**BIBLE IV**

Course of Study 421

May 2023

Weekday Assignments\*

Key:

Obj. Refers to the main objective of the assignment. Do not answer this statement.

(T) Refers to a question or statement that you are to **think** about before moving on to the next question. You are not required to write out an answer, but be prepared to answer in class.

(N) You are to record and submit an answer in **note** form, but you are not required to write out a paragraph in complete sentences. (Note from still needs to make sense to me.)

(W) You are to record and submit an answer of at least a **written** (typed) paragraph using formal English.

\*Note: I encourage you to discuss and work on these assignments together in pairs or small groups. (Students have noted: it often helps to meet first to clarify the assignment objective and prompt; however, when there are readings, it helps to read them first, then meet in groups.) Whenever there is a (W) response, students must write out their own individually written response.

**Daily**) Obj.: Synthesize new learning and move to application.

For each day of class: **Write** (type) a journal entry (1-2 paragraphs) in which you develop one or two specific thoughts from the day's class and discuss how they are in some way applicable to you (e.g. for personal growth, theological connections, sermon ideas, ministry, etc. Feel free to use this exercise as a time to sketch out a sermon or devotional outline, but do make the response personal).

1) Obj.: Identify "subtypes" of proverbs. (The Book of Proverbs contains different kinds/forms of wisdom literature in the same "book.")

Read: a) Pro 1:20-33; b) 10:1-5; c) 22:17-23:8; and d) 30:15-16, 18-19, 21-23.

a) (N) Describe what characterizes/distinguishes each of the above types of wisdom material (a-d) from the others. (Focus primarily on form, not on content.)

2) Obj.: Discover the kinds of relationships which may be found between the two lines of the mashal.

a) (N) For any five of the fifteen proverbs in 20:1-15, identify what the relationship is of the second line to the first (e.g. effect of a cause, completing a thought, building, giving the opposite, etc.).

3) Obj.: Practice applying the "Reading Strategy" by analyzing some two-line proverbs (mashalim).

a) (N) Using Handout p. 8, "Reading Strategy for the Mashal" (proverb), follow at least levels A and B, and step-by-step analyze at least one of the following: Pro 26:17; 13:14; 25:27. (What literary features do you find? How do they work? What are their impacts?)

b) (N) Describe a real-life context in which one of these proverbs might still be applicable, a context in which you might put this proverb to use.

4) Obj.: Discover the form and intention of Genesis 1:1-2:3.

Read Gen 1:1-2:3. (Focus on form.)

a) (N) List the formal, stylistic, structuring features in this text?

b) (N) What might these formal features indicate about the functions of this text? Is this history, theology, science, poetry? (Think about the four "poles of communication" and their corresponding functions. In what settings might you read/hear similarly structured texts?)

5) Obj.: Practice applying the "Reading Strategy for the Mashal" (Handouts p, 8) by analyzing some two-line proverbs (mashalim).

a) (N) Follow the "Reading Strategy" for Proverbs (mashalim) (at least levels A and B) step-by-step and analyze either Pro 26:22 or 17:22. (What literary features do you find? How do they work? What are their impacts?)

6) Obj.: Discover the formal element of different kinds of psalms.

Compare and contrast Psalms 33, 34, 74, 79, 113, and 116. (Consider: rhetorical intention; addressee; themes; mood and mood shifts; whether the speaker is reflecting on the past, present, or future; etc.)

a) (N) Match up the psalms which are most alike, forming three sets of pairs.

b) (N) What are the elements which are similar between the two psalms in each of your pairings? c) (N) What elements distinguish each set from the other sets of your pairs?

7) Obj.: Discover the various roles of the Israelite priests.

Read sections #3-5 of the article, “Priests, Priesthood,” from the *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch* (sent as “Duke\_Priests.pdf”).

a) (N) Identify some significant aspects about the symbol system of the Israelite cult.

b) (W) Identify and discuss something you think is significant about the functions of the Israelite priests.

8) Obj.: Develop skill of identifying and outlining the basic type of psalms.

a) (N) Using the outlines of the three main types of psalms (Handouts, pp.,12-14), just identify the major divisions of Psalms 32, 33, and 54.

9) Obj.: Develop skill of identifying the “balanced thought structures” (parallelism) of Hebrew poetry.

Study handout, “Balanced Thought Structure” (Handouts, pp. 18-19)

a) (N) Come up with your own headings and outline of the major structure of Psalm 24. (This psalm does not fit one of the 3 major types.)

b) (N) Using Handouts, p. 21, diagram verse-by-verse each of the balanced units of meaning in Psalm 24.

10) Obj.: Explore the prophetic literature.

Read: Nahum.

(W) Develop and write out any one main observation, question, reaction, or comment you have about this prophetic text. Do not retell the content.

11) Obj.: Explore the nature of prophetic literature.

a) Read Ezekiel 3:16-21; 14:12-23; ch 18; and 33:1-9. (See also Jer. 31:27-30 and Exodus 34:6-7.) (W) Write out your reflection on what Ezekiel thought about his role as a prophet and what he thought about individual responsibility.

b) Skim through the texts on Ezekiel’s symbolic activities (Section C. of “Themes and Characteristics of Ezekiel’s Prophecy” (Handouts, p. 28). Pick out one of those symbolic acts and (W) write out your reflection on what you think the message and impact would have been on Ezekiel’s audience. c) (T) Is there a place in the “pulpit” today for dramatic actions rather than sermons?

12) Obj.: Explore the nature of the Book of Jonah.

a) Read the book of Jonah and list (N) all of the unusual features (events, style, form, etc.) that you find, particularly when you think about it in comparison with the prophetic literature.

b) (T) Is Jonah prophetic literature? Why do you think Jonah was included in the Hebrew Bible/OT? What rhetorical functions does the book seem to have?

c) (N) How would you describe the genre of the Book of Jonah?

