flourish of praise that closes the Book is there (just...) (Ps 89:52)

## **9. Joseph's Meditating on Book III**

## KEY INDICATORS OF FORM IN BOOK I

### ***Every psalm ‘of David’***

Psalms 10 and 33 are only *apparent* exceptions: these two psalms are closely tied to their predecessors (see ESV footnote 6, p. 540; and compare the last verse of Psalm 32 with the first verse of Psalm 33).

### ***Psalms 15 and 24 as “book-ends”***

Compare the question of Ps 15:1 with that of Ps 24:3: who is righteous enough for God? It is widely recognised amongst scholars – and the case is strong – that there is a “concentric structure” across the group of psalms delineated by this question. Ps 15//Ps 24; Ps 16//Ps 23; Ps 17//Ps 22; Ps 18//Pss 20-21 (the latter two are “twin” psalms); Ps 19 stands out in the middle of the structure.

### ***Psalms 25 and 34 as “book-ends”***

These are alphabetic acrostics – in the original, the lines begin with the successive letters of the alphabet. Your Bible probably helpfully points out where you have acrostic psalms by giving you a footnote to that effect. There are a couple of other acrostics in Book I, but what’s striking about these two in particular is that they exhibit a number of characteristics in common – they both leave out the sixth letter of the alphabet; they both add on an extra line after the end of the alphabet, and the first letter of that extra line is the same... Although there is an additional departure from the alphabet in Psalm 25 that doesn’t feature in Psalm 34, there are too many “coincidences” there for us to be able to dismiss them! Irregularities can occur in acrostics, but (according to a maths expert I consulted), there’s only a 1 in 2000 chance that you’d find that combination of irregularities “as a matter of course” in adjacent acrostics within the Psalter. Add to that the fact that the verb in the supplementary line of each of the psalms is the same (the verb ‘redeem’)...

### ***Also, in Book II: psalms without titles closely tied to preceding psalms***

Pss 42-43 and Pss 70-71. Check these out for yourself: what refrain binds Psalm 43 to Psalm 42, and what refrain binds Psalm 71 to Psalm 70?

## **SUGGESTIONS FOR GROUP TIME**

- a. Collect and discuss any questions raised by the sessions so far, adding them to the question box if appropriate.
  
- b. Which truths of the gospel have struck us from the material covered so far? What has most excited us from looking at the Psalms?
  
- c. What connections are there between what we've seen so far in the Psalms and the material covered so far in RML Overview?
  
- d. Spend some time praying in response.

## SESSION 3

### MEDITATING ON – AND PRAYING – INDIVIDUAL PSALMS (AS A CHRISTIAN BELIEVER)

#### 1. Psalms as Christian prayers?

NO:

- we're not David
- Book of Psalms is not Jesus' answer to the request 'Lord, teach us to pray' (Lk 11:1)

YES:

- often appropriately our words to God
- "sweetness" (cf. 2 Sam 23:1)

#### 2. Initial Reading of Ps 27:4: David's One Desire

<p>'One thing have I asked of the LORD, that           will I seek after:                   that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life,                                   to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD and                                   to inquire in his temple.'</p> <p style="text-align: right;">(Ps 27:4, ESV)</p>
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#### 3. Psalm 27 as a Whole: David's One Desire Understood in Context

[Psalter context isn't the same as (say) context within Galatians – try Rom 10:18, and see Acts 13:33!]

How does the rest of Psalm 27 contribute to our understanding of verse 4?

**4. ....One Desire?**

Mk 14:36 (cf. Jn 12:27-28); Heb 12:2; Matt 26:53; Heb 5:7; Mk 15:34 (Ps 22:1)

**5. ....One Desire**

Rom 11:33; Eph 3:18; Rom 5:2; Heb 10:19; Ecc 1-3; Rom 8:20; 1 Cor 15:26; 2 Cor 5:2; Rev 22:4; Rev 20:14; 1 Cor 15:49; Heb 12:1-4



## **6. Taking Stock**

## **7. A Final Word of Encouragement**

## **8. Some Recommended Practices for the Study of Individual Psalms**

1. Find the right environment
2. Pray
3. Access the text of a formal-equivalence<sup>4</sup> translation (e.g. ESV)  
*[4 to 6 more or less concurrently]*
4. Consider the genre/tone/mood/emotion
5. Consider indicators of historical context
6. Consider questions of speaker, addressee and “axis”<sup>5</sup>  
*[7 to 12 more or less concurrently]*
7. Work on flow/structure (there may be some clear structural breaks)
8. Look for key words/repetition
9. Note key ideas
10. Dwell on the parallelism: what’s the new “spin on the ball” or the new “camera angle” in the second line?
11. Savour the imagery: what’s the cutting edge of the image?
12. Look for surprises and sweat over difficulties

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<sup>4</sup> (“literal”).

