

## **Waltke, Psalms, Session 11, Resources from Notebooklm**

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

### **1. Abstract of Waltke, Psalms, Session 11 Psalm 92, Petitionary Psalms, [biblicalelearning.org](http://biblicalelearning.org), BeL**

**Dr. Bruce Waltke's Lecture 11** on the book of Psalms analyzes Psalm 92, a psalm of thanksgiving, employing various critical approaches. **He examines the psalm's structure**, including parallelism and chiasm, and explores its historical, liturgical, and rhetorical contexts. **Waltke connects the psalm to themes of royal victory and the ultimate triumph of righteousness**, drawing parallels to Christ's victory and the flourishing of believers. His interpretation highlights the psalm's theological significance, particularly concerning the nature of God and the ultimate defeat of evil. The lecture also discusses the importance of careful exegesis and the contribution of scholarly research to a deeper understanding of Scripture.

**2. 19-minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Waltke's, Psalms, Session 11 – Double click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the [Biblicalelearning.org](http://Biblicalelearning.org) [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link there (Old Testament → Psalms → Waltke).**



**Waltke\_Psalms\_Session 11\_Ps92\_Petition**

### 3. Briefing Document

Okay, here is a detailed briefing document summarizing the key themes and ideas from the provided lecture transcript by Dr. Bruce Waltke on Psalm 92:

#### **Briefing Document: Dr. Bruce Waltke on Psalm 92**

**Source:** Excerpts from "Waltke\_Psalms\_EN\_Lecture11.pdf"

#### **Introduction:**

This document summarizes Dr. Bruce Waltke's lecture on Psalm 92, focusing on his methodology, interpretation, and key insights. Waltke approaches the Psalms through multiple lenses: historical, form-critical, liturgical, and rhetorical. He emphasizes that the Psalms are primarily royal prayers, providing a foundation for understanding their New Testament application to Jesus Christ. He views the Psalms as both the prayers of the King and also the shared prayers of the people.

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

##### **1. Methodology:**

- **Multiple Approaches:** Waltke uses historical, form-critical, liturgical, and rhetorical approaches to interpret the Psalms.
- **Historical Context:** He advocates for Davidic authorship and the importance of seeing the king as the central figure in the Psalms, which he sees as a royal hymn book.
- **Form Criticism:** He acknowledges Gunkel's contribution in categorizing Psalms into different types (hymns, royal psalms, laments, communal laments, thanksgiving) but finds three main categories: petition, praise, and thanksgiving.
- **Exegetical Focus:** Waltke prioritizes accurate interpretation, examining the text word by word, and understanding its original context, noting that his work on commentaries drives his translation choices.
- **Theological Interpretation:** While interpreting the scripture is his main goal, Waltke sees the psalms as deeply theological and important to Christian spiritual formation.
- **Importance of Scholarship:** Waltke stresses the importance of academic study and the need to stay current with scholarship to refine interpretations of the text, even noting that the church is often "anti-intellectual" in this regard.

- **Meditative Study:** He emphasizes meditating on the Word, not just quick reading, noting this type of study takes real work.

#### 1. **Psalm 92: A Song of Grateful Praise:**

- **Genre:** Psalm 92 is a song of "grateful praise" (not simply "thanksgiving" in the English sense, which he clarifies is more about personal thanks to another person). In Hebrew, "thanksgiving" is about public praise of God to others for what He has done.
- **Sabbath Psalm:** It is specifically designated for the Sabbath day and likely sung in the temple with a musical accompaniment and a sacrifice.
- **Temple Setting:** The Psalm's content suggests a temple setting and seems to involve the community alongside the King, making it a shared liturgical experience.
- **Poetic Structure:** Waltke emphasizes the poetic nature of the psalm, highlighting parallelism, figures of speech, and terse verses like a "slideshow" rather than a moving picture.
- **Parallelism:** He stresses the parallel structure of the verses and notes how the lines relate to each other, with related but not identical statements in each pairing.
- **Figures of Speech:** Waltke notes the abundant figurative language like the wicked being like grass and the righteous like palm trees and cedars of Lebanon to highlight their contrast.
- **Chiasm:** The Psalm has a chiastic structure with praise at the beginning and end, God's works and the king's victory in the middle, and the central pivot being God's eternal exaltation.
- **Narrative and Universal Truth:** The psalm moves from a specific triumph (the king's victory) to a universal truth of the extermination of evil and the flourishing of the righteous.
- **Two Introductions:** The Psalm begins with corporate praise for God's attributes and shifts to the psalmist's personal praise for a specific saving act in his life.
- **Tireless Praise:** The psalm calls for continuous praise, day and night.