13) Obj.: Explore how the NT writers understood and used OT prophetic literature.

Main issue: Were the prophetic messages univalent (one meaning or application only) or polyvalent (more than one meaning or application)?

Case illustration:

Read Matthew 1:18-23 and Isaiah 7:13-16 in its context of the Syro-Ephraimatic War of 734 BCE. a) (W) Reflect on the following questions and explain your response.

Does the prophetic word apply only to Isaiah’s day?

Does the prophetic word apply only to Matthew’s day?

Does it apply somehow to both times?

BIBLICAL NOTATION

General divisions:

One must become acquainted with the subdivisions of the Bible and the system of notation used to cite texts within the Bible in order to locate the references being cited. The Bible is first divided into several "books." These books are divided into numbered sections called "chapters" (except for the Book of Psalms which is composed of individually numbered psalms/songs). Each chapter (or psalm in the case of the Book of Psalms) is then subdivided into numbered "verses." A system of notation is used to refer to the chapters and verses within the biblical books. When verses are not indicated, the reference will just indicate the book and chapter number:

Genesis 12 = Book of Genesis, chapter 12.

When verses are indicated, one must pay close attention to the meaning of the punctuation used.

Colon

A colon is used to join a verse or group of verses to the chapter in which they are found:

chapt:verse

Gen 1:1 = Book of Genesis chapter 1, verse 1.

Gen 1:1-6 = Genesis chapt 1, verse 1 through verse 6.

\*(Books are often abbreviated by using the first 3-4 letters of the book name.)

Semi-colon

The semi-colon is used to indicate a major break in a series:

verse; new chapt/book

Gen 1:2; 3:4; Exod 5:6 = Genesis chapt 1, verse 2; chapt 3,

verse 4; Exodus chapt 5, verse 6.

Comma

The comma is used to indicate a minor break in a series, usually separating like units of division:

chapter, chapter or verse, verse

Gen 1:1-3, 5-7 = Genesis chapt 1, verse 1 through verse 3, and

verse 5 through verse 7.

Gen 1-3, 5-7 = Genesis chapt 1 through chapt 3 and chapt 5

through chapt 7.

Combinations

When combinations of punctuation are used, the notation system can get complex. Study the following sample and then try your hand at the test sample.

Gen 1:2-3:4 = Genesis chapt 1, verse 2 through chapt 3, verse 4.

Note the colons which indicate the joining of a chapter with its verse creating two end units in this case: (1:2) through (3:4).

Test: Gen 1:2-4; 5:6-7:8; 9





**Israelite Functionaries and Institutions**

**King:**

monarchy, national identity, term "messiah," Davidic dynasty

NT: David lineage, Messiah, messianic & political expectation of Jesus’ day

**Priest:**

cult, holiness symbol system, sacrificial system, Temple, the Law

NT: sacrificial imagery, Jesus as High Priest and atoning sacrifice,  
Sadducees, Christians as a royal priesthood

**Prophet:**

(unlike Ancient Near East: court/temple/shrine) independent "preacher"/ activist / demonstrator /conscience of the people

(NT: John the B, Jesus, apostles, prophets, “pastors,” etc.)

**Sage:**

court (school?) scribe (palace & temple)

NT: wisdom forms of Jesus' teaching, Pharisees, scribes and rabbis.

**NT assumes knowledge of these roles and institutions.**

**THE CANON OF THE OLD TESTAMENT**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **The Books of**  **The Law**  **(Torah)** | **The Books of**  **The Prophets**  **(Nebhi’im)** | **The Books of the Writings**  **(Kethubim)** | **The Books of**  **The Apocrypha**  **(Roman Cath. Canon)** |
| Genesis  Exodus  Leviticus  Numbers  Deuteronomy | *Former Prophets*  \*Joshua  \*Judges  \*1 Samuel  \*2 Samuel  \*1 Kings  \*2 Kings  *Latter Prophets*  Isaiah  Jeremiah  Ezekiel  # >  The Book of  the Twelve | Psalms  Job  Proverbs  \*Ruth  Song of Songs  Ecclesiastes  #Lamentations  \*Esther  #Daniel  \*Ezra-Nehemiah  \*1 Chronicles  \*2 Chronicles | Tobith  Judith  Wisdom of Solomon  Ecclesiasticus  Baruch  1 Maccabees  2 Maccabees  Additions to  Esther  Additions to  Daniel  Apocrypha  (East. Orthodox)  Same as above,  Less the Book of  Baruch |

**\* = “Historical” books in the Christian Canon**

**# = Included with “Prophets” in Christian Canon**

**STRUCTURE OF HEBREW CANON**

**Law/Torah/Pentateuch**

1. Traditional Domain: priests (preserved ritual laws, in late period taught Torah)
2. Literary Forms: historical narratives and laws
3. Functions: to provides Israelite foundations for:
   1. world-view (nature of God, world, humanity)
   2. origin and purpose of Israel (covenant with God)
   3. conduct (ritual, moral, social, criminal laws, etc.)

**Prophets**

1. Traditional Domain: prophets

"Former Prophets": key characters in course of Israelite history, believed to have kept records

"Latter Prophets": main characters and their messages

2. Literary Forms:

"Former Prophets": broad-sweeping historical narratives

"Latter Prophets": narratives focused on individuals; oral, poetic messages

3. Functions:

"Former Prophets":

* 1. preserve the traditions of Israel,
  2. answer questions about the course their history took, evaluating their kings and nation
  3. teach about the nature of reality

"Latter Prophets": hold people accountable to faith priorities (different emphases with each prophet)

**Writings**

1. Traditional Domain: varied, but wisdom literature associated with the sage (collected knowledge, wisdom)

2. Literary Forms: (varied) wisdom literature, hymnic lit., historical

narrative, story

3. Functions: (varied)

* 1. wisdom: teach about the nature of life and how to live skillfully
  2. hymnic: guidance and encouragement in expressions of prayer, worship and celebration
  3. narrative: (same as under "Former Prophets”)

##### PROCESS OF COMMUNICATION

##### CHART

Wisdom Literature: Literary Description

A. Rhetorical Intention

[General: Instruction or teaching of any kind. Can be encyclopedic listing of data.]