<sup>5</sup> Sometimes the psalmist will shift between addressing God (vertical axis) and addressing other worshippers or the nations (horizontal axis).

13. Draw up a one-sentence summary (refine it)
14. Factor in the move to Christ and to our new-covenant era
15. Appropriate/pray/thank/praise/marvel
16. Learn by heart?

## **9. And Now Over to You for Psalm 130**

For those interested in the question of what it might look like to *preach* Psalm 27:4:  
<http://www.grosvenorbaptist.org/resources/sermons/> (scroll down to sermon given on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2017)

For further stimulation in this area: Christopher Ash, *Teaching Psalms, Vol. 1 – From Text to Message*. Fearn [Ross-shire]/London: Christian Focus/Proclamation Trust, 2017, pp. 19-146. Volume 2 (2018) provides ‘A Christian Introduction to each Psalm.’ [In my opinion, he overplays the idea of Christ as the song-leader for the choir that we sing in.]

*Use of psalms in relation to particular circumstances (draw up your own list!):*

Confidence in God: Ps 27

Satisfaction in God: Pss 27; 63; 84

Proximity to God (including in the face of difficult circumstances): Pss 23; 27

In the face of depression: Pss 42-43; 88

In the face of major sin: Ps 51

In the face of day-to-day sins (importance of transparency and confession to God for maintaining a healthy relationship): Ps 32

In the face of injustice:<sup>6</sup> Ps 35

Questions of money and death: Ps 49

In the face of the temptation to be jealous of unbelieving folk who “succeed” whereas we (believers) suffer: Ps 73

Marvelling at God’s grace: Pss 78; 103; 136

Joy in the forgiveness of sins: Ps 32

Fear of God as a healthy reaction to the forgiveness of sins: Ps 130

Assurance that God knows the details of our circumstances: Ps 139

Dependence on God (prayer): Ps 127:1-2

Zeal in the missionary enterprise of taking the gospel to the nations: Ps 67

Marvelling at God’s creation: Pss 8; 19; (24)

Strengthening in the faith: Ps 16

Protection: Pss 91; 121

Aspiration to humility: Ps 131

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<sup>6</sup> But with particular transpositions needing to be taken into account in such “imprecatory” psalms. There may be time for questions on the right approach to these psalms on Sunday morning!

## SESSION 4

### BOOK IV (PSALMS 90-106):

### “The Gospel Heart of the Book of Psalms”

#### 1. The Story So Far...

*Looking back over Israel's history: David...Solomon...Exile...*

*What hope could remain once the Exile has happened?*

Transition to Books IV-V: what do you observe regarding the headings (or the start) of the psalms in these last two Books?

#### 2. Introduction to Book IV: The Moses Book

- Prayer of Moses (Ps 90)
- Name ‘Moses’
- Moses’ day
- Books of Moses

#### 3. Studying the Boundaries: Psalm 90 and Psalms 104-106

*Ps 90:1-12: recalling the problem of Genesis 3*

The problems of human sin and God’s wrath

## ***Ps 106: Israel's sin & God's judgment according to Exodus/Numbers***

E.g. vv. 19-23 (Ex 32)

E.g. vv. 24-27 (Num 13-14)

E.g. vv. 28-31 (Num 25)

### ***Ps 90:12-17: Moses acts as mediator***

Plea for vv. 1-11 to be reversed

Links between Ps 89 and Ps 90 enable us to understand that *the problem of the exile needs to be understood through the lens of the Genesis 3 problem*

Plea grounded in God's loving covenant commitment

### ***God's loving covenant commitment has always stood firm***

Ps 104:5-9: covenant with Noah

Ps 105: covenant with Abraham

Ps 106: covenant with Abraham unshakeable *even in the face of Israel's sin*

- Because God has never totally wiped out his people (even in ....., v. 47)
- Despite 1000 years of *persistent* sin
- TRUE, Ps 106 presents the same sin-and-wrath problem as Ps 90, ...YET... it celebrates God's covenant loyalty just like Ps 105
- The Exile doesn't threaten the covenant with Abraham: it was foreseen in the Books of Moses (Lev 26:42-45, Deut 4:25-31, Deut 30:1-10)
- God raised up mediators (Moses, Phinehas) in order to keep the Abrahamic promises alive – e.g. 106:19-23 (cf. Ex 32: Moses pleads on basis of .....

#### **4. Joseph's Meditating on Book IV (and the Middle of the Book)**

***Joseph reassured that God is still committed to Abrahamic covenant***

***Question 1: but what about the covenant with David?***

***Question 2: but is God really powerful enough?***

Pss 93-100:.....