#### 1. **Interpretation of Key Passages:**

- **"It is Good" (v. 1):** Good refers to both substance (beneficial, life-enriching) and style (attractive, pleasing). Praising God is beneficial to both God and us.
- **Tireless Praise (v. 2-3):** This section develops both the "words" of praise (God's love and reliability) and the music of praise, pointing to consistent worship. The "morning and night" language is a merism, indicating totality and consistency in praise.
- **God's Thoughts and Works (v. 5-7):** God's thoughts are "exceedingly deep," hidden from the foolish. The wicked prosper for a time, as part of God's plan that ultimately leads to their destruction.
- **God's Exaltation (v. 8):** The central line "For you are on high forever, I Am" underscores God's sovereign role in all events. This pivot point shows that while the king is used to destroy enemies, ultimately God is in control.
- **Elimination of Evil (v. 9):** The scattering of evildoers means their inability to reproduce their wickedness for the next generation.
- **King's Victory (v. 10-11):** God exalts the king's "horn" like a wild ox, but the king participates enthusiastically in his victory by rubbing his horns with oil. His victory is immediate, but his reputation will continue into the future, which he sees as being similar to Christ's resurrection.
- **Flourishing of the Righteous (v. 12-15):** The righteous are like palm trees and cedars of Lebanon, symbolizing regal stature, sustenance, great value, need of an abundant supply of water and longevity. He calls this "evocative language" that calls the reader to reflect on the imagery.
- **Temple as a Garden:** The imagery of the righteous being planted in the temple is likened to the Garden of Eden, with an abundant supply of spiritual water (like the "streams of water" in Psalm 1 and the river coming from the temple in his image) that nurtures them. This image underscores our source of life as the temple and being in God's presence.
- **Ecumenicity:** The palm and cedar, diverse and opposite trees that flourish in different environments are both in the temple, speaking of the ecumenicity of the church.
- **Proclaiming God's Justice (v. 15):** The righteous declare that God is upright (flawless, without a bend), a rock of safety and salvation.

## 1. Application and Theological Insights:

- **The Problem of Evil:** The psalm addresses the prosperity of the wicked, explaining it as a temporary means for God to demonstrate his power and justice.
- **Contrast:** Evil is needed as a contrast for the understanding of God's good nature, but all evil will be destroyed.
- **Normative Lament:** Lament is the "normative" experience of the righteous, noting most psalms are lament, which he will discuss in later lectures.
- **Type of Christ:** The king's triumph prefigures Christ's victory over sin, Satan, and death and the universal covenant community identifies itself with the king.
- **Eschatological Perspective:** The psalm looks towards the future, as the Targum interpretation (an Aramaic paraphrase) reflects, hinting at a complete rest and triumph of God in the age to come. The psalm has a trajectory to eternal life, but doesn't achieve full clarity as is found in the New Testament.
- **Purpose of the Righteous:** God has chosen the righteous to give him praise and make him known, and that they are sustained by the word of God.
- **Deep Doctrine:** Dr. Waltke makes a plea for deep doctrine and the need for solid exposition of the Bible.

## Conclusion:

Dr. Waltke's lecture provides a rich and detailed analysis of Psalm 92. By using a multi-faceted approach, he unveils the depth and complexity of the text. He emphasizes that Psalm 92 is not just a historical text but a living song that speaks to both individual faith and the collective worship of God's people. He calls his audience to engage with the psalm by meditating on its words and recognizing it within the broader sweep of scripture and the life of the Church. He wants the audience to appreciate the aesthetic beauty and also the theological underpinnings of the text.

## 4. Psalms Study Guide: Waltke, Psalms, Session 11, Petitionary Psalms--Psalm 92

### Psalms Study Guide: Petitionary Psalms (Psalm 92)

#### Quiz

Answer each question in 2-3 sentences.

1. According to Waltke, what is the primary aim of the course on Psalms, and how does it differ from the typical aims of the church?
2. What are the five approaches to studying the Psalms that Waltke identifies and utilizes in this course?
3. What are the three primary categories of Psalms according to Waltke, and how does he arrive at these categories?
4. How does Waltke describe the difference between "Thanksgiving" in English and the concept of grateful praise in the Psalms?
5. What are the three key characteristics of poetry, and how do they apply to Psalm 92?
6. What is the significance of the center line of Psalm 92 ("For you are on high forever, I Am") in relation to its overall message?
7. How does Waltke interpret the imagery of the wicked flourishing like grass and the righteous like palm trees and cedars of Lebanon?
8. According to Waltke, what does the imagery of the righteous being planted in the house of I Am and in the courts of God evoke?
9. What is a "merism," and how is it used in the context of Psalm 92, verse 2?
10. How does the chiasmic structure of Psalm 92 contribute to its overall meaning and impact?

#### Quiz Answer Key

1. The course aims to interpret the scripture as accurately as possible through various approaches to understanding the mind of the psalmist. This differs from the church's typical aims, which are primarily to teach theology or address spiritual life.

