

PSALMS STRUCTURE

The Book of Psalms is a *collection* of 150 musical poems. Each of these is a literary unit and should be read as such. The psalm has a pattern of development by which ideas are presented, developed, and brought to a conclusion. Because of this one must be especially careful not to take individual verses out of context.

PRIMARY CATEGORIES OF PSALMS

Book I:(Ps. 1-41) *“The Law and the Gospel”* compiled by **David**, Israel’s first king, about 1000 B.C. Consists mostly of personal psalms which arose out of the king’s own experiences. Contrasts old and new covenants. Emphasis on prayer.

Book II:(Ps. 42-71) *“Faith and the Kingdom”* compiled by **Solomon**, David’s son, he became Israel’s second king, about 900 B.C. Many Kingly Psalms, with an emphasis on prayer.

Book III:(Ps. 73-89) *“God’s faithfulness towards a faithless Israel”* Compiled by the **Sons of Korah**, a guild of singers and composers, about 586 B.C. Mostly prayers concerning national suffering, exile, and destruction of Jerusalem. Emphasis on prayer and praise.

Book IV:(Ps. 90-106) *“Our King and Deliverer”* Compiled by **David**. Emphasis on praise.

Book V:(Ps.107-150) *“Praise to our Deliverer”* All the Psalms probably compiled by **Ezra**, he was a priest that God used to lead the Jews out of Babylon, 539-444 B.C. after the return from exile. Emphasis on praise and prayer.

Each Book ends with a doxology of “Amen”, “Praise the LORD”, or both.

41:13; 72:18-19; 89:52; 106:48; 150:1-6

These are just a few of the categories in the Psalms:

| | Book I | Book II | Book III | Book IV | Book V | TOTAL |
|--------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| Praise | 7 | 6 | 1 | 10 | 19 | 43 |
| Prayer | 20 | 18 | 9 | 2 | 16 | 65 |
| Prophecy | 6 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 14 |
| Proverbs | 8 | 4 | 6 | 4 | 6 | 28 |
| TOTAL | 41 | 31 | 17 | 17 | 44 | 150 |