Biblical: Instruction intended to shape one's perspective and/or behavior, so that one can live skillfully (wisely) and successfully in the world. ("conative")

B. Rhetorical Strategies

Easy to remember

Applicable/relevant

Get attention and keep it

Provoke thought, challenge

Motivate

C. Literary Features and Their Impacts (for the mashal)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  |  |
| 1. Formal element:  a. two lines in relationship | invites the audience to perceive the relationship |
|  |  |
| 2. Style: |  |
| a. brief and to the point   (compact) | easy to remember |
|  |  |
| b. figurative language |  |
| 1) descriptive, graphic   (common, mundane) | evokes pictures, and feelings from   one’s experience |
| 2) hyperbole (exaggeration) | gets attention, memorable |
| 3) simile, metaphor | makes one draw comparison |
| 4) irony | often adds humor, wit |
|  |  |
| c. elliptical (uses omission) | makes one fill in the parts |
|  |  |
| d. humorous | memorable |
|  |  |
| e. stereotypical language (uses   extremes, opposites) | gets attention, simple to understand, memorable |
|  |  |
| 3. Content: |  |
| a. common life experiences | easy to relate to |
| b. wise vs. foolish | motivate |
| c. life vs. death | motivate |

Wisdom Literature

Reading Strategy for the Mashal

A. Formal Level of Analysis (how the "parts" function)

1. What kind of relationship exists between the two lines? (e.g. comparison, contrast, "building," etc.)
2. How does that relationship work? What does it cause you to do? (might try to diagram the relationship)
3. What figurative language is in the 1st line? How does it work?
4. What figurative language is in the 2nd line? How does it work?

B. Level of Specific Content (what the "parts" are)

1. What are the elements being related between lines 1 and 2?
2. What are the specific images, feeling, and thoughts which are evoked and developed through the relationship?

C. Synthesis

1. What is the intended total impact?

D. Application

1. Push "backwards" dwelling on your own experience: What kind of experience/observation/perspective do you imagine prompted this particular piece of wisdom?
2. Does this proverb invite self-assessment? How do you stand?
3. Push "forwards": In what future kinds of settings might this piece of wisdom be applicable?

**Proverbs 14:16**

A wise man fears Yahweh and shuns evil,

but a fool is hotheaded and reckless.

A. Formal level of analysis.

1. Relationship: contrast between lines.

2. Reader perceives that elements in one line balance elements

in the other as opposites. Yet, there is not a complete

balance. There are some ellipses/omissions which the

reader must fill in to complete the implied

balance.

Line 1 gives a subject with two actions. The second action

might be linked to the first as a result.

Line 2 gives a subject who is qualified by two predicate

adjectives, which describe the nature of the subject.

1. Subject [no qualifiers] does X and does Y.

2. Subject is A and B [no actions ].

3. Image in line 2 (hotheaded) makes reader visualize person

from own experience.

B. Analyze specific content.

Wise person fears Y [coolheaded and cautious] shuns evil.

| | | |

Fool not fear Y hotheaded and reckless [gets into trouble]

C. Synthesis:

This proverb, by using a contrast between balancing elements

between its two lines, causes the reader to reflect on the

opposite nature, actions and results of people who are wise and

foolish. Through the proverb's use of ellipsis, it causes the

reader to discover more characteristics about the wise and

foolish person than what are explicitly stated. As a result the

reader is invited to reflect on the concept that a wise person

fears Yahweh and as a result, in contrast to the fool, is

levelheaded and cautious, and therefore is able to stay away from

evil. The fool, who is hotheaded and reckless, does not fear

Yahweh, and, as a result, ends up getting involved in that which

is evil. Moreover, the term "hotheaded" and its counterbalance,

"coolheaded," add negative and positive emotional images to one's

picture of the fool and the sage.

D. Application:

When I wonder about the origin of this proverb, I think back

to examples in my [or others'] past when I was rash and got into

trouble.... As a result I realize I tend to be somewhat foolish

at times.... This proverb "hits home" for me in such a way that

in the future I ....

**Holiness: Purity, Sacrifices**

Intro: Both within and without the cult, Israelite life confronted the people with the reminder that, since Yahweh was holy, they were to be holy.

A. Purity System

1. People, animals, and objects were classified either: "clean/pure" or "unclean/impure" [clean/pure = lack of impurity]
2. Origin (ANE): Impurity often seems to be associated with a spiritual, demonic realm of external forces.
3. Israel: Impurity is not associated with a demonic realm, but seems to be associated with things which symbolized death or chaos.

(Yahweh was a God of order and life.) Unclean objects: out-of-place objects representing life ("spilled” semen and menstrual blood), corpses, lepers (i.e. they had the appearance of death), animals with characteristics out of place for their domain (e.g. lobsters walk in the sea), mixed realms (crossbreeding animals, mixing seed in a field).

1. Impurities were of two types: permitted and prohibited. A person could become unclean through normal and necessary actions (e.g. sexual intercourse, burying a family member). Such impurity was permitted and not a sin, but the uncleanness had to be removed before coming into contact with the holy.. Prohibited impurity arose from the mismanagement of permitted impurity or from breaches of the moral realm.

B. Holiness System (Holy things were things "set apart" for divine use.)

1. People, animals, objects, places, times were classified as either: "profane/common" or "sacred/holy" [profane = lack of holiness]

2 There were also "**gradations**" of holiness: temple architecture, temple admission and personnel, sacrificial system, sins, etc., so that some things were more holy or more impure than others.

