



PSALMS OF LAMENT & PRAISE

Bible Jam Session 2 – Winter/Spring



FEBRUARY 1, 2022
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Bible Jam – Session 2, February 1, 2022

- A. Psalm of Lament Format
 - a. Address to God
 - b. Review of God’s Faithfulness in the past
 - c. the “complaint”
 - d. A “confession” of wrongdoing or a claim of innocence
 - e. A request for help
 - f. God’s response (often not stated)
 - g. A vow to praise, statement of trust in God

Psalm 130 – Inclusive Bible

¹Out of the depths I cry to you YHWH!

²God hear my voice!

Let your ears be attentive
to my voice, my cries for mercy!

³If you keep track of our sins, YHWH,
who could stand before you?

⁴But with you is forgiveness,
and for this we revere you.

⁵So, I wait for you YHWH—
my soul waits,
and in your word I place my trust.

⁶My soul longs for you YHWH,
more than sentinels long for the dawn,
more than sentinels long for the dawn.

⁷Israel, put your hope in YHWH,
for with YHWH is abundant love
and the fulness of deliverance;

⁸God will deliver Israel,
from all its failings.

B. Psalm of Lament Format

- a. Address to God
- b. Review of God's Faithfulness in the past
- c. the "complaint"
- d. A "confession" of wrongdoing or a claim of innocence
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Psalm 130 – Psalms for Praying Nan C. Merrill

Out of the depths I cry to You!
In you Mercy, hear my voice!
May you be attentive to the
voice of my supplications!

If You should number the times we
stray from You, O Beloved,
who could face You?
You are ever-ready to forgive,
that we might be healed.

I wait for You, my soul waits,
for in your Love I would live;
My soul awaits the Beloved
as one awaits the birth
of a child, or
as one awaits the fulfillment
of their destiny.

O [kindred] of the Light,
welcome the Heart of your heart!
Then you will climb the Sacred
Mountain of Truth;
You will know mercy and love
in abundance.
Then will your transgressions be
forgiven; and you will know
the Oneness of All.

D. Psalm of Praise

- f. Recognize God's goodness
- g. Express present gratitude
- h. Surrender to the Spirit of Praise
- i. List your blessings
- j. Affirm God's goodness

Psalm 98 - The Message (Modified)

- ¹ Sing to God a brand-new song.
God has made a world of wonders!
Go rolled up God's sleeves,
God set things right.
- ² God made history with salvation,
God showed the world what he could do.
- ³ God remembered to love us, a bonus
To a dear family, Israel—undefatigable love.
The whole earth comes to attention.
Look—God's work of salvation!
- ⁴ Shout your praises to God, everybody!
Let loose and sing! Strike up the band!
- ⁵ Round up an orchestra to play for God,
Add on a hundred-voice choir.
- ⁶ Feature trumpets and big trombones,
Fill the air with praises to Ruler God.
- ⁷ Let the sea and its fish give a round of applause,
With everything living on earth joining in.
- ⁸ Let ocean breakers call out, "Encore!"
And mountains harmonize the finale—
- ⁹ A tribute to God when God comes,
When God comes to set the earth right.
God will straighten out the whole world,
God will put the world right, and everyone in it.

Bible Jam – Session 2, February 1, 2022

Psalm 51 – The Miserere (“Miserere mei, Deus”)
A psalm of David – Written when the prophet Nathan came to him after David’s affair with Bathsheba in 2 Samuel 12

- 1 O God, have mercy on me!
Because of your love and great compassion,
wipe away my faults;
- 2 wash me clean of my guilt; purify me of my sin.
- 3 For I am aware of my faults,
and have my sin constantly in mind.
- 4 I sinned against you alone, and did what is evil in your sight.
You are just when you pass sentence on me,
blameless when you give judgment.

- 5 I was born in sin, conceived in sin—
- 6 yet you want truth to live in my innermost being.
Teach me your wisdom!
- 7 Purify me with *hyssop* until I am clean;
wash me until I am purer than new-fallen snow.
- 8 Instill some joy and gladness into me;
let the bones you have crushed rejoice again.
- 9 Turn your face from my sins, and wipe out all my guilt.

- 10 O God, create a clean heart in me,
put into me a new and steadfast spirit;
- 11 do not banish me from your presence,
do not deprive me of your Holy Spirit!
- 12 Be my savior again, renew my joy,
keep my spirit steady and willing;
- 13 and I will teach transgressors your ways,
and sinners will return to you.

- 14 Save me from bloodshed, O God, of my salvation—
and my tongue will acclaim your justice.
- 15 Open my lips, YHWH, and my mouth will declare your praise.
- 16 Sacrifice gives you no pleasure;
were I to present a burnt offering, you would not have it.
- 17 My sacrifice, O God, is a broken spirit;
you will not scorn this crushed and broken heart.
- 18 Make Zion prosper through your favor,
and rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.
- 19 There will be proper sacrifice to please you—
burn offerings and who oblations,
and young bulls to be offered on your altar.

Categorizing the Psalms

Matt Postiff, November 21, 2014

The Classification System

All the Psalms share the genre of Hebrew poetry. Among the 150 Psalms, there are groups or categories that share the same form and subject matter. These could be called “sub-genres”, but I have elected to call them “categories.” In this article, I provide a categorization of all the Psalms using a simple lettering system.

At the largest granularity, there are six categories of Psalms. I use the six letters shown in the table below to classify the Psalm into these largest of buckets. The task of classification is made more difficult by the fact that some Psalms have strong elements of two or more of these categories. So a slash (/) is employed to specify a second category, which is encoded in the same way as the first category.