Observations regarding the beginning of these psalms?

NB Exodus/Sinai language, e.g. 97:1-6, 98:1-3

How does Psalm 99 tie in with the ideas that we have seen at the boundaries of Book IV (Psalms 90, 105-106)?

***Question 3: but don't we need a solution to the problem of sin?***

Wait till Book V!

Ps 101: blameless king (vv. 2, 4)

Ps 102: afflicted one who suffers God's wrath (title, vv. 9-11)  
→ Zion to be rebuilt, nations to be gathered (vv. 13-24)

## **5. Conclusion (Ps 103<sup>7</sup>): Total Assurance of God's Covenant Loyalty**

### ***The answer to the Ps 90 prayer***

- Ps 90 Moses as mediator // 103:7-8: Moses as mediator (Ex 32-34)
- 90:13-14 pity, satisfaction with covenant loyalty // 103:4-5 mercy, covenant loyalty, satisfaction
- 90:3,5 humans as dust, like grass that flourishes only briefly, days few // 103:14-15 humans as dust, days like grass, flourish only briefly
- 90:7-11 God's anger at sin // 103:9-10 God who does not harbour anger for ever, nor treat his people as their sins deserve
- 90:2 God from everlasting to everlasting // 103:17 God's covenant loyalty from everlasting to everlasting

***No more questioning of God's covenant commitment!***

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<sup>7</sup> Psalms 91 and 92 also set forth the psalmists' confidence in God's faithfulness. See, respectively, verse 4 and verse 2.

## SESSION 5

### BOOK V (PSALMS 107-144/145) AND CONCLUSION (PSALMS 145/146-150):

#### “The Gospel Climax of the Book of Psalms”

*Please study this page before the session begins*

#### THE STRUCTURE OF BOOK V

Book V contains several clear groups of psalms and a refrain:-

1 0 7	108-110	111-118			(137) <sup>9</sup> 138-144	1 4 5	146-150
P 1	DAVID	P2 → <i>PI</i>		ASCENTS  → <i>PI</i>	DAVID	<sup>10</sup>	P2

- “*PI*” (“praise type 1”) and the thick vertical lines indicate the junctures at which the refrain appears. In its full form the refrain reads as follows: ‘Oh give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, for his loving covenant commitment endures for ever’; but in most of its occurrences it’s only the last part (‘for his loving covenant commitment endures for ever’) that’s quoted. The larger the “*PI*” print, the more the refrain is repeated! You can see that there’s a crescendo building up to the climax in Psalm 136 where the refrain appears in every verse.
- The other type of summons to praise, “P2” (“praise type 2”), is ‘Praise the LORD.’ Psalms 111-117 and 146-150 begin and/or end this way.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>8</sup> To see why Psalms 135-136 have been tacked on to the Songs of Ascents, compare 134:1 with 135:1-2 and 135:8-12 with 136:10-22.

<sup>9</sup> Psalm 137 is transitional: it is not a psalm of David, but it serves as a fitting opening to this David sequence.

<sup>10</sup> Ps 145 is also a psalm of David, concluding the preceding group and introducing the flourish of praise with which the Psalter closes. Remarkably, it is the only psalm which is designated as (literally) ‘praise’...and yet the traditional title of the whole Psalter in Hebrew is ‘Book of Praises’. In the light of what we have seen this weekend, what do you make of this discrepancy?

<sup>11</sup> With the exception of Psalm 114, although ‘Praise the LORD’ is found at the beginning of this psalm in the Greek version of the OT.



## 1. Background of Books III-IV

### ***The desperate cry of Ps 89 is not in vain!***

Abrahamic promises still on track, which means the Ps 2 king is coming

### ***Moses' mediation was only ever partial and temporary***

A radical solution to the sin problem is required; Moses & Phinehas kept only *some* of God's wrath away – and only in the *short term*

## 2. The Heartbeat of Book V: 'for his covenant commitment endures for ever'

### ***Two types of summons to praise***

Praise the LORD!  
(Praise the name of the LORD!)<sup>12</sup>

'Oh give thanks to the LORD,  
    **for he is good,**  
    **for his covenant commitment endures for ever.'**

### ***Refrain gets louder in a Book that is ringing with praise***

## 3. The Theme of Book V: The Return of the Exiles (Psalm 107)

### ***Historical setting of Book: return from Exile***

Ps 107:2-3; Pss 120-136; Ps 137; Ps 147:2

Ps 106:47 prayer answered in Ps 107:1-3

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<sup>12</sup> For this part, see Pss 113:1; 135:1; 148:5, 13.

In what ways does Psalm 107 depict the return from Exile?