C. Purity/Holiness Relationships

* 1. The two 'systems' were interrelated: One could be profane/common (a layperson) and be clean or unclean. Something could be holy (a sacrifice) and be clean (prior to use) or unclean (remnants of the sacrifice after use to remove impurity).
  2. In general, there was something of a scale:  
      ***unclean –- common --less holy -- more holy***   
     in which contact between non-adjacent levels was forbidden.

D. Impurity and Purification

1. Permitted impurity generally made the person or object unclean, but also the sanctuary in severe cases. The person or object was made clean again by one or more means: washing, waiting a certain length of time, offering certain sacrifices (see "purgation offering," below), or by disposal.

2. Prohibited impurity/sin polluted the dwelling place of God (land, temple) and possibly the person, and appears to stand as an impediment to communion with God. In some cases purification was possible through the same means as for permitted impurities, but usually required purgation sacrifices to cleanse God's dwelling place. In other cases purification was not possible. The guilty party might be executed, "cut off," or expelled from the land (see Leviticus 20). Continued pollution could result in all Israel being "vomited out" of the land (Lev 18:28).

E. Sacrificial System (See Leviticus 1-16)

1. Origin (ANE): The root concept seems to be to provide a gift of food for the gods. Sometimes the whole sacrifice was to be consumed by flames, going up to the gods. Other times, after a sacrifice had been "set apart" (made holy) to the gods, the sacrificer ate part, perhaps effecting communion/unity with the gods by ingesting something of the divine realm. Such actions could be a gesture of manipulation (magic) or of respect.

1. Israel: The feeding vocabulary and symbolism persisted (e.g. the altar was the "table of God"), but there was a theological level which rejected the concept of being able to feed and manipulate Yahweh. At this theological level, the sacrificial system was seen as given by Yahweh to Israel as a means of making atonement. The sacrifices were given then by Israel in obedience and as gifts of respect back to Yahweh (see Lev 17:10-14).
2. Main types:

a. Most holy sacrifices:

1) **whole burnt offering** - totally consumed by flames. Seems to be connected to making atonement for sins (Job 1:5; Lev 1:4) and/or serving as a gift which invoked the deity's presence.

2) **purgation/sin offering** - part eaten by priests. Removes/purges impurities. Offerer repents, places hand on head of animal, then it is killed. The blood (life) of the offering was applied to the cultic objects (e.g. altar) to cleanse symbolically God's dwelling place by removing the pollution. The more serious the sin, the closer the blood was brought to the Holy of Holies (e.g. for deliberate sins, blood was sprinkled in front of the "mercy seat" in the Holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement, see Lev. 16:1-19). (It does not appear that the purgation offering cleansed the person of sin; but that by atonement the offence was forgiven to the repentant sinner [Lev 4:20,26,31].) Such offerings were primarily for permitted impurity and **involuntary** sins. Only sacrifices on Day of Atonement were for **willful** sins.

3) **reparation/guilt offering** - part eaten by priests. Similar to purgation sacrifice, but has the idea of payment for a debt and can be replaced by a monetary equivalent.

4) **cereal offering** - part eaten by priests

b. Less holy sacrifice: **well-being/peace offering** - main part eaten by sacrificer and extended family as a celebrative feast. 3 subtypes: thanksgiving, vow, freewill. Mentioned frequently in Psalms.

Main sources: "Holiness," "Unclean, clean," **Anchor Bible Dictionary**, 6 vols. edited. by D.N. Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992).

**Psalms of Lament / Petition**

General characteristics:

* Tone: personal, use of 1st person
* Audience: primarily addresses God
* Mood: shifts from despair to some hope/trust
* Time: oriented in the present setting of need
* Setting: time of crisis

I. Motifs Found in Lament Psalms (NO SET STRUCTURE OR ORDER!)

A. [Introductory petition/lament]

B. Lament (describes the need)  
 Often, but not always, describes from 3 perspectives:

1. You (God)

2. I

3. They (foes)

C. Petition (asks God to do something)

Often has:

1. To take favorable notice

2. To intervene

3. Motivation

4. “Double wish”

a) against enemies (imprecation)

b) for oneself

D. Confession of Trust

(waw adversative) Look for words such as “then” “now” “but” "however" and a shift to a positive mood.

If at the end of the psalm, a Trust section often has:

1. vow of praise

2. declarative praise

II. Types of Laments\*

A. Individual Laments

3, 4?, 5, 7, 9-10, 13, 14(=53), 17, 22, 25-28, 31, 35, 39, 40:13-17(=70), 41-43, 52, 53(=14), 54-57, 59, 61, 64, 69, 70(=40:13-17), 71, 77, 86, 88, 89 (royal lament), 109, 120, 139-142

B. Penitential

6, 32, 38, 51, 102, 130, 143

1. National/Community 12, 44, 58, 60, 74, 79, 80, 83, 85, 90

94, 123, 126, 129, 137

\*Source: Bernhard W. Anderson, *Out of the Depths: The Psalms Speak for Us Today,* Westminster Press, 1983.

**Psalms of Declarative Praise (Thanksgiving)**

General characteristics:

* Tone: personal, use of 1st person
* Audience: usually switches between God and community
* Mood: consistent, joyful
* Time: in the present, the psalmist looks back to the past
* Setting: celebration of todah (thanks) offering with extended family and the poor

I. Motifs and Structure

A. Proclamation

1. States intention to praise God

and/or

2. Introductory summary

B. Report of Deliverance

1. Trial or problem

2. Psalmists cry to God: “I cried,” “He heard”

3. The deliverance: “He delivered”

C. Conclusion

1. Renewed vow of praise

(2. Descriptive praise)

(3. Instruction)

II. Types\*

A. Individual Declarative Praise

18(=2 Sam 22), 30, 32?, 34, 40:1-11, 66:13-20, 92?, 116, 118, 138

B. Community Declarative Praise

65, 67, 75, 107, 124, 136

\*Source: Bernhard W. Anderson, *Out of the Depths: The Psalms Speak for Us Today,* Westminster Press, 1983.

