

THE PSALMS ACCORDING TO TYPE

I. Hymns and Psalms of Praise

The largest single category of psalms is made up of hymns and poems which offer praise, either directly or indirectly to God. Almost half of the 150 psalms may be considered as belonging to this category. We will break these up into seven classes.

First, the majority of these are *straightforward hymns of praise, generally beginning with a call to the praise of God, then continuing with a of justification of such praise by reference to God's nature, attributes, and deeds.* The following belong to this first class (a call to the praise of God, with the reason usually being stated) of hymns or psalms of praise:

8	100	115	146
19	103	117	147
24	104	134	148
29	105	135	149
33	111	136	150
65	113	139	
68	114	145	

Second, there are psalms of *praise which have thanksgiving as the central theme.* These may be psalms of an individual or of a group:

30	41	92	118
32	66	107	124
34	67	116	138

Third, psalms considered poems of *praise in their expression of trust in God:*

4	16	27	91
11	23	62	131

Fourth, hymns of *praise of Zion as the pilgrimage-place of the Presence of God::*

46	76	87
48	84	122

Fifth, hymns of *praise to God as universal and eternal king:*

47	96	98
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93 97 99

Sixth, *praise in counterpoint to lamentation, moving from one to the other:*

9&10	77
57	108

Seventh, psalms which *infer the praise of God, but the inferred praise is presented as a part of a lesson about man on the basis of what God is:*

15	75	82	125
36	78	95	129
50	81	121	

II. Psalms of Lament

The second largest category of psalms is made up of prayers of lamentation amidst stress and difficulty. Most of the psalms in this category are *individual* prayers and lamentation. The individual laments stem from contexts of spiritual, mental, physical, and material suffering.

These individual laments are often begun with a *cry for a hearing*. Sometimes this cry is coupled with *an expression of certainty that God will hear*.

The *plea* in these laments is *deliverance*. This plea for deliverance is often specified as:

protection	healing	vindication
justice	vengeance	forgiveness

Inherent in nearly all of the laments is an expression of confident faith in God and an element of praise to him for what he is about to do, or, in some instances, for what he is utterly certain to do in time. The long list (40 in number) of *individual* laments found in the book of Psalms are as follows:

3	31	56	94
5	35	59	102
6	38	61	109
7	39	63	120
13	40	64	130
17	42&43	69	140
22	51	70	141
25	52	71	142

26	54	86	143
28	55	88	

The *community* laments are corporate cries of the congregation which stem either from an *OPPRESSION experienced by all who actually worship God* or from some *CATASTROPHE affecting his whole people*, that is, the nation at large.

Here, as to some extent in the individual laments, God is frequently reminded that his reputation is at stake in the mistreatment by others of those who are regarded as his own. These community laments are as follows:

12	58	80	106
14	60	83	123
44	74	85	126
53	79	90	137

III. Royal Psalms

The royal psalms bear a direct relation to the rule in Jerusalem of David and his dynasty. They celebrate various aspects of the institution and continuance of Davidic rule, and there is every reason to believe that they were used repeatedly in connection with the Davidic kings. Although some would apply a large number of the psalms to the king, the number that can be certainly so categorized is relatively small. These are as follows:

2	21	89	132
18	45	101	144
20	72	110	

IV. Wisdom Psalms

Some psalms are thought to have been written by the wise men belonging to the Temple, the sages of Israel who nurtured and propagated the traditional teaching of Israel in an effort to discover the right way of life. There is a didactic style in these psalms, like that which is found in the book of Proverbs. There is a concentration on the good way in contrast to the ungodly or wicked way. This is not to say that such style and devices are never to be found in some of the other psalms, but that there are a certain number which clearly belong to this class, and for this reason they are plainly their own.. They are as follows:

1	73	127
37	112	128
49	119	133