1	2...	/	3	4...
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P – Praise Hymn **S** – Song of Trust **T** – Thanksgiving
L – Lament **W** – Wisdom **K** – Kingship/covenant
 (If there is no slash, I did not give the Psalm a secondary classification.)

The optional second and third letters identify major elements of the content of the Psalm which further classify it. The letters of identification for these additional content elements are taken from the second group of identifiers below.

1	2...	/	3	4...
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C – Creator **D** – Deliverer **H** – Lord of History **G** – God as Divine King
I – Individual **N** – National **R** – Request in prayer **T** – Theocratic/Human King
P – Penitential **M** – Imprecatory **Z** – Song of Zion **C** – Covenant

All the Psalms Classified by Category

Psalm	Type	Psalm	Type	Psalm	Type	Psalm	Type	Psalm	Type
1	W	31	LI/S	61	LI	91	S	121	S
2	KT	32	TI	62	S	92	TI	122	PZ
3	LI	33	PH	63	S	93	KG	123	LP
4	LI	34	TI	64	LI	94	LP	124	TN
5	LI	35	LIM	65	TN	95	KG/PG	125	S
6	LI	36	W	66	TI/TN	96	KG	126	LP
7	LI	37	W	67	TN	97	KG	127	W
8	PC	38	LI	68	P/KG	98	KG/PG	128	W
9	LI	39	LI	69	LII	99	KG	129	TN/LM
10	LI	40	TI	70	LII	100	PD	130	LI
11	S	41	LI	71	LI	101	KT	131	S
12	LNI	42	LI	72	KT	102	LP	132	KT
13	LI	43	LI	73	W	103	PH	133	W
14	LI	44	LNP	74	LP	104	PC	134	P
15	W	45	KT	75	TN	105	TH	135	PH
16	S	46	PZ	76	PZ	106	TH	136	TN/PH
17	LI	47	KG/PG	77	LI	107	TN	137	LPI
18	TI/KT	48	PZ	78	W/PH	108	LP	138	TI
19	PC/W	49	W	79	LP	109	LII	139	W/P
20	KT	50	KC	80	LP	110	KT	140	LIM

21	KT	51	LIP	81	KC	111	PD	141	LI
22	LI	52	LI	82	LNP	112	W	142	LI
23	S	53	LI	83	LNLM	113	PH	143	LI
24	KG	54	LI/S	84	PZ	114	PD	144	KT/P
25	LI	55	LI	85	LN/P	115	LP	145	P
26	LIR	56	LI/S	86	LI	116	TI	146	P
27	S	57	LI	87	PZ	117	PH	147	P
28	LI	58	LN/PI	88	LI	118	TI/TN	148	P
29	PC/KG	59	LIM	89	KT	119	W	149	P
30	TI	60	LN/P	90	LP	120	TI/LI	150	P

A Helpful Mnemonic Device for the Categories of Psalms

This might be helpful for students taking a poetic books test.

P raise hymn
S ong of trust/confidence
Th A nksgiving
L ament
 Wisdo**M**
 King **S** hip and covenant

Discussion

The kingship psalms often contain a heavy element of praise. Perhaps they should be categorized under ‘P’ with the ‘K’ sub-classification.

The thanksgiving psalms often reflect a response to deliverance from a lament or answer to a prayer.

It is difficult to make a clean division between thanksgiving and praise psalms, since thanksgiving overlaps with praise.

The lament category is large—about one third of the Psalms. These psalms often include elements of the other major categories.

Bullock classifies national thanksgiving psalms as those of “community.” This broadens the appeal of the psalm in terms of application, but the authors were always thinking of the nation of Israel as their particular community. He also classifies two psalms (66 and 118) as both national and individual thanksgivings. I agree both elements are present.

Longman suggests a “psalm of remembrance” having to do with redemptive historical issues. He classifies Psalms 78, 105, 106, 135, and 136 in this category. However, most of these psalms have a strong element of thanksgiving or praise associated with them so I have categorized them under those headings. The remembrance or historical material in the psalms serve the larger purpose of providing material to report and praise to others (78:4, 105:1-5, 45; 106:1, 48; 135:1-3, 21; 136:1-3, 26) or of conveying wisdom to following generations, to not be stiff-necked like prior generations (78).

References

This work is derived from Dr. Robert McCabe’s poetic books notes from Detroit Baptist Theological Seminary. I also interacted with C. Hassell Bullock’s *Encountering the Book of Psalms* as well as Tremper Longman’s *How to Read the Psalms*.

C. Psalm of Praise

- a. Recognize God's goodness
- b. Express present gratitude
- c. Surrender to the Spirit of Praise
- d. List your blessings
- e. Affirm God's goodness

Psalm 98 - King James Version

- ¹O sing unto the Lord a new song;
for he hath done marvellous things:
his right hand, and his holy arm,
hath gotten him the victory.
- ²The Lord hath made known his salvation:
his righteousness hath he openly shewed
in the sight of the heathen.
- ³He hath remembered his mercy
and his truth toward the house of Israel:
all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.
- ⁴Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all the earth:
make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise.
- ⁵Sing unto the Lord with the harp; with the harp,
and the voice of a psalm.
- ⁶With trumpets and sound of cornet
make a joyful noise before the Lord, the King.
- ⁷Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof;
the world, and they that dwell therein.
- ⁸Let the floods clap their hands:
let the hills be joyful together
- ⁹Before the Lord; for he cometh to judge the earth:
with righteousness shall he judge the world,
and the people with equity.