**Psalms of Descriptive Praise (Hymns)**

General characteristics**:**

* Tone: impersonal (often in 3rd person)
* Audience: community and God
* Mood: consistently joyful
* Time: atemporal
* Setting: often festivals and pilgrimages

I. Motifs and Structure

(Prologue: Hallelujah)

A. Call to Praise

imperative: often repeated throughout psalm

B. Cause for Praise

1. Summary Statement (often 2-fold)

a. God’s majesty: Lord of Creation

b. God’s grace: Lord of history

2. Descriptive Illustrations

C. Conclusion: many options

(1. Renewed call to praise)

(2. Exhortations)

(3. Petition)

(4. Vow of praise)

(Epilogue: Hallelujah)

II. Types\*

A. Psalms that follow this structure:

33, 66, 103 and 104 (call to praise directed to self), 105, 111, 113, 117, 135, 136 (liturgy), 146, 147

B. Hymns missing certain motifs

1. Focus on call to praise/worship: 100, 148, 149, 150 (only element is call to praise)

2. Reflection on God’s majesty and/or grace without call to praise: 8, 19, 36, 114

\*Source: Bernhard W. Anderson, *Out of the Depths: The Psalms Speak for Us Today,* Westminster Press, 1983.

**OTHER PSALM TYPES**

A. Festival Songs and Liturgies:

1. Covenant Renewal Liturgies: 50, 81

2. Royal Psalms: 2,18,21,45,72, 101, 110, 144:1-11

3. Songs of Zion: 46, 48, 76, 84, 87, 122

4. Enthronement Psalms: 24, 29, 47, 93, 95-99

B. Songs of Trust and Meditation:

1. Songs of Trust: 11, 16, 23, 27:1-6, 62, 63, 91, 121, 125, 131

2. Wisdom Psalms: 36, 37, 49, 73, 78, 112, 127, 128, 133, Prov. 8, Eccl. 14:20-15:10

3. Torah Psalms: 1, 19:1-14

C. Other:

1. Liturgies: 15, 68, 82, 115, 134

2. Mixed Types: 108

\*Source: Bernhard W. Anderson, *Out of the Depths: The Psalms Speak for Us Today,* Westminster Press, 1983.

PSALM 79

(Communal Lament/Petition)

Setting: Destruction of Jerusalem c. 586 BCE

I. Introductory lament 1-5

A. Enemy: has done this against You 1-3

B. We: have become a reproach 4

C. You: how long angry? 5

II. Petition with motivation 6-12

A. Against enemy; reason: do not know You 6-7

B. For selves; need: compassion, help, forgiveness 8-9

C. Against enemy; reason: dishonor God 10

D. For selves: doomed without You 11

E. Against enemy; reason: reproach You 12

III. Expression of trust: vow of praise 13

"Then/now/but" (waw adversative) note: mood shift

"We will give testimony (thanks/praise) forever."

Psalm 113

(Descriptive Praise)

(abbreviated outline)

Setting: communal, sung at all 3 main festivals, newmoon, and dedication of the temple

I. Call to Praise, 1-3

A. Whom: Yahweh; By whom: servants, 1 (3-fold rep.)

B. Whom: Yahweh; When and Where, 2-3 [note chiasm]

a) 1. Praise name of Yahweh

b) 2. From now to the end [merism = always]

b) 3. From place sun rises to sets [= everywhere]

a) 4. Praise name of Yahweh

II. Cause for Praise, 4-9b

A. Yahweh is over all (sovereign), 4-6

B. Yahweh intervenes (gracious), 7-9b

III. Concluding Call to Praise, 9c

PSALM 116

(Individual Thanksgiving)

Setting involves persecution (11) and perhaps illness

I. Proclamation and Summary 1-2 (chiastic structure)

A. Response: love Yahweh, w/reason: heard me 1

B. Reason: listened to me, w/response: will call on Yah 2  
(leans down: grace) (repeated motif: 4a, 13b, 17b)

II. Report (w/Descriptive Praise) 3-11

A. Trial: near "death," overcome w/sorrow 3  
(death as a hunter, dragging one into Sheol)

B. Cry to Yahweh 4

C. Deliverance (w/descriptive praise) 5-11

1. Affirmation to others w/report of deliverance 5-6

a. General affirmation, principle derived from   
 deliverance: grace of Yah 5

b. Specific affirmation w/mention of deliverance 6

2. Affirmation to self: consolation based on deliver. 7

3. Affirmation to Yah: because delivered, will live 8-9

4. Continued reflection on deliverance 10-11  
 "I [still] believed [even] when afflicted and   
 dismayed."

III. Conclusion 12-19

A. Vow of Praise 12-14  
("cup of salvation" might be drink offering of Num 15:10)  
(vows included sacrifice of thanksgiving [vs 17])

B. Affirmation and commitment 15-16

1. Realizes his worth to Yah 15

2. Moved to commitment of self to Yah 16

C. Vow of Praise repeated 17-19

**BALANCED THOUGHT STRUCTURE / PARALLELISM**

Hebrew composition is characterized by a paratactic ("touch alongside") structure. This means that units of meaning are placed side-by-side to give a greater meaning (generally) to the whole. This device is used in the construction of phrases and clauses as well as in relating clauses to clauses and narrative units to narrative units. For example: In the English sentence, "Yahweh is the almighty one," English must supply the verb "is" in order to link the subject, "Yahweh," with the predicate nominative, "the almighty one." In Hebrew this linking is achieved just by setting the units side-by-side: "Yahweh"-"the almighty one."