***Themes of Ps 107 recur in rest of Book V***

E.g.  
113:  
114, 135-136:  
116:  
118, 120-122 (120-134):  
130:

***Return portrayed in Book V far outstrips the historical reality***

**4. The Journey of Faith: its Realism (Psalm 119)**

***The journey of Pss 120-134 is tough***

Scoffers/enemies/persecutors also on view in Ps 119 (e.g., vv. 81-88)

***Resources for the journey supplied by Scripture***

Meditation on, and delight in, God's word (cf. Ps 1), e.g. vv. 97, 72, 103

Sufficiency of Scripture (over against mysticism)

**5. The Journey of Faith: its Focus on the Psalm 2 King**

***First climax: Ps 110***

- Supreme king on Zion
- David's lord
- Permanent mediator

### **Second climax: Ps 118**

- *Rejected* stone
- Comes in name of the LORD

The New David of Book V is “ratcheted up” relative to David of Book II – Ps 57 is reworked in the direction of enhanced victory (Ps 108) and is picked up in the context of enhanced suffering (Ps 142)... Here is the righteous suffering servant (e.g. Ps 109:2-5, 28)

Note the little Ps 117 along the way: covenant loyalty for *all* nations!

### **Third climax: Ps 132**

- ‘Horn’ for David to be set on Zion
- Fulfilment of covenant with David whose throne is definitively established

### **Fourth climax: Ps 144**

- Servant David wins victory
- No further exile (cf. Ps 130!)
- People showered with blessings
  
- Double ‘blessed’ (v. 15): book-end with Pss 1-2?

### ***Waiting for the Glorious, Righteous Davidic King-Priest-Servant...***

## **6. The Journey of Faith: Our Context**

### ***Not so different!***

We have the privilege of more revelation

Sin problem dealt with

Ps 2:7 fulfilled at the resurrection

Ps 2:8-9 (judgment) yet to be fulfilled

We have come to heavenly Jerusalem (Heb 12:18-24), but we seek the city that is to come (Heb 13:14)

In the meantime, God’s word is sufficient to sustain us: we are to keep meditating on the gospel of Ps 2!

## **7. The Concluding Flourish of Praise (Psalms 146-150)**

***Praise offered up by gathered people in Zion and by whole creation***

Loud clashing cymbals (Ps 150:6)!

Note Ps 148:14!

**SESSION 6**  
**QUESTIONS**

**IF YOU'VE BEEN EXCITED BY THE MATERIAL FROM THIS WEEKEND, BEWARE! IT IS STILL APPROPRIATE TO STUDY INDIVIDUAL PSALMS (WITHOUT REFERENCE TO PSALTER CONTEXT) AND TO TAKE PSALMISTS' WORDS ON TO OUR LIPS (THOUGH FACTORING IN TRANSPOSITIONS)... HERE'S WHY...**

If our understanding of the overall shape of the Book of Psalms is correct, where does all this leave us in terms of our traditional teaching of individual psalms, without reference to Psalter context? And where does it leave us in terms of the traditional use of psalms whereby one takes the words of individual psalms on to one's lips in a subjective manner – as if one were David or another psalmist – in one's personal and community prayer life?

It seems to me that we enjoy the freedom and flexibility to benefit from both the macro and the micro approaches and from both objective and subjective use of psalms (as both God's word to us and our word to God). Defending the study of individual psalms – and demonstrating that Psalter context is not equivalent to context within, say, a Pauline letter – is straightforward. In brief, (1) New Testament authors show very little interest in Psalter context; (2) individual psalm numbering – unlike that of other chapter (and verse) divisions in Scripture – is inspired by the Holy Spirit (Acts 13:33), implying that units of psalm text are demarcated for us; (3) Gerald Wilson's appeal to the analogy of a symphony<sup>13</sup> is apposite (in the film *The King's Speech*, it is no scandal that the second movement of Beethoven's Seventh is 'lifted from its symphony context'). Thus it would be legitimate to study and teach Psalm 73 without taking account of the psalms that precede and follow it (even if additional benefits would accrue if one were to consider the Psalter context).

Defending the subjective use of psalms – our stepping into the shoes of David and appropriating his words as we speak to God – is somewhat harder, but the case is robust. (1) There are at least three places where it is practised in the New Testament (Rom 8:35-37; 2 Tim 4:17; Heb 13:6).<sup>14</sup> (2) David sometimes serves as an (exemplary) ordinary Israelite more than as king, for example in Psalm 19 (note the echo of Psalm 1 in verse 14) or in Psalm 32 (cf. Rom 4:4-8). (3) Given the importance of prayer and praise for the believer as prescribed in Scripture in general, and the principle of 'lex orandi, lex credendi',<sup>15</sup> it would be surprising if the Psalter contained no dimension of exemplarity. (4) An important metaphor, 'pouring out one's heart/soul to God' (1 Sam 1:15; Ps 42:4; Ps 62:8; Lam 2:19), conveys what prayer is and is often precisely what we see psalmists doing. (5) We Christians are united to Christ in his sufferings (Rom 8:17; Phil 3:10; Col 1:24), and these sufferings are typologically anticipated by those of David (e.g. Jn 15:25

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<sup>13</sup> Gerald H. Wilson, 'Shaping the Psalter: A Consideration of Editorial Linkage in the Book of Psalms', in J. Clinton McCann (ed.), *The Shape and Shaping of the Psalter* (JSOTS 159; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), p. 82.

