

AUGUST 8-14, 2022

Psalms 1–2; 8; 19–33; 40; 46

“THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD”

Summary: Psalm 1. *Blessed are the righteous—The ungodly will perish.*

Psalm 2. *A messianic psalm—The heathen will rage against the Lord’s anointed—The Lord speaks of His Son, whom He has begotten.*

Psalm 8. *A messianic psalm of David—He says that babes and children praise the Lord—He asks, What is man, that Thou art mindful of him?*

Psalm 19. *David testifies, The heavens declare the glory of God, the law of the Lord is perfect, and the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.*

Psalm 20. *David prays that the Lord will hear in time of trouble—The Lord saves His anointed.*

Psalm 21. *A messianic psalm of David—He tells of the glory of the great King—The King will triumph over all His enemies—Their evil designs will fail.*

Psalm 22. *A messianic psalm of David—He foretells events in the Messiah’s life—The Messiah will say, My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?—They will pierce His hands and feet—He will yet govern among all nations.*

Psalm 23. *David declares, The Lord is my shepherd.*

Psalm 24. *David testifies, The earth is the Lord’s and the fulness thereof, he who has clean hands and a pure heart will ascend unto the hill of the Lord, and the Lord of Hosts is the King of Glory.*

Psalm 25. *David pleads for truth and asks for pardon—Mercy and truth are for those who keep the commandments.*

Psalm 26. *David says that he has walked in integrity and obedience—He loves the Lord’s house.*

Psalm 27. *David says, The Lord is my light and my salvation—He desires to dwell in the house of the Lord forever—He counsels, Wait on the Lord and be of good courage.*

Psalm 28. *David pleads with the Lord to hear his voice and grant his petitions—David prays, Save Thy people and bless Thine inheritance.*

Psalm 29. *David counsels, Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness—David sets forth the wonder and power of the voice of the Lord.*

Psalm 30. *David sings praises and gives thanks to the Lord—David pleads for mercy.*

Psalm 31. *David trusts in the Lord and rejoices in His mercy—Speaking as the Messiah he says, Into Thine hand I commit my spirit—He counsels, O love the Lord, all ye His Saints, for the Lord preserves the faithful.*

Psalm 32. *David says, Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputes not iniquity—David acknowledges his sin—He recommends that the righteous be glad in the Lord and rejoice.*

Psalm 33. *Rejoice in the Lord—Sing unto Him a new song—He loves righteousness and judgment—Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord.*

Psalm 40. *A messianic psalm of David—The Messiah will come and preach righteousness—He will declare salvation—The righteous will say, The Lord be magnified.*

Psalm 46. *God is our refuge and strength—He dwells in His city, does marvelous things, and says, Be still and know that I am God.*

Supplemental Jewish and Holy Land Insights

How significant are the Psalms compared to other Bible books?

No book of the Old

Testament is more Messianic in its inner sense or more fully attested as such by the use made of it than the Psalms. Out of a total of 283 direct citations from the Old Testament and 116 in the New Testament, have been counted from this one book. Much of Christianity by its preference for the Psalms reverses the custom of the Synagogue, which judged the psalmists' inspiration inferior to that of the prophets, and set Moses on high above them all, so that no prophet might teach any new thing but only what was implicitly contained in the law.

Who authored many of the Psalms?

Seventy-three of the psalms are ascribed to David, and so it was natural that the whole collection should be referred to as his, and that this convenient way of speaking should give rise in time to the popular belief that "the sweet psalmist of Israel" himself wrote all the so-called Psalms of David. **(Bible Dictionary)** Reading the scriptures is a very important part of Jewish Life. There are normally three days a week when the first five

books of the Bible, the Torah, known as the Law, are read. Every congregation, whether Orthodox, Conservative or Reform, reads the same Torah section on Mondays, Thursdays, and Sabbaths (Saturdays). There are additional readings on High Days such as Yom Kippur, Passover, Sukkoth, Rosh Hannah, Shavuot, etc. In addition to reading the *Torah* segments, additional readings from the *Neviim*, the Prophets, and the *Ketuvim*, their writings, are added. Over the years, these additional readings have been added to assist in explaining the *Torah* portion being read. Approximately 150 B.C., the foreign occupying government of the Greeks and Syrians forbade the Jews to read the Torah, so they began reading the Psalms, part of the *Ketuvim*, instead. Nowadays, selected Psalms and other writings of the Old Testament constitute a regular part of daily Jewish reading. "Traditionally, authorship of the book of Psalms has been ascribed to King David. 73 of the 150 Psalms begin with the superscription, le-David, although the precise connotation of this term is uncertain; it could mean "concerning David" or "a dedication to David" and not necessarily "by David." Furthermore, of the remaining Psalms, many bear superscriptions relating them

to ten other figures of early Israelite history, ranging from Adam to Moses. However, the association of King David with Psalms rests on strong, ancient traditions. Moreover, in other books of the Bible David appears as a skillful player on the lyre, as an inventor of musical instruments and as a composer of dirges, and is described in one place as the “sweet singer of Israel.” “Some evidence further suggests that King David organized guilds of Psalm singers in the Tabernacle (**I Chronicles 6:16**), which were certainly functioning during the period of the First Temple. The fact that the names of some of these groups (the “*Korahites*” and the “*Asaphites*”) appear in the superscription of various psalms, indicate their strong involvement in the early public worship of Israel. Bible critics today (unlike those of 100 years ago) almost all agree that the Psalms represent a very early form of Israelite literature, bearing no Hellenistic influences and thus predating, at the very latest, early Second Temple times.” (**Encyclopedia Judaica Jr**)