When reading Hebrew composition one should look for units of meaning that are placed together in some sort of balance, where the units are "playing off" each other and creating a greater impact. The more balancing structures a text has the more "poetic" it feels. We see this kind of balanced structuring taking place in the composition of the two-line proverb. In these cases the two lines stand in some kind of relationship to one another, and one or more elements in the first line frequently have a balancing component in the second line:

Lazy hands make a man poor,

but diligent hands bring wealth. (Proverbs 10:4)

Not only do the two lines "play off" each other by standing in contrast (antithesis), but also individual units in each line balance each other. (It is this balancing which reveals the opposition between the lines.)"Lazy hands" balances, and stands in contrast to "diligent hands." "Make a man poor" plays off "bring wealth."

The point of diagramming the balanced structures (usually called "parallelism") is so that after having identified the balanced units, one can reflect on how they interact with each other to produce a greater impact. Correctly "reading" the balanced structures was second nature for the Hebrews. It was part of their language and culture. The contemporary reader, however, often overlooks or fails to register the intended impact of these constructions. Diagramming is simply a device to cause one to read more closely.

When diagramming, you must first view the larger unit and then examine the parts. In the hymnic literature one generally finds two or sometimes three lines in balance (parallel). If the first line consists of 8 words, it is generally fruitless to diagram it into 8 parts and then look at the second line expecting to find 8 corresponding entities. Try to observe the interplay of the parts within the whole. Look for the interplay of the larger units first: how one whole clause balances the second clause. Then look for more interplay among each of the parts: subject versus subject, predicate vs. predicate, phrase vs. phrase, etc. For example:

O God, by Your name save me,

And by Your power vindicate me. (Psalm 54:1)

Note how the two clauses balance each other, appearing to be almost synonymous (saying the same thing). Then note that the balance is there because there is a correspondence between the smaller units: the predicates, "save me" and "vindicate me;" the phrases, "by your name" and "by your power." Upon further reflection it should become apparent that the address, "O God," is implicitly carried over to the second line; the person is still crying out to God. [This kind of ellipsis (omission) is also frequently found in proverbs. The use of a unit of thought in the first line of two parallel lines leads one to anticipate a balancing unit in the second.] These observations lead to the following diagram:

(A) O God | (B) by Your name | (C) save me,

[(A) O God] | (B) by Your power | (C) vindicate me!

The identification of the above balanced structure then leads to further observations. Together the lines intensify the psalmist's plea, making it more dramatic. Plus, the two lines are not saying quite the same thing. "Vindicate" spells out more specifically the kind of "salvation" for which the psalmist is crying out. Calling on the "name" of God is to call for God's "power." [In the Hebrew culture one's name stands for one's character. The aspect of God's character the psalmist wants to see is God's power.]

Rest of Psalm 54:

O God, | hear | my prayer, A B C

|Give ear| to the words of my mouth! [A] B C

For strangers | have arisen against me, A B

And terrifying ones| seek my life; A B

Men who do not set God before them. A

Behold, God [is] | the One who helps | me, A B C

My Lord [is] | the One who upholds| my life. A B C

May He return evil | to those lurking for me, A B

In Your faithfulness | bring to an end | them. C A B

With a free-will offering | I will sacrifice to You, A B

I will thank Your name, Yahweh, | because [it is] good. B C

Because| from every trouble | You have delivered me, A B C

And against my enemies| my eye has gloated. . [A] B C

PSALM 54

O God, by Your name save me,

And by Your power vindicate me!

O God, hear my prayer,

Give ear to the words of my mouth!

For strangers have arisen against me,

And terrifying ones seek my life;

Men who do not set God before them.

Behold, God [is] the One who helps me,

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May He return evil to those lurking for me,

In Your faithfulness bring to an end them.

With a free-will offering I will sacrifice to You,

I will thank Your name, Yahweh, because [it is] good.

Because from every trouble You have delivered me,

And against my enemies my eye has gloated.

Psalm 24

Of David, A psalm.

1) To Yahweh belongs the earth and its fullness,

the world and all who dwell in it;

2) for He founded it upon the seas

and established it upon the rivers.

3) Who may ascend the mountain of Yahweh

and who may stand in His holy place?

4) One innocent of hands

and one pure of heart;

one who does not lift up his soul to falseness

and one who does not swear deceitfully.

5) He receives blessing from Yahweh

and vindication from the God of his salvation.

6) Such is the generation of those seeking Him;

those seeking Your face are Jacob.

7) Lift up your heads, O gates,

and lift yourselves up, O ancient doors,

so that the glorious King may enter!

8) Who is the glorious King?

Yahweh, powerful and mighty;

Yahweh, mighty in battle!

9) Lift up your heads, O gates,

and lift up, O ancient doors,

so that the glorious King may enter!

10) Who is this glorious King?

Yahweh of hosts;

He is the glorious King!

**Literary Description**

A. Rhetorical Intention

Almost all serve a cultic function (expression of faith, worship).

At least 2/3 of the psalms (most of the remaining 1/3 as well) have one or more of the following primary and secondary intentions:

* Petition God: want to get God to act.
* Thank God for something specific God has done and get community to respond in faith (teach, motivate, etc.)
* Praise God in general, describing God's nature and get community to respond in faith (teach, motivate, etc.)

B. Rhetorical Strategies (see C as well)

* Get attention of God and/or community
* Be expressive of one's feelings/needs
* Applicable/relevant for the needs of others
* Motivate God or community to respond
* Provoke spiritual, theological reflection and commitment
* Inspire
* Be memorable

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| C. Literary Features General | Rhetorical Strategy / Impact |
| 1. General |  |
| a) Poetic: | memorable, "powerful" |
| 1) parallelism (balanced   thought structures)  2) figurative language   (e.g. hyperbole, simile,  metaphor, merism,   personification, etc.  3) graphic, picturesque   language  4) densely packed | creates "rhythm," provokes   reflection on relationship  among units of thought  evokes feelings, implies   various relationships, etc.   according to the type of   figure  evokes images, feelings,   concepts  provokes greater focus |
| b) "Lofty" (theological) | inspire |
| c) Intensely personal language   (testimonial; bold, honest,   emotional, emphatic) | motivate God; provoke empathy,  identification, trust |
| d) Direct address | get attention, make personal |
| e) Questions and answers  (etc.) | prompt reflection, add   emphasis |
| 2. Typological and General  a) shifts in direct address  b) mood shifts (joy, pain, confidence, etc.)  c) thematic shifts (petition, lament, trust, instruction,  attributes of God, etc.)  d) temporal orientation (i.e. reflecting on present, past, or   future) | |

READING STRATEGY

Analyze (Many of the "steps" are not sequential, but simultaneous.)