<sup>14</sup> Two of these are mentioned by Allan M. Harman, *Commentary on the Psalms* (Mentor; Fearn [Ross-shire]: Christian Focus, 1998), p. 62-63; I owe the third reference to David Gibbs.

<sup>15</sup> In other words, the principle that prayers are indices of beliefs (2 Corinthians 4:13 expresses the principle that Christians' words should reflect their beliefs).

draws on Ps 35:19 and Ps 69:4).<sup>16</sup> (6) The non-specificity of the historical context of so many of the psalms lends itself to their being applied *generally* to comparable circumstances to those which the 21<sup>st</sup>-century believer may be experiencing.<sup>17</sup>

There are, of course, pitfalls to avoid. First, there must be a danger of developing an unhealthy subjectivism or egocentrism: the New Testament use of the psalms should lead us to focus primarily on God's attributes and Christology. Secondly, we should be on our guard against allegorisation (that we read of David's being 'in the wilderness of Judah' in Psalm 63 is not a direct invitation for us to appropriate this psalm when we are in a metaphorical wilderness). Thirdly, we should strive to take account of the change of salvation-historical era (for example, in relation to Psalm 51:11, a Christian does not need to fear that the Holy Spirit will be taken from her; in relation to Psalm 100:4, the equivalent for us of entering God's courts is not entering a church building; dashing Babylon's children against the rock [Ps 137:9] does not carry over in any direct way to our era of redemptive history).

This (slightly modified) extract is from my 'The Psalter as a Book' in *Stirred By A Noble Theme* by Andrew G. Shead (ed.) Published by Inter-Varsity Press, Nottingham, England, 2013. Used by Permission. For further information, please go to: <http://www.thinkivp.com/9781783590117>.

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<sup>16</sup> I owe this insight to Dominique Angers.

<sup>17</sup> I owe this insight to Jamie Grant.

## **REFLECTING ON THE NEW-TESTAMENT USE OF THE PSALMS**

☞ What proportion of quotations/allusions found in the NT are drawn from the Book of Psalms?

☞ New-Testament quotations of the Psalms are *not* evenly spread across the Psalter. Wherein lies the bias? What might this be telling us?

☞ In what main ways/contexts/connections are the psalms quoted in the New Testament? What is surprising or instructive here?

[Important pointers: (1) consider how the Gospels portray the sufferings of Christ; (2) consider how the superiority of Christ is demonstrated in Hebrews.]



## THE VARIETY OF WAYS IN WHICH INDIVIDUAL PSALMS<sup>18</sup> FIND THEIR FULFILMENT IN CHRIST

### I. A variety of dangers

If we find it hard to work out how a given psalm speaks of Christ, this may be due, in part, to some combination of the following:-

17. The danger of overvaluing the role of specific New-Testament controls.
18. The danger of overplaying either the continuity or the discontinuity between the two Testaments.
19. The danger of undervaluing the range of routes from the Psalms to Christ.

Let's unpack these dangers before setting forth something of the variety of ways in which individual psalms may be understood to be fulfilled in Christ.

(1) **The danger of overvaluing the role of specific New-Testament controls.** Many of the psalms are quoted (or alluded to) in the New Testament. In their NT context, however, the quotations are rarely intended to expound the entire psalm in question; rather, they highlight a particular theological point that serves the NT author's purpose. Thus

- Ps 24:1a ('The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it') is quoted in 1 Cor 10:26 in connection with the need not to cause others to stumble, but the question of not causing others to stumble hardly constitutes the heart and soul of Ps 24!
- Ps 32:1-2, quoted in Romans 4, speak of the joy of sins forgiven, but the overall message of the psalm concerns the importance of transparency, confession and humility in order to maintain that joy.
- Ps 104 deals at length with God's creative/re-creative/providential activity, but the NT control in Heb 1:7 (Ps 104:4) is restricted to making the point that angels are inferior to Christ.
- Ps 109:8b ('May another take his place of leadership') is quoted in Acts 1:20 with reference to Judas. Why should we imagine that this quotation unlocks the Christian meaning of the entire psalm? Is it likely that the long Ps 109, read through Christian spectacles, speaks of covenant curses being called down exclusively on Judas?
- Ps 110 is quoted several times in the NT, and it is clear that none of these NT quotations (taken on its own) opens up the Christian meaning of the entire psalm. The quotation of verse 1 ('The LORD said to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet"') serves to demonstrate that Jesus is greater than David in Mark 12 and that he is divine and supreme in Hebrews 1; verse 4 ('The LORD has sworn and will not change his mind: "You are a priest for ever, in the order of

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<sup>18</sup> As opposed to the Psalter as a whole.

