

Approach the study of an individual psalm through a consideration of its setting, its meaning, and its significance.

Setting

1. Original

Pre-temple, First Temple, or Second Temple Period

2. Compositional

Instruments, tunes, and other musical directions

3. Anthological

Place within Psalter as a whole, five Books, smaller collections

4. Ritual/Occasional

Liturgical use: festivals, offerings, Sabbaths, coronations, weddings

Meaning

1. Form and structure

Classification by form, its typical elements; variations of theme; actual structure by stanzas

2. Poetry

Use of parallelism, words, images to evoke emotion, engage psyche; deeper studies of Hebrew words

Significance

...for Jesus and the Church

The reading and explanation of the psalm by Jesus as well as the early and late Church

Laments

Typical structure: *Cry of desperation, Trust, Petition, Vow to praise*

Themes: **Imprecatory Psalm**

Confidence Lament

Plea of Innocence (justice)

Penitential Lament

Petitionary Lament

Wisdom Lament

Thanksgivings

 (Declarative/Narrative psalms of praise)

Typical structure: *Call to praise, Story of deliverance, Concluding praise*

Themes: **Deliverance Psalm**

Victory Song (after battle)

Wisdom Thanksgiving

Hymns

 (Descriptive psalms of praise)

Typical structure: *General call to praise, Praise itself, Final call to praise*

Themes: **Hymn of Sovereign Majesty** (God's rule; God as Creator)

Enthronement Hymn (king/Messiah placed on throne)

Hymn of National Deliverance (faithfulness to covenant; realized when Messiah comes—but distinguish from the enthronement hymn)

War Song (before battle)

Pilgrim Hymn (Zion—as city or king, Ascent)

Wisdom Hymn