1. Identify type of psalm.
2. Seek to recover historical and cultic setting.
3. Outline the general structure.
   1. What are the main sections and their motifs?
   2. What is the connection/flow of thought among sections?
4. Identify the flow of thought and topics within each section.
5. Identify/diagram the structural patterns among the verses. What impact are these structures meant to have?
6. Identify/diagram the parallelism (balanced structures) within verses. What are the relationships between the balanced elements?
7. Identify the figures of speech and explore how each one "works."
8. Focus on the graphic language and ask what it is meant to evoke.
9. Look for allusions to other OT events and texts. What would this relationship indicate?
10. If the title/superscription gives a setting (e.g. in the life of David), look up that event and explore what this perspective would add to the themes and mood of the psalm.

Synthesize

1. What is/are the psalmist's intention/s?
2. What is the psalmist's situation (personally, cultically)?
3. What is the psalmist feeling and experiencing?
4. What is/are the psalmist's thesis/theses?

Application

1. What is the psalmist teaching about the God-humanity relationship and/or about how life works?
2. Can I identify or empathize with the psalmist's situation and/or feelings?
3. Can/should this psalm provide a model for me when speaking to God or others about God?

I.Historical Context of the Psalms

1. Relationship to ANE literature

1. Similar:

2. Different:

***B. Authorship/Origin***

1. Cannot be certain titles indicate authorship

2. Some very probably from David

3. Some probably from Levitical-priest musicians

4. Debate about personal vs. cultic origin

1. ***Setting of transmission/employment***

1. Transmission and preservation:

2. Employment:

D. Collection/Preservation

Probably the music guilds of the Levitical-priests

E. Role of the priest

1. Teach the Law

2. Guide and guard the cultic rituals: sacrifices, worship

II. Psalms outside the Psalter (particularly in prophets)

1. Ex.15:1-18, 20-21, (Song of the Sea).
2. Dt.32:1-43, (Song of Moses).
3. Jdg.5:1-31, (Song of Deborah).
4. 1 Sam.2:1-10, (Song of Hannah).
5. 2 Sam.22:2-51, (Psalm of David, also Ps. 18).
6. Isa.12:4-6, (Thanksgiving).
7. Isa.39-9-20, (Song of Hezehiah).
8. Isa.42:10-12, 52:1-10.
9. Hab.3:2-19, (Hymn of Praise).
10. Jonah 2:1-9, (Johan’s Prayer from the Belly of the Fish).
11. Job 5:8-16, 9:10-14, 12:7-10, 13-25, (Hymns) 3:3-12, 13-19, 20-16, 7:1-10, 12-21, 9:25-31, 10:1-22, (Laments.)
12. Jer. 15:15-18, 17:14-18, 18:9-23, (Laments) also Lam. Cns. 3,5.

\*Read Jonah 2:2-9

What type of psalm is this?

III. Growth of the Psalter

1. 1st Stage:
2. 2nd Stage:
3. 3rd Stage:

Collections of Psalms Within Present Psalter

1. Davidic Collection, 3-41.
2. Korah Musical Guild, 42-49.
3. Davidic Collection, 51-72.
4. Asaph Musical Guild, 73-78, Ps. 50.
5. Various Musical Guilds, 84-89.
6. Various Other Collections, 90-150, including
7. Psalms of Yahweh’s Kingship, 93-99.
8. Psalms of Pilgrimage, 120-134.
9. Halellujiah 104-106, 111-113, 135, 146, 150.

D. 4th Stage:

*Read Pss 14 and 53. What do you observe?*

God/Elohim Lord/Yahweh

Book I: Psalms 1-41. 15 272

Concluding Doxology, 41:13.

Book II: Psalms 42-72. 164 30

Concluding Doxology, 72:18-19.

Book III: Psalms 73-89.

Concluding Doxology, 89:52.

14 370

Book IV: Psalms 90-106.

Concluding Doxology, 106:48.

Book V: Psalms 107-150.

Concluding Doxology for Entire Psalter, Psalm 150.

Book II is called the “Elohistic Psalter”

Note:

Pss. 14 = 53

40:13-17 = 50

57:7-11 + 60:5-12 = 108

E. 5th Stage:

Pss 1-2 – introduction

Pss 145-50 – finale

(3-year lectionary cycle, 4 per Sabbath?)

IV. Titles/Superscriptions (all but 24)

1. 6 types of information:
2. linked to a person with lamed (to, for, by)
3. technical names of psalm types
4. musical terms
5. melody indicators
6. liturgical indicators
7. historical connection to life of David

#1 (above) linked to:

Moses: Ps 90

David: 73 psalms

Asaph: Pss 50, 73-83

Solomon: Pss 72, 127

Heman: Ps 88

Ethan: Ps 89

1. Evaluation:

V. Theological Basis and/or Message

Distinct for each psalm, but some points in common:

A. Petitions:

1.

2.

B. Thanksgiving:

1.

2.

3.

1. Hymns:

1.

2.

VI. Principles for Application:

1. For personal and corporate prayer and worship.

Ask: How can this psalm serve as a model or medium for my needs and my feelings of worship?

Caution: Imprecations not necessarily appropriate.

1. For theological reflection.

Invite audience empathetically to live in the experiences of need, trust, deliverance and praise, and to meditate on the nature of God which is revealed.

