

OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY

Psalms

Introduction

- "Psalm" derived from *psalmos* (Greek: "song" or "plucking" [a stringed instrument])
- Collection of praises and prayers of the people of God -- "the hymnbook of ancient Israel"

Psalms - Overview

- Structure of Psalms
 - Comprised of ~150 individual psalms
 - divided into 5 books
 - Book I - Psalm 1-41
 - Book II - Psalm 42-72
 - Book III - Psalm 73-89
 - Book IV - Psalms 90-106
 - Book V - Psalms 107-150
 - Psalms 1 & 2 an introduction - provides a framework/context within which the Psalms operate
 - Concludes with 5 psalms of praise (146-150)
- Authorship and historical context of the Psalms
 - "superscriptions" or titles of psalms
 - composed by multiple authors, over the span of ~1000 years (from Moses to exilic/post-exilic)
- Types of Psalms
 - Psalms are often categorized based on their content
 - Types of psalms include
 - Psalms of praise (e.g. 100, 146-150)
 - Psalms of lament (e.g. 4, 5, 6, 10, 12, 13, ...)
 - Psalms of thanksgiving (e.g. 9, 30, 34, 118, 138)
 - Psalms of trust/confidence (e.g. 11, 16, 23, 91, 139)
 - Psalms of remembrance (e.g. 78, 105, 106)
 - Royal/Kingship psalms (e.g. 2, 20, 45, 72, 110)
 - Wisdom psalms/psalms of instruction (e.g. 1, 119)
 - Psalms of Zion (e.g. 46, 48, 76, 84)
 - Songs of ascent (pilgrimage psalms) - 120-134

- The 3 major types are praise, lament, and thanksgiving psalms
 - sometimes referred to as songs of orientation (praise), disorientation (lament), and reorientation (thanksgiving)
 - Praise psalms (e.g. Psalm 117)
 - Lament psalms (e.g. Psalm 5)
 - the largest number of psalms are in this category
 - Thanksgiving psalms (e.g. Psalm 118)

Some Major Themes and Concepts in Psalms

- God
- Man

Glimpses of Christ in Psalms

- The Psalms were widely used and quoted by Jesus Christ and by the New Testament writers
- Psalms speaking about Jesus Christ
 - "Then he said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled." (Luke 24:44)
 - e.g. Psalm 2, 8, 16, 22, 45, 69, 72, 110
- Psalms as the words and prayers of Jesus Christ
 - the words of Jesus Christ, spoken prophetically through the Psalmist
 - words actually spoken by Jesus Christ
 - words expressing a sentiment that characterized Jesus Christ