

# Dr. Ted Hildebrandt, Praise of God in Book II of the Psalter, Session 1, Canonical Context of Book II Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide Quiz, and 5) FAQs

## 1. Abstract of Hildebrandt, Praise of God in Book II of the Psalter, Session 1, Canonical Context of Book II, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. Ted Hildebrandt's lecture explores the canonical context of Book Two of the Psalter (Psalms 42-72), focusing on its unique characteristics and flow as a distinct unit within the larger book. The lecture will examine the three main characters - the king, the psalmist, and the enemy - as they are used in this section of the Bible. He highlights Book Two's structure, noting its division into smaller collections and its distinctive "Elohistic" character, which is the increased use of the name Elohim (God) instead of Yahweh (Lord). Hildebrandt identifies a narrative progression from lament to praise within Book Two, and he notes that the lecture will examine the praises, the call to praise, the cause to praise, and the place of praise in the book of Psalms. The lecture provides an overview of the psalms, showing the unique characteristics of the book and a plan for further exploration in later sessions.

**2. 16 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of  
Dr. Hildebrandt, Session 1 – Double click icon to play in  
Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL]  
Site and click the audio podcast link there (Old Testament →  
Psalms & Wisdom → Psalms).**



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### 3. Briefing Document: Hildebrandt, Praise of God in Book II of the Psalter, Session 1, Canonical Context of Book II

Okay, here is a detailed briefing document summarizing the key themes and ideas from the provided source, "Hildebrandt\_PraiseInBkII\_EN\_Session01\_CanonicalContext.pdf":

#### **Briefing Document: Canonical Context of Book Two of the Psalter**

**Overview:** This document summarizes Dr. Ted Hildebrandt's first session on the praise of God in Book Two of the Psalter (Psalms 42-72). This session focuses on the canonical context of this section within the larger book of Psalms. Hildebrandt explores the structure, literary devices, and unique characteristics of Book Two, setting the stage for future discussions on the themes of praise, lament, and the key characters present within these Psalms.

#### **Key Themes and Ideas:**

##### **1. Psalms as "Praises" (Tehillim):**

- The Hebrew title for the book of Psalms is "Tehillim," meaning "praises."
- This word is derived from the root "Halel," familiar from "Hallelujah" (praise Yah/the Lord).
- The entire book is fundamentally about praising God.

##### **1. Five-Book Structure and Parallel to the Torah:**

- The book of Psalms is divided into five books, mirroring the five books of the Torah (Pentateuch).
- Each book concludes with markers of praise and a double "Amen," indicating the end of a unit.
- **Book One:** Psalms 1-41 (largely Davidic) - closes with "Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel from everlasting to everlasting. Amen and Amen." (Psalm 41:13)
- **Book Two:** Psalms 42-72 (second Davidic collection, sons of Korah, and Solomon at the end) closes with "Praise be to the Lord God, the God of Israel who alone does marvelous deeds. Praise be to his glorious name forever. May the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen and Amen. This concludes the prayers of David, son of Jesse." (Psalm 72:18-20)

- **Book Three:** Psalms 73-89 - closes with "Praise be the Lord forever. Amen and Amen." (Psalm 89:52)
- **Book Four:** Psalms 90-106 - closes with "Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel from everlasting to everlasting. Let all the people say, Amen. Praise the Lord." (Psalm 106:48)
- **Book Five:** Psalms 107-150 - ends with "Praise the Lord"/Hallelujah (Psalm 150:6)
- This five-book structure was developed over a 400-year period, from the time of David (1000 BC) to the post-exilic period (after 586 BC).

#### 1. **Focus on Book Two (Psalms 42-72):**

- This mini-series will primarily examine the worship of God specifically in Book Two.
- Book Two has more diversity than Book One, which is largely Davidic.
- Contains the second Davidic collection (Psalms 51-70).
- Includes Psalms of the Sons of Korah (42-49).
- Concludes with a psalm by King Solomon (Psalm 72).
- Has connections to 1 Kings 1-3, drawing parallel between David's feebleness at the end of his life and his son Solomon's ascension to the throne.

#### 1. **Psalms Pairs and Orphan Psalms:**

- Psalms 42 and 43 form a pair, linked by a recurring refrain: "Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God." (found in Psalm 42:5, 11 and 43:5).
- Psalm 43 is an "orphan psalm" (lacking a title).
- This psalm pairing is similar to the pairs found in Psalms 1-2 and 9-10.

#### 1. **Maskil Psalms:**

- Psalms 42-45 are labeled "Maskils," meaning instructional psalms.
- Psalms 52-55 are also identified as Maskils.

