

OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY

Lesson 16 w/Answers

Psalms - Part 2

This week we will conclude our study of the Psalms. We will examine the physical material that it was written on, and the forms that these writings took as they were passed down generation after generation. Finally, we will use them to write a prayer that we can use in worship.

Once again, this week let's look up some unfamiliar terms and gain a deeper of understanding of the background and character of the Psalms.

1. Define the following:

a. Papyrus:

- i. ANSWER: Papyrus was the preferred material for writing by both the Egyptians and the Greeks. It was made from the papyrus plant, a tall marsh plant that grows abundantly in the Nile Valley. Sheets were made by placing layers at right angles then pressing them flat; the sticky quality of the sap served to bind the layers together.

b. Parchment:

- i. ANSWER: Parchment is a thin material made from the cured skins of sheep, goats or cattle.

c. Codex:

- i. ANSWER: A codex is a collection of leaves or pages bound at one side. It was a Roman invention that replaced the scroll.

d. Scroll:

- i. ANSWER: A scroll (and a roll) represented connected sheets of papyrus, written on in columns, similar to today's newspaper. They were unrolled from the top and rolled up from the bottom, as the reader moved through the document.

2. Why is Pergamum relevant to our understanding of parchment?

- a. ANSWER: According to the first century historian, Pliny the Elder, parchment came into use as a result of competition between Ptolemy V (210-180 BC) of Egypt and Eumenes II (197-159 BC) of Pergamum, in western Anatolia. Ptolemy's ban of exporting papyrus to Eumenes resulted in Eumenes developing parchment. Pergamum went on to be a major exporter of parchment.

3. Define what is meant by an "Imprecatory" Psalm (such as Psalm 69 or Psalm 109).

- a. ANSWER: Imprecatory Psalms are those which invoke judgment, calamity or curses on an enemy.

4. To the casual reader, it may seem difficult to justify Imprecatory Psalms in light of the New Testament teachings on love and meekness. However, they were not written in a vengeful fashion nor during the heat of anger; but rather, they were written during a time of leisure. They were written to inspire repentance and not for public admonishment; the feelings or emotions of the author are demonstrated as being true and right, and not vindictive. Against this background, we can see four things about the Imprecatory Psalms. Can you determine what they are?

- a. ANSWER 1: They represent the longing of David for the vindication of God's righteousness. David saw his evil enemies living well and prospering, and cried out against it.
- b. ANSWER 2: They utter zeal for the righteousness of God.
- c. ANSWER 3: They express God's hatred of sin.
- d. ANSWER 4: They express God's vindication of His righteousness.

5. David wrote many prophetic "Messianic" Psalms between 970 and 1010 BC, some 1,000 years before Christ's crucifixion. Examples of these are Psalm 69 and Psalm 22, which is also one of the most quoted Psalms in the New Testament. Of the most prophetic Psalms was specifically referred to by Christ in Matthew 22:41-46. Which Psalm was it?
- a. ANSWER: Psalm 110.
6. Explain how Christ used Psalm 110 to prove that he is the Messiah.
- a. ANSWER: As we see in Matthew 22:41-46, Christ asked the Pharisees whose son is the Christ. When they responded by saying that he is a son of David, he then asked them if David referred to Christ as Lord in Psalm 110. If so, then how could Christ be his son? In doing so, he confounded them as part of the revelation that he, Jesus, was the promised Christ.
7. Now, let's look at using the book of Psalms in a way that honors God, and in a way that adds a new dimension to your worship of Him. Using at least seven verses from different Psalms (but not an entire Psalm), construct a prayer to God. Cite your verses as you construct the prayer. In class at Southview, we will share these with each other.
- a. EXAMPLE 1: The earth is the Lord's and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it, for he founded it upon the seas and established it upon the waters. (Psalms 24:1-2) I will praise you O Lord, with all my heart; before the "gods" I will sing your praise. (Psalm 138:1) I will exalt you my God the King, I will praise your name for ever and ever. Every day I will praise you and extol your name for ever and ever. (Psalm 145:1-2) Praise the Lord, Praise the Lord O my soul. I will praise the Lord all my life, I will sing praise to my God as long as I live. (Psalm 146:1-2) Amen.
- b. EXAMPLE 2: Answer me when I call to you O my righteous God. Give me relief from my distress be merciful to me and hear my prayer. (Psalm 4:1-2) Give ear to my words O Lord, consider my sighing. Listen to my cry for help my King and my God for to you I pray. (Psalm 5:1-2) How long O Lord will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me? How long must I wrestle with my thoughts and every day have sorrow in my heart? How long will my enemy triumph over me? (Psalm 13:1-2) Oh Lord by your hand save me from such men, from men of this world whose reward is in this life. You still the hunger of those you cherish, their sons have plenty, and they store up wealth for their children. And I, in righteousness I will see your face when I awake, I will be satisfied with seeing your likeness. (Psalm 17:14-15) Amen.

I pray that you have been as blessed by this quick look at the book of Psalms as I have. One of my most favorite books in the Bible, it is a book that you will want to read over and over.

I look forward as well to next week's look at the book of Proverbs, another book full of wisdom that is worth reading over and over again.

Thanks for being faithful in studying God's Holy Word. May He richly bless you for it!

Have a great week everyone.

In Christ,

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