

STUDY GUIDE FOR BOOK OF PSALMS

I. INTRODUCTION.

- a. Nature and Name.
 - i. Hebrew title is "Book of Praises".
 - ii. Character of writing—praise, worship, confession and prayer.
- b. Authorship as indicated by titles:
 - i. David, Solomon, Asaph, the Sons of Korah, Moses, Ethan the Ezrahite, Heman the Ezrahite.
- c. Key Words: (1) Praise, (2) Trust, (3) Joy, (4) Rejoice, (5) Worship and (6) Mercy.

II. BACKGROUND.

- a. Psalms are at heart of spiritual experience of both Jew & Gentile believer.
- b. Longest Old Testament book & most often quoted in New Testament.
- c. Time covered—from Moses to Post-exile period of second Temple (about 1000 yrs).

III. CENTRAL FEATURE OF HEBREW POETRY—PARALLELISM.

- a. Hebrew poetry balances thought, not sound.
- b. Poet makes assertion on one line and parallels it with another thought on next line.

IV. EXAMPLES OF PARALLELISM IN THE PSALMS(AND ELSEWHERE IN OLD TESTAMENT):

- a. SYNONYMOUS PARALLELISM.(second line reinforces thought on first line)
 - i. Psalm 19:1, Psalm 52:2, and Isaiah 1:3.
- b. ANTITHETICAL PARALLELISM.(second line emphasizes the first by stating a "contrasting" thought)
 - i. Psalm 1:6, Psalm 30:5 and Proverbs 10:1ff.
- c. SYNTHETIC PARALLELISM.(thought of first line is extended and made complete by the second line)
 - i. Psalm 9:10, Psalm 25:8-10 and Proverbs 16:12-13.
- d. CLIMACTIC PARALLELISM.(second line repeats part of the first and then adds new thought)
 - i. Psalm 77:1, Psalm 94:1 and Psalm 96:7

V. CONCEPT OF GOD IN THE PSALMS.

- a. At heart of Psalms is the "personal" God of Israel.
- b. God's _____ and _____ are praised. (PSALM 5)
- c. God's _____ toward the _____. (PSALM 51)

VI. ANTICIPATION OF THE MESSIAH IN BOOK OF PSALMS.

- a. Jesus claimed Psalms spoke of Him. (Luke 24:44(b))
- b. Both Judaism & Christianity see number of Psalms as predictions of Christ.
- c. Psalms cited in the New Testament & interpreted as referring to Christ:
 - i. Psalm 2:1-2—Acts 4:25-28 & Psalm 2:7—Acts 13:33.
 - ii. Psalm 16:8-11—Acts 2:25-31 & Psalm 22:18—Matthew 27:35.
 - iii. Psalm 22:22—Hebrews 2:12 & Psalm 45:6-7—Hebrews 1:8-9.
 - iv. Psalm 89:3-4—see Acts 2:30.
 - v. Psalm 110:1—Acts 2:33-35 and Matthew 22:43-45.