

**COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH**  
**PSALMS**  
**LESSON 1**  
**INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF PSALMS**  
**WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 14 – SEPTEMBER 19**

### **Introduction to the Book of Psalms**

The Book of Psalms stands as the inspired hymnbook of ancient Israel, a divinely inspired collection of 150 poetic prayers, songs, and meditations containing profound theology, human emotion, and worship of the all-powerful creator, king and sovereign God. Every word of the Psalms is inspired, breathed out by the Holy Spirit **(2 Timothy 3:16)**.

*“The Psalms cover the whole gamut of human experience from praise to penitence, from quietly confident faith to agonized perplexity from joy at the wonder of life in God's world to the struggle to reach out to a God who seems remote or silent, from bowing humbly before the mystery of life to bitter and urgent questioning. It is all there, and because it is all there we are there in our ever-changing moods and needs.”*

*The Vitality of Worship, Robert Davidson, p. 2.,*

The Psalms vividly and poetically capture the full range of human experience—from the heights of praise to the depths of despair and lament—all written within the framework of God's unchanging character, faithfulness and redemptive purposes.

### **Authorship and Historical Context**

The Psalms were composed over a span of 900+ years. The earliest written by Moses (Psalm 90) around 1410 B.C. to 450 B.C., written after the return of Israel from exile in Babylon. Each Psalm was written by an individual author. The primary author is David who contributed at least 73 psalms, many written to reflect his personal trials, triumphs, failures, disappointments and intimate relationship with his powerful, sovereign, faithful and merciful God. Other contributors include Asaph (12 psalms); the sons of Korah (11 psalms); Solomon (2 psalms); Heman and Ethan (2 psalms); and Moses (1 psalm). Approximately 50 psalms are anonymous. Some theologians think Ezra composed some of the Psalms.

Each Psalm was written with a specific historical context. Each should be analyzed individually, but at the same time the Psalms are part of an edited collection and organized with a purpose. Some commentators believe that Ezra compiled the order of the Psalms to communicate specific theological content. The Psalms were used in Israel's public worship and private devotion. Psalm 1 and 2 form the introduction to the book and set the theme for all of the Psalter. The Psalms are the most quoted Old Testament book by Christ and the apostles in the New Testament, which underscores the significance, authority, and relevance of the Psalms.

## Theological Themes

The predominant theme of the Book of the Psalms is the reign and rule of God; His reign over creation, over the nations, over all and eternally. There is also a focus on the kingdom of God over creation and the nations through His Anointed One, the Messiah, the eternal Davidic King.

In the Psalms we encounter Christology. Jesus declared that the Psalms spoke of Him (**Luke 24:44**), with direct fulfillment in His suffering (**Psalm 22**), His resurrection (**Psalm 16**), His ascension (**Psalm 68**), and His eternal priesthood (**Psalm 110**). Eschatologically, the Psalms look forward to God's ultimate victory with the Messiah's reign over a subdued earth (**Psalm 2**). We read of the judgment of the wicked (**Psalm 37**), and the eternal praise in a new creation (**Psalm 150**). The Psalms establish that history culminates in Christ's millennial kingdom and eternal rule. (**Psalms 144-150**).

## The Five Books of Psalms

The Psalms are not haphazard but deliberately structured into five books. Each book ends with a doxology of praise. The books trace a theological progression from the earthly Davidic monarchy, the failure of that human monarchy, the national crises and restoration culminating in the future hope of the establishment of an eternal kingdom.

**Book I (Psalms 1–41)** Book 1 closes with “Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting! Amen and Amen” (**41:13**), affirming God's eternal sovereignty.

**Book II (Psalms 42–72)** Book 2 ends with the doxology: “Blessed be the LORD God, the God of Israel, who alone does wondrous deeds! Blessed be His glorious name forever!” (**72:18–19**), followed by “The prayers of David... are ended” (**72:20**), transitioning to later compilers.

**Book III (Psalms 73–89)** Concludes with the doxology: “Blessed be the LORD forever! Amen and Amen” (**89:52**), a defiant praise amid crisis.

**Book IV (Psalms 90–106)** Concludes with “Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting! And let all the people say, ‘Amen!’ Praise the LORD!” (**106:48**).

**Book V (Psalms 107–150)** Book V closes without a separate doxology since Psalm 150 provides the grand finale: instruments, creation, and breath all praising Yahweh—a worshipful eternal chorus.

As you delight yourself in the study of the Psalms, may these inspired Psalms transform you by shaping your prayers, fueling your worship, and anchoring your hope in Christ. May the Holy Spirit illuminate these Psalms, drawing you ever closer to the One who is worthy of all honor, glory, and dominion.