1. Can I identify or empathize with the psalmist's situation and feelings?
2. What is the psalmist teaching about the God-human relationship and about how life works?
3. Can/should this psalm provide a model when speaking to God or to others about God?

Caution: Not the same level as explicitly taught doctrine.

THEMES AND CHARACTERISTICS OF EZEKIEL’S PROPHECY

(source: Dr. Delbert Burkett)

A. The Glory of Yahweh

1. Ezekiel’s initial vision of the glory: ch. 1

2. Departure of the glory: ch. 10; 11:22-25

3. Return of the glory: 43:1-5

B. Ezekiel as Watchman: 3:16-21; 33:1-9

C. Prophetic Symbolism

1. Eating the scroll: 2:1-3:3,10

2. Confinement and dumbness: 3:22-27; 24:25-27; 33:21-23

3. Sign of the Siege: ch. 4

4. Sign of the hair: 5:1-4

5. Sign of the exile’s baggage: 12:1-16

6. Sign of eating and drinking with trembling: 12:17-20

7. Sign of the unmourned wife: 24:15-27

8. Sign of the two sticks: 37:15-28

D. Allegories and Metaphors

1. Analogy of the vine: ch. 15

2. The harlotry of Jerusalem: ch. 16

3. Allegory of the eagles and the cedar: ch. 17

4. The harlotry of Oholah and Oholibah: ch. 23

5. Allegory of the pot: 24:1-14

6. Tyre as a ship: ch. 27

7. Pharaoh as a sea-serpent: 29:1-5; 32:1-8

8. Egypt as a cedar: ch. 31

E. Message of Individual Responsibility

(compare with Jer 31:27-30 and contrast with Exodus 34:6-7)

1. Individual salvation: 14:12-23

2. Individual judgment: ch. 18

F. Concerning the Nations

1. Prince and king of Tyre: 28:1-19

2. Correction of prophecy: 26:7-14; 29:17-21

3. Gog and Magog: chs. 38-39

G. Prophecies of Restoration

1. New shepherd: ch. 34

2. New heart and spirit: 36:22-32 (see 11:17-21)

3. Resurrection of dry bones: 37:1-14

4. Reunion of Israel and Judah: 37:15-28

5. New Temple: chs. 40-48

MESSAGES OF THE PROPHETS

**Pre-Exilic**

* God is active in and sovereign over history.
* God's ultimate rule would be established in the distant future.
* Called people to faithfulness, away from idolatry.
* Called people to righteous behavior (vs. meaningless ritual).
* "Day of the LORD" will bring judgment on Israel, not just the nations.
* Called leaders (kings, priest, judges) into accountability.
* Called nation to depend on strength of God, not themselves or other nations.
* Judgment was coming unless there was repentance; finally, judgment was inevitable.
* Zion and the Temple were not invulnerable, God would abandon them in judgment.

**Exilic**

* God was still with the nation, even in exile.
* Called people to avoid idolatry and practice righteousness.
* Promise of restoration, new covenant, nations would recognize God.

**Post-Exilic**

* Called people and leaders to make God their priority, establish the cultic forms of worship and tithe.
* Assured people that God was working through their current leaders despite their lack of independence.
* Promise of restoration and ultimate rule of God.

**APOCALYPTIC LITERATURE: DANIEL**

**Genre**: apocalyptic, with narratives

**Nature of Apocalyptic**:

Setting: "underground" literature of oppressed people (primarily Jewish) for whom symbolic language is a "code" not to be understood by oppressors.

Form: narrated accounts of visions and dreams, often with angelic interpretation; heavy use of symbolism: numbers and strange animals, many in fantasy forms rather than realistic forms.

Function: set present struggle in light of cosmic, spiritual perspective and in light of ultimate victorious outcome, in order to guide and encourage audience to be faithful. (Daniel 3:16-18)

Main theses: God is in control of history; conditions will not improve in this age; one is to live faithfully until God ushers in Age to Come / Kingdom of God.

**Interpretive Approaches to Book of Daniel [Book of Revelation]**:

* **Preterist**: focuses on original historical setting, what the text meant. **Weakness**: ignores what text "means" to community of faith.
* **Historicist**: interprets as forecast of course of history (up to time of interpreter). **Weakness**: very subjective, little agreement, tends to ignore what text meant.
* **Futurist**: reads as a guidebook for events yet to come. **Weakness**: ignores what text meant and what it means to contemporary community.
* **Idealist**: interprets as a timeless expression of basic principles regarding the activities of God and the community of faith. **Weakness**: sees no ultimate consummation of Kingdom of God in history.

**Duke: Suggested "Blended" Approach: Typologico-historical**:

1. Start with preterist perspective to ground symbolic language in its original setting, while
2. recognizing historicist perspective that text speaks of a real historical consummation of Kingdom of God, the pattern of which,
3. applies typologically (idealist) to the ongoing experiences of the community of faith.

**Suggested Reading Tips/Strategies**:

1. Read for **overall story line and message** of the whole work.
2. Read each vision looking for the **impact of the whole**. Do not focus on and allegorize all of the details.
3. Explore **allusions to other OT texts** to get some control over the symbols and theological perspective.
4. Look for **internal interpretation** of images (e.g. by angelic interpreters).
5. Recognize **distinction between** "*oppression*," which is the experience of the community of faith and "*wrath*," which is judgment on the opponents of God.
6. Identify how events fit **typologically** with the current setting of the community of faith and look for the book's message for such situations today, but exercise great caution about reading as blueprint for specific historical events.

Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons ca. 139-200, said:

[In regard to using the number 666 in the Book of Revelation to predict the person of the Antichrist]

It is therefore more certain, and less hazardous, to await the fulfillment of the prophecy, than to be making surmises, and casting about for any names that may present themselves, inasmuch as many names can be found possessing the number mentioned; and the same question will, after all, remain unsolved.

*Against Heresies*, Book V. in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, reprinted 1973), vol. 1, xxx. 3, p.559.