Melchizedek”) is taken up later in Hebrews to make a fresh point relating to Jesus’ perfect priesthood.

(2) **The danger of overplaying either the continuity or the discontinuity between the two Testaments.** If we handle an OT passage in such a way as to suggest that the NT era has not yet arrived (as if, in other words, there is complete continuity between the two Testaments), the chances are we are astray. Even those psalms that delight in God’s revelation (Pss 1, 19, 119) must be viewed through NT glasses: the Christian’s ‘law of the LORD’ is not the same as the Jew’s! Conversely, we need to avoid jumping directly to the NT. This is perhaps our greater danger. Have you ever read Ps 51 as if it’s a Christian confession?! What did you do with the last two verses (‘In your good pleasure make Zion prosper; build up the walls of Jerusalem. Then there will be righteous sacrifices, whole burnt offerings to delight you; then bulls will be offered on your altar’)?! Again, we might have prayed verse 11 of the Ps 51 (‘Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me’) as if it is compatible with NT theology; yet the historical particularity of the text turns on the fact that the Spirit had been withdrawn from King Saul following his disobedience, a scenario that David, in his capacity as Saul’s replacement (that is, as King) was anxious to avoid following his adultery with Bathsheba.

(3) **The danger of undervaluing the range of routes from the Psalms to Christ.** We might feel that the job of making the transition to Christ is easy if we’re dealing with a “royal” or “messianic” psalm. But every datum in the OT relates to Christ in some way or another (cf. Jn 5:39; Lk 24:27; Lk 24:44), and we need to be alert to the variety of the roads that can be taken to Christ. Let’s take note of Rom 3:19-21 in this regard:-

3:19 Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world held accountable to God. 20 Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin. 21 But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify.

Verses 19-20 tell us (in the flow of 1:18ff.) that one of the functions of the Law/law<sup>19</sup> is to highlight sin. In the immediate context, the Psalms are quoted several times to support the assertion that all have failed to keep the Law/law. This means that one major route from the Psalms to Christ (a neglected one, I suggest) is to point up our need of the gospel.

Verse 21 goes on to speak of that gospel solution. The other major route from the Psalms to Christ (the one we are more familiar with, perhaps) is mentioned in this verse, namely the fact that the Old Testament (referred to here as ‘the Law and the Prophets’) testifies to him as the solution. But even here, let’s be sensitive to the variety of ways in which the Psalms set forth this gospel solution.

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<sup>19</sup> The Mosaic Law in the case of Jews, the law ‘written on the heart’ in the case of Gentiles; but for the purposes of Paul’s argument in this context, they come to much the same thing.

Indeed, it might be helpful to consider each of these broad ways of moving from the Psalms to Christ in relation to the two broad categories of club used by golfers – woods and irons. Each category has its own range of clubs, as we shall now see, and we should acknowledge up front that this classification is not intended to obscure the similarity between the various clubs in both categories, nor the fact that the best golfers use iron woods (i.e. the two broad categories are far from mutually exclusive)...

## II. A variety of woods: our need of Christ

- a. **Law → gospel.** During Session 2 we touched on the fact that the question posed by Ps 15 – who is fit for God? – is taken up by the flow of the psalms in that section of Book I. The answer given in both this Psalm and Ps 24 (‘clean hands...pure heart...’) is clearly demanding. Although non-Jews are not required to obey the Mosaic Law, there is a law written on their hearts which they need to put into practice (Rom 1-2) and yet they have been in solidarity with Adam in his sinfulness (Rom 5:12-21; 1 Cor 15:22). Jew and non-Jew should be thrust forward to gaze at the life of the only human who matches the Law’s demands – the New Israel and Last Adam.
- b. **Old covenant → new covenant.** The conditionality of the Sinaitic covenant (Ps 81) is satisfied by Christ. The element of conditionality in the Davidic covenant (Ps 132) needs to give way to a new covenant in which the bestowal of blessings is not conditional on the obedience of sinful human beings.
- c. **Inadequate structures → sufficient sacrifice.** That God provided for the forgiveness of his people in Old-Testament times is not in doubt; but the sacrifices offered in the tabernacle did not in themselves secure this forgiveness. Ps 40:6 (cf. Heb 10:1-5: the blood of bulls and goats serve as a reminder of the sin problem and thus our need of Christ; the Lord Jesus carries out God’s will through his self-sacrifice). In Ps 106, the intercessory ministry is partial in scope and temporary, carried out by a sinful mediator; in Christ, who is untainted by sin, it is total and definitive.