#### 1. **The Elohistic Psalter:**

- Psalms 42-83 are called the "Elohistic Psalter" due to the infrequent use of the divine name Yahweh and a higher usage of Elohim.

- Yahweh is translated LORD, and Elohim is translated God.
- In Book Two, Elohim appears much more frequently than Yahweh (131 to 27), contrasting with the rest of the Psalter where Yahweh is favored (approximately 5:1).
- Books One, Four and Five favor Yahweh six to one, whereas Books Two and Three favor Elohim six to one.
- Hildebrandt uses a comparison of Psalm 14 (Book One) and Psalm 53 (Book Two) to demonstrate how the divine names change in parallel verses, where "Lord/Yahweh" is switched to "God/Elohim" in the Elohistic Psalter.
- "The *Lord* looks down from heaven..." (Psalm 14:2) becomes "God looks down from heaven..." (Psalm 53:2).
- "...who do not call on the *Lord*?" (Psalm 14:4) becomes "...who do not call on *God*?" (Psalm 53:4).
- "...when the *Lord* restores the fortress..." (Psalm 14:7) becomes "...when *God* restores the fortunes..." (Psalm 53:6)

#### 1. Flow of Book Two:

- **Introduction (Psalms 42-43):** Expresses a longing for God, similar to a deer panting for water, and struggles with the question "Where is your God?" The Psalmist yearns to return to the altar in the temple.
- **Shift to Communal Lament (Psalm 44):** Moves from individual lament (first-person singular) to communal lament (first-person plural), expressing the defeat of God's people and the apparent absence of divine support.
- **Marriage of the King (Psalm 45):** Celebrates the marriage of the king.
- **Zion (Psalms 46-48, continuing beyond):** Presents Zion as the dwelling place of God, the "holy place where the Most High dwells". It shifts the focus from "where is your God" to "God is in Zion."
- God's rule extends beyond Zion to all nations (Psalm 47).
- **Wisdom and Sacrifice (Psalms 49-51):** Explores the futility of wealth and returns to the theme of Zion.
- Psalm 50 highlights God's self-sufficiency, while Psalm 51 details David's confession and plea for a broken heart and restored relationship.

- The connection of Zion is present at the end of Psalm 51, calling for the restoration of Jerusalem.
  - **Sin and the Wicked (Psalms 52-53):** Depicts the wickedness of those who trust in wealth and the fool who denies God (reiterating the theme from Psalms 14 and 53).
  - **Maskil Psalms (Psalms 52-55):** Highlights the theme of trusting in riches vs. trusting in God and the danger of the tongue. Both are connected to themes found in Jeremiah 9.
  - **Miktam Psalms (Psalms 56-60):** A cluster of Psalms connected by the "Miktam" title. The term is not well understood but links these Psalms together.
  - **Hope and Praise (Psalm 63):** Answers the longing from Psalms 42-43 with a focus on the presence of God in the sanctuary.
  - **Hymns of Praise (Psalms 65-68):** Moves toward hymns of praise.
  - **Transition to Solomon (Psalms 71-72):** Transition from the feeble age of David (Psalm 71) to the vibrant strength of Solomon (Psalm 72), echoing the narrative in 1 Kings 1-3.
1. **Lament to Praise Trajectory:**
- Book Two, like the whole Psalter, follows a trajectory from lament and petition to hymns of praise.
  - The book begins with laments of God's absence and the question of "where is your God?" It moves to the declaration of God being in Zion and His rule over all. The book concludes with praises for God and the reign of King Solomon.

#### **Future Topics:**

- Hildebrandt will further explore the three main characters in Book Two:
- The Enemy: depicted as treacherous, taunting, seeking to destroy.
- The Psalmist: cries out for deliverance and help.
- The King (God): rescues, protects, and renders justice.

**Conclusion:**

This session provides a detailed introduction to the canonical context of Book Two of the Psalter. It identifies the unique structure, literary features, and theological underpinnings of this section of the Psalms. The analysis of the Elohist Psalter and the flow from lament to praise sets the stage for a deeper exploration of the themes and characters within these Psalms. The shift between the Davidic laments to a praise of God as king are key aspects of the book.

## 4. Study Guide: Hildebrandt, Praise of God in Book II of the Psalter, Session 1, Canonical Context of Book II

### A Study of Book Two of the Psalter

#### Quiz

Answer each question in 2-3 sentences.

1. What is the Hebrew title for the book of Psalms, and what does it mean?
2. How is the book of Psalms structured, and what parallel does this structure have?
3. How are the five books of the Psalter typically marked?
4. What is the "Elohistic Psalter," and which sections does it encompass?
5. What is unique about the divine names used in the Elohistic Psalter?
6. Explain the significance of Psalms 42 and 43 as a "Psalm pair."
7. How does the thematic focus shift from Psalm 42/43 to Psalm 44?
8. What is the significance of Zion in Psalms 46-48, and how does it relate to the question posed in Psalms 42-43?
9. How are Psalms 52-55 linked together?
10. What is the overall flow of Book Two of the Psalter in terms of its themes?

