

INTRO TO THE BOOK OF PSALMS

IMPORTANT FACTS:

- ❖ The Hebrew Title of the book is “Sepher Tehillim” which means “Book of Praises” and was utilized as a song book in public and private worship.

- ❖ Psalms contains 150 chapters and a total of 2,461 verses and in the original Hebrew Bible it is sub-divided into 5 sections. Book One contains psalms 1-41. Book Two contains psalms 42-72. Book Three covers psalms 73-89. Book Four contains psalms 90-106 and book Five covers psalms 107-150.

- ❖ The Book of Psalms contains at least 7 different types of psalms’ including:
 - 1) Praise psalms (focusing on God and praising Him for His goodness)
 - 2) Historical psalms (recounting God’s history with the Israelites)
 - 3) Relational psalms (referring to God’s relationship with an individual believer)
 - 4) Imprecatory psalms (which implore God to destroy the wicked)
 - 5) Penitential psalms (psalms in which the writer cries in sorrow over his own sin)
 - 6) Messianic psalms (which contain sometimes veiled or symbolic references to the coming Savior)
 - 7) Liturgical psalms (used in public worship and for special occasions or festivals)

Other classifications include psalms of lament, psalms of instruction, psalms of deliverance, psalms of prayer and acrostic psalms.

- ❖ The inspired authorship of the Book of Psalms is attributed to multiple individuals including King David who is credited with 73 of them. Moses is credited with one, (Psalm 90) though it is thought by some scholars that he also authored Psalm 91.

King David’s choirmaster, Asaph, is credited with 12, David’s son Solomon is the known author of 2, Heman and Ethan are the stated authors of one psalm each and the sons of Korah are ascribed as the authors of 10 psalms. Others have unknown authors and are referred to as “orphan psalms.”

¹ From Hayford’s *Bible Handbook*, pg. 138-139

- ❖ The period in which the 150 psalms were written is believed to have spanned just over a thousand years, from 1550 to 450 BC.

- ❖ Ezra is believed to be the compiler of the Book of Psalms in its current format. ²

² *Dake's Annotated Reference Bible - pg. 1026.*