## III. A variety of irons: Christ as gospel-solution

- (a) **Type → antitype.**
  - i. King David in Books I-II: a type of the blameless Christ.
  - ii. The exodus in Ps 114: a type of the real deliverance from sin, etc.
  - iii. In Book V, the antitype is sometimes presented more directly (even if still clothed in the structures of the old covenant): Ps 110 for the King (also Ps 101, in Book IV); Ps 114 for the exodus.
- (b) **Reverse type (/contrast) → antitype.**

- i. Pss 38-41: the David who is physically ill owing to his sin as well as besieged by his enemies... Contrast the perfect and victorious Christ.
- ii. Ps 49:7: no man can redeem the life of another...but Jesus can!
- iii. Ps 80:12-16: a vine whose surrounding walls are broken, which is ravaged by the forest boar, which is burnt by fire and which is cut down...contrast Jesus as the new, true vine (Jn 15)!
- iv. Ps 106: Moses and Phinehas act as mediators between God and the Israelites, but their intercession/intervention achieves only partial and temporary removal of God's wrath (cf. Session 4 – some people are put to death, and the next case of rebellion [giving rise to God's wrath] is only around the corner)... Contrast Jesus' mediation which removes God's wrath for *all* God's people *definitively*. [Cf. "wood" (c), above.]

(c) **Analogy → fulfilment.** Jesus' use of Pss 42-43 language<sup>20</sup> in the Garden of Gethsemane means that the whole scenario of the psalmist's suffering is evoked as we read Mk 14:34 (and parallels) and that Pss 42-43 are designed to help us understand what Jesus went through. [This category is close to that of typology, and certainly Christ's sufferings are more profound than those of the psalmist.]

(d) **Hyperbole → reality.**

- i. Ps 45:6 ('Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever...')<sup>21</sup>: hyperbole with respect to the human figure, but not with respect to Christ.
- ii. Ps 72:11 ('All kings will bow down to him), 72:17 ('May his name endure for ever; may it continue as long as the sun'): hyperbole with respect to Solomon, reality with respect to Christ.

(e) **Salvation-historical flow → consummation in Christ.** Many psalms trace the plot-line of redemption for which we Christians have the full history with its climax in Christ.

- i. Ps 78 (history of Israel from Egypt to David).
- ii. Pss 105-106 (Abraham to the exile).

(f) **Thematic progressive revelation → fulfilment in Christ.** Several psalms play a role not only within the flow of the Psalter but also within the broader unfolding development of a biblical theme which finds its fulfilment in Christ.

- i. Theme of temple in Pss 84, 134.
- ii. Theme of city in Pss 87, 137 (in Ps 87, for example, the accent falls on the fact that Gentiles are found to have their origin in Zion).

<sup>20</sup> The Greek translation of Ps 42:5 is strikingly similar to Mk 14:34.

<sup>21</sup> It is possible that this is an example of what is sometimes referred to as 'sensus plenior' (fuller sense), i.e. it may be that the psalmist's use of 'god' is similar to that of Ps 82 (where the word refers to judges) but that in the light of the whole canon of Scripture it comes to take on a bigger meaning than the human author could have originally intended.

For further reading:

\*Sidney Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament: A Contemporary Hermeneutical Method*. Cambridge: Eerdmans, 1999.

\*Sidney Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from Psalms: Foundations for Expository Sermons in the Christian Year*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016.

\*Richard P. Belcher, Jr., *The Messiah and the Psalms. Preaching Christ from all the Psalms*. Fearn [Ross-shire]: Christian Focus, 2006.

For Christ-centred expositions of a variety of psalms (audio):-

Ps 27 (psalm of confidence in the face of enemies):

<http://www.grosvenorbaptist.org/resources/sermons/> (scroll down to sermon given on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2017)

Ps 32 (psalm of confession): <http://www.grosvenorbaptist.org/sermon/three-watchwords-joyful-relationship-god/>

Ps 45 (royal psalm): <http://media.lyonsdown.org/houseparty2010/2010-07-03%20James%20Hely%20Hutchinson,%20Psalm%2045,%20A%20Royal%20Psalm,%20Houseparty%202010.mp3>

Ps 49 (wisdom psalm): <http://media.lyonsdown.org/houseparty2010/2010-07-03%20James%20Hely%20Hutchinson,%20Psalm%2049,%20A%20Wisdom%20Psalm,%20Houseparty%202010.mp3>