#### Quiz Answer Key

1. The Hebrew title for the book of Psalms is *Tehillim*, which means "praises." This title reflects the book's overall focus on praising God, stemming from the root word *Halel*, which is the root of the word "Hallelujah."
2. The book of Psalms is structured into five distinct books, mirroring the five books of the Torah or Pentateuch. This parallel emphasizes the importance of the Psalms as a response to and reflection on the law.
3. Each of the five books of the Psalter is marked by concluding markers of praise, such as "Praise be to the Lord," and a double "Amen." These concluding markers help identify the end of each book and the start of the next.

4. The "Elohistic Psalter" refers to Psalms 42 through 83. This section is distinguished by the prominent use of the divine name *Elohim* (translated as "God") rather than *Yahweh* (translated as "LORD").
5. In the Elohistic Psalter, the use of the divine name *Elohim* is greatly increased (131 times), while the use of *Yahweh* is significantly reduced (27 times). This contrasts with the rest of the Psalter, where *Yahweh* is used much more frequently than *Elohim*.
6. Psalms 42 and 43 are linked as a "Psalm pair" due to the identical refrain, "Why, my soul, are you downcast?" that appears three times (twice in Psalm 42, once in Psalm 43). This refrain functions to tie these psalms together as a single unit.
7. The thematic focus shifts from the individual lament and petition of the Psalmist in Psalms 42 and 43 to a communal lament in Psalm 44. Psalm 44 moves from first person singular to first person plural expressing the laments of a whole people.
8. Zion in Psalms 46-48 is presented as the holy place where God dwells and is a direct answer to the taunt "Where is your God?" This section emphasizes God's presence in Zion, God's reign over the nations, and God's exaltation on Mount Zion.
9. Psalms 52-55 are linked together by the common title *Maskil*, which indicates that they are psalms of instruction. They are also linked by shared themes of trust, boasting, the dangers of the tongue, and the contrast between those who trust in God and those who trust in riches.
10. The overall flow of Book Two of the Psalter moves from initial laments expressing feelings of God's absence (Psalms 42-43), to a focus on God's presence in Zion (Psalms 46-55), to instruction (Psalms 52-55), to a renewed sense of the hope of God (Psalm 63) and then culminating in hymns of praise (Psalms 65-68), ultimately concluding with a transition between the feeble David and strong Solomon.



## Essay Questions

1. Discuss the significance of the structure of the Book of Psalms (Psalter) and how Book Two fits into that overall structure. In your discussion, explore the use of the divine names Yahweh and Elohim and how they are distributed throughout the different books of the Psalter.
2. Analyze the thematic development of Book Two of the Psalter, tracing the transition from lament to praise. Consider the significance of the question "Where is your God?" and how the Psalms of Zion address this question.
3. Explore the various literary techniques used in Book Two of the Psalter (e.g., refrains, titles), paying particular attention to the way that Psalms 42-43, 52-55 and 56-60, and 71-72 are linked together. Explain the purpose and effect of these techniques on the reader.
4. Discuss the representation of God as king and the significance of this metaphor in understanding the book of Psalms and, specifically, Book Two. How does the theme of the king develop throughout Book Two?
5. Evaluate the concept of lament as a basis for praise in Book Two of the Psalter, examining specific Psalms and their expression of both lament and hope. How do lament and praise work together to create a fuller understanding of God?

## Glossary

- **Canonical Context:** The context of a biblical book within the larger canon of scripture.
- **Cultic Context:** The context of worship rituals and practices within a religious community.
- **Elohim:** A Hebrew word for God, often translated as "God."
- **Elohistic Psalter:** Psalms 42-83 of the Psalter characterized by the predominance of Elohim over Yahweh.
- **Halal:** Hebrew word meaning "to praise," the root of Hallelujah.
- **Hallelujah:** A Hebrew expression meaning "Praise Yah" or "Praise the Lord."
- **Imprecation:** A prayer or curse calling for harm or judgment on enemies.
- **Lament:** A passionate expression of grief, sorrow, or complaint.
- **Maskil:** A Hebrew word of uncertain meaning that may indicate a didactic or instructional psalm.
- **Mikdam:** A Hebrew word of uncertain meaning that may indicate a special type of psalm (often a prayer of protection).
- **Orphan Psalm:** A psalm that lacks a title or superscription.
- **Pentateuch:** The first five books of the Hebrew Bible (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy), also known as the Torah.
- **Psalmist:** The author or speaker of a psalm.
- **Psalter:** The book of Psalms in the Hebrew Bible.
- **Refrain:** A line or group of lines that is repeated throughout a song or poem.
- **Tehillim:** The Hebrew title for the book of Psalms, meaning "praises."
- **Torah:** The first five books of the Hebrew Bible, also called the Pentateuch.
- **Yahweh:** The personal name of God in the Hebrew Bible, often translated as "LORD."
- **Zion:** A mountain in Jerusalem, often used as a symbol for the city of God and the dwelling place of God.