2. The five approaches are the historical approach, form-critical approach, liturgical approach, rhetorical approach, and redaction criticism. Each approach provides a different lens to better understand the Psalms.
3. Waltke identifies petition, praise, and thanksgiving as the three primary categories, which he determines by comparing Gunkel's analysis with 1 Chronicles 16.4. This passage describes David appointing Levites to minister petition, thanksgiving, and praise.
4. In English, Thanksgiving is a personal expression of gratitude, whereas in Hebrew, grateful praise is public and involves telling others about God's actions on one's behalf; it is not private or merely saying thank you.
5. The three characteristics are parallelism (saying a line and then a related one), figures of speech, and terseness (verses being like snapshots). Each verse in Psalm 92 uses related ideas in parallel and many metaphors are used in short, descriptive lines.
6. The center line emphasizes God's sovereignty and eternity, indicating that His plan is behind everything, including the defeat of the wicked by the king and the flourishing of the righteous; he is the ultimate source of the king's power and victory.
7. The image of grass illustrates the temporary nature of the wicked's prosperity, while palm trees and cedars of Lebanon represent the righteous' enduring and fruitful lives, underscoring their contrasting destinies.
8. The imagery is likened to the Garden of Eden, suggesting that the temple is a place of abundance and a source of spiritual nourishment, where the righteous thrive like trees with an abundant supply of water.
9. A merism is a literary device using opposites to indicate totality. In verse 2, "morning and night" is a merism, meaning "all the time," symbolizing the tireless praise given to God.
10. The chiastic structure, with praise at the beginning and end, works and victory in the middle, and God at the center, emphasizes that all things emanate from God, and that even in battle, he is sovereign. This reinforces God's role and plan in all aspects of life.

## Essay Questions

1. Discuss the significance of the historical approach to interpreting the Psalms, particularly in understanding the role of the king. How does this perspective influence a Christian's understanding of the Psalms in relation to Jesus Christ?
2. Analyze the rhetorical structure of Psalm 92, including its chiasmic arrangement and use of inclusio. How do these literary devices enhance the psalm's meaning and impact on the reader?
3. Compare and contrast the form-critical categories of praise and thanksgiving psalms, providing examples from the Psalms to illustrate their unique features. How might the distinctions within these categories influence worship or prayer?
4. Explore the theological implications of the contrasts presented in Psalm 92, such as the prosperity of the wicked versus the flourishing of the righteous. How do these contrasts illuminate God's nature and plan?
5. Examine the use of metaphors and similes in Psalm 92, particularly the descriptions of the righteous as palm trees and cedars of Lebanon, and the wicked as grass. What do these images suggest about the nature of the righteous and the wicked in relation to God and time?

## Glossary of Key Terms

- **Aseity:** The quality of being self-derived or self-existent. It is an incommunicable attribute of God, that He is dependent on nothing for His being.
- **Chiasm:** A literary device in which words, grammatical constructions, or concepts are repeated in reverse order, often forming an X pattern (AB/BA) to emphasize a central point or create a symmetrical structure.
- **Communicable Attributes:** Attributes of God that are reflected in human beings, such as love, justice, mercy, and wisdom.
- **Doxology:** A liturgical expression of praise and glory to God.
- **Eschatology:** The study of the end times or last things, including concepts like the final judgment, resurrection, and eternal life.
- **Form Criticism:** A method of biblical analysis that seeks to classify texts by literary genre, identifying the common characteristics and typical settings of specific forms such as hymns, laments, and wisdom sayings.



- **Heilsgeschichte:** A German word that refers to the "history of salvation." It is the narrative of God's redemptive acts in history.
- **Inclusio:** A literary device where a passage or section begins and ends with the same or similar words or phrases, creating a frame or an envelope structure.
- **Incommunicable Attributes:** Attributes of God that are unique to Him and cannot be shared by human beings, such as His aseity, eternity, omnipresence, and omniscience.
- **Liturgical Approach:** A method of studying the Psalms by analyzing their use in worship settings, considering their original context and purpose in temple rituals and ceremonies.
- **Merism:** A literary device using opposites to indicate totality, where two contrasting terms are used to refer to a whole.
- **Poetics:** The study of the aesthetic qualities of how a text is put together to create meaning.
- **Redaction Criticism:** A method of biblical analysis that examines how editors compiled and shaped the final form of a text by focusing on additions, changes, and omissions.
- **Rhetorical Approach:** A method of studying texts that focuses on analyzing persuasive techniques, literary devices, and structure that authors use to communicate their message effectively.
- **Superscription:** An introductory phrase in the Psalms that might identify the author, historical setting, or purpose of the psalm.

## 5. FAQ on Themes from Dr. Bruce Waltke's Psalms Lecture

### FAQ: Exploring the Psalms and Psalm 92

- **What is the main goal of studying the Psalms, according to the lecture?**
- The primary aim isn't simply to teach theology or address the spiritual life, though both are touched upon. Instead, the goal is to accurately interpret the Psalms, entering into the mindset of the psalmists. This involves understanding the historical, literary, and theological contexts of the Psalms, allowing for a deeper engagement with the text and its message. It's about understanding the original intent and meaning, recognizing the poetic structure, and appreciating how the Psalms function as a prayer book and a form of communication with God.
- **How does the historical approach to the Psalms enhance understanding, and what is the significance of the king?**
- The historical approach reveals that many Psalms were composed with the king in mind, functioning as a royal hymn book. The king is often praying or being prayed for, and the Psalms were used in temple worship