Ps 78 (salvation-history psalm): <http://media.lyonsdown.org/houseparty2010/2010-07-03%20James%20Hely%20Hutchinson,%20Psalm%2078,%20A%20Salvation%20History%20Psalm,%20Houseparty%202010.mp3>

Ps 87 (Zion psalm): <http://media.lyonsdown.org/houseparty2010/2010-07-04%20James%20Hely%20Hutchinson,%20Psalm%2087,%20A%20Zion%20Psalm,%20Houseparty%202010.mp3>

Also

(Ps 1:1-2): <http://www.grosvenorbaptist.org/sermon/the-key-to-happiness/>

(Ps 73): <https://blogfinch.files.wordpress.com/2012/09/sermon-2012-09-02.mp3>

# RESOURCES RECOMMENDED FOR FURTHER STUDY OF THE PSALMS

## HIGHLY RECOMMENDED

Eveson, Philip, *Psalms: From Suffering to Glory*. Vol. 1: Psalms 1-72 (*The Servant King*). Darlington: EP Books, 2014. AND Vol. 2: Psalms 73-150 (*God's Manual of Spirituality*). Welwyn: EP Books, 2015. A terrific commentary in almost every department – thoroughly edifying! [See review in *Evangelicals Now*, September 2015.]

Kidner, Derek, *Psalms 1-72. An Introduction and Commentary on Books I and II of the Psalms*. Tyndale Old Testament Commentary; Leicester: IVP, 1973. AND *Psalms 73-150. A commentary on Books III-V of the Psalms*. TOTC; Leicester: IVP, 1975. Probably still the best commentary available: combines outstanding scholarship (especially at the level of detail) with accessibility to non-specialist readers, succinctness and sensitivity to reading the Psalms through NT spectacles.

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## RECOMMENDED

Harman, Allan, *Commentary on the Psalms*. Mentor; Fearn: Christian Focus, 1998. Not quite in Kidner's league, but more sensitive than Kidner to the big picture of the Psalter. Brief, accessible, sensitive to covenant theology.

Wilcock, Michael, *The Message of the Psalms* (two volumes). Bible Speaks Today; Leicester, IVP, 2001. Certainly not in Kidner's league, but edifying and aims to grapple with the big picture of the Psalter.

Futato, Mark D, *Transformed by Praise: The Purpose and Message of the Psalms*. Phillipsburg [New Jersey]: P & R Publishing, 2002. A simple, edifying sweep through the big picture of the Psalter that takes a similar approach to ours this weekend.

Grogan, Geoffrey, *Prayer, Praise & Prophecy: A Theology of the Psalms*. Mentor; Fearn: Christian Focus, 2001. A comprehensive handbook that is accessible to non-specialist readers, evangelical in outlook and sensitive to the big picture of the Psalter.

Grogan, Geoffrey, *Psalms*. Two Horizons; Grand Rapids/Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2008. I've not yet used this commentary that much, but it looks accessible and seems to take account of others' insights in a helpful way.

Robertson, O. Palmer, *The Flow of the Psalms: Discovering their Structure and Theology*. Phillipsburg [New Jersey]: P & R Publishing, 2015. Insights – not all of which are convincingly argued – regarding the shape of the Book of Psalms from a conservative scholar.

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## MORE ADVANCED

Delitzsch, Franz, *Biblical Commentary on the Psalms* (three volumes). London: Hodder, 1889/1894 (translation of fourth German edition, 1883). An outstanding technical commentary.

Dempster, Stephen, *Dominion and Dynasty: A Biblical Theology of the Hebrew Bible*. New Studies in Biblical Theology; Leicester/Downers Grove: Apollos/IVP, 2003, pp. 194-202 (section on the Psalms). A similar approach to the one we have taken this weekend.

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ADDITIONAL BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES APPEAR ON PAGE 25 (REGARDING APPROPRIATING INDIVIDUAL PSALMS) AND PAGE 44 (REGARDING FULFILMENT OF PSALMS IN CHRIST)

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## REINFORCEMENT OF MATERIAL TAUGHT DURING THE WEEKEND

Hely Hutchinson, James, 'A New-Covenant Slogan in the Old Testament', in Jamie A. Grant, Alistair I. Wilson, eds., *The God of Covenant. Biblical, Theological and Contemporary Perspectives* (Leicester: Apollos, 2005), 100-121.

-- 'Psalms', in *NIV Proclamation Bible. Correctly Handling the Word of Truth* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 2013), 577-579.

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And you might find this interesting: « Psalms », video produced by the Bible Project, <https://thebibleproject.com/explore/psalms/> (accessed 25<sup>th</sup> January 2018).