What prompts Jews and others to “move” or “sway” as they pray?

It should be noted that reading scriptures and praying are to be done in a singing or chanting way to differentiate the common everyday sounds of the mouth with the Word of the Lord or words to the Lord. A pattern of singing has developed that puts emphasis on particular syllables and words. When a boy has a *Bar Mitzvah*, he is accompanied by a person who may prompt him to sing his words correctly while making sure that his clothing, cap, robe, sash, etc. is worn correctly. Singing is a festive part of many Jewish occasions. Many times, the Eastern Jews (*Sephardic*) and Western Jews (*Ashkenazi*) sing the same lyrics with their own ethnic music and intonation.

How did the Psalms become a reminder of the “Law?”

“The Psalter, as the work is often called in English, contains 150 Psalm-chapters, divided into five books, each of which, except the last, concludes with a doxology, or formulaic hymn of praise to God. This division seems to represent successive stages in the composition of the work as a whole, in such a way that the final crystallized form of 150 reflects a cumulative edition of what were once separate collections. The five-fold arrangement was apparently chosen in conscious duplication of the five books of the Pentateuch. It may have been the result of the reading of the Psalms week by week in association with the Torah readings.” (**Encyclopedia Judaica Jr**) When the Selucid Empire (Greeks/Syrians) forbade Jews from reading the *Torah* (the Law), the Jews began a pattern of reading that reminded them of the “law.”

How did these writings become known as the Psalms?

“PSALMS—the first book of the *Ketuvim* (writings) section of the Bible, constituting an anthology of lyric poems universally recognized as the foremost collection of Hebrew religious poetry. The English name “Psalms” is derived from the Greek word for a “song sung to a stringed instrument” while the Hebrew name, *Tehillim*, is derived from the root meaning praise and glorification. The Hebrew title characterizes the book in terms of its essential contents—a collection of profoundly religious poems of praise to God—while the English title characterizes it in terms of its form: lyric poems designed for elaborate musical accompaniment.” “The Psalter contains an unusual variety and complexity of literary forms, including hymns, laments, prayers of thanksgiving and didactic poems of various sorts. Within it are to be found both deeply personal lyrics, reflecting the solitary confrontation of the individual with God, and poems written from the perspective of the community as

a whole, reflecting the combined concerns of all Israel. The Psalms thus reflect a large array of specific situations in the life of the individual and the community and offer profoundly moving and deeply religious formulations for those seeking religious expression. It is for this reason that the Psalms has become the best-known and most widely-read portion of the Bible, not only in the original Hebrew but in all the many languages into which the Bible has been translated.”

([Encyclopedia Judaica Jr](#))

How autonomous has the book of Psalms become

“The great popularity of the Psalms can be judged from the fact that most large prayer books contain the Psalms in their entirety, and that special *hevrot tehillim*, societies for the recitation of Psalms, exist in many parts of the world. In Jerusalem, two separate groups recite all of the Psalms daily at the Western Wall.” “In the liturgy, readings from the Bible play a prominent role. The Shema as well as the Song of Moses after the crossing of the Red Sea are central to the daily morning service, and the prayers are studded with various selections from the Book of Psalms as well as verses from other Books.” ([Encyclopedia Judaica Jr](#)).

How can ancient and present music relate to God and Mankind?

The probability that the sacredness of worship music prevented it from being

written is to be considered. “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.” ([Colossians 3:16](#)) Biblical mention refers to music at the dedication of the temple in Solomon’s day. After Jesus and the Twelve had partaken of the last supper, they sang a hymn. ([Mark 14:26](#)) Moroni also tells us that in church meetings, “as the power of the Holy Ghost led them whether to preach, ... or to sing, even so it was done.” ([Moroni. 6:9.](#)) The scriptures relate of songs of the redemption of Zion: “Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: . . . break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem: for the Lord hath comforted his people.” ([Isaiah. 52:8–9.](#)) “For the Lord shall comfort Zion: ... joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody.” “Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall . . . come with singing unto Zion.” ([Isaiah. 51:3, 11](#)) And in that day the saints “shall lift up their voice, and with the voice together sing the new song, saying: “The Lord hath brought again Zion; The Lord hath redeemed his people, Israel.” ([Doctrine and Covenants 84:98–99](#))