## 5. FAQs on Hildebrandt, Praise of God in Book II of the Psalter, Session 1, Canonical Context of Book II, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

### Frequently Asked Questions about Book Two of the Psalms (Psalms 42-72)

1. **What is the significance of the division of the Book of Psalms into five books?**  
The Book of Psalms is intentionally divided into five books, mirroring the five books of the Torah (the Pentateuch). Each book within the Psalms has its own unique characteristics and is marked by concluding markers of praise, often including a double "Amen." This division is not merely structural but indicates a deliberate literary and theological design, suggesting a response to the law by a heart of praise and worship.
2. **What is meant by "the Elohist Psalter," and how does it apply to Book Two?**  
The term "Elohist Psalter" refers to Psalms 42-83, a section of the Psalms where the divine name *Elohim* ("God") is used far more frequently than *Yahweh* ("LORD"). In Book Two specifically, the name *Elohim* is emphasized dramatically, with only 27 uses of *Yahweh* compared to 131 uses of *Elohim*, a stark contrast to the rest of the Psalter. This difference is not random; it marks a deliberate shift in emphasis that highlights God's transcendent power and sovereignty.
3. **What is the significance of the "Maskil" and "Miktam" titles found in Book Two?**  
The titles "Maskil" and "Miktam" appear in many of the Psalms in Book Two. "Maskil" (found in Psalms 42-45 and 52-55) is often translated as "instructional" or "contemplative," suggesting that these psalms were written for the purpose of teaching or deeper reflection on God's ways. "Miktam" (found in Psalms 56-60) is of unknown meaning, but is likely a specific genre of psalms used in the temple context. These titles offer clues to the purpose and style of the psalms.
4. **How does Book Two of the Psalms begin and what are the themes of Psalms 42 and 43?**  
Book Two opens with Psalms 42 and 43, which are connected as a "psalm pair" by a shared refrain. These psalms express an individual's deep longing for God, using the image of a deer thirsting for water. The psalmist is in exile and tormented by his enemies, who taunt him with the question, "Where is your God?" Despite this, the psalmist repeatedly declares, "I will yet praise him," demonstrating hope in God despite suffering.

5. **What is the shift from individual to communal lament, and where do we see that in Book Two?** There is a shift in focus in the book from individual lament to communal lament as we move from Psalms 42-43 to Psalm 44. Psalms 42-43 are written in the first-person singular and express the individual psalmist's personal struggles and grief. In contrast, Psalm 44 shifts to the first-person plural, using "we," "us," and "our" to lament the national defeat and suffering of God's people, suggesting a movement from personal experience to the shared experience of the community.
6. **How does the theme of Zion, the city of God, play a role in Book Two, especially after the question of God's absence?** In response to the psalmist's cry of "Where is your God?" in Psalms 42 and 43, Book Two shifts to the theme of Zion, the city of God, in Psalms 46-55. Zion is presented as God's dwelling place and the center of his worship. These psalms affirm that God is present and active in Zion, providing a tangible and present answer to the questions of God's location and availability. However, this location is not the end point, it is the source from which God's glory will extend to the ends of the earth.
7. **How does Book Two address the themes of sacrifice and the heart of worship?** Book Two contrasts the futility of external sacrifices with the genuine need for a contrite heart. Psalm 50 declares that God does not need physical sacrifices as food; instead, he emphasizes that his true need is worship stemming from a genuine change of heart. This idea is further developed in Psalm 51, where David acknowledges that the true sacrifice is "a broken and contrite heart," which demonstrates the internal nature of worship and repentance.
8. **How does Book Two conclude, and what is the significance of the ending?** Book Two concludes with a notable transition from the aging and feeble King David in Psalm 71 to the strong and righteous King Solomon in Psalm 72. This transition is similar to the one found in 1 Kings 1-3. The book ends with a double praise, a double amen and the statement "This concludes the prayers of David, son of Jesse." The movement of the book is one from lament to praise, culminating in the praise and a double amen, underscoring the overall trajectory of the book from individual and communal struggles to the assurance of God's presence and the anticipation of future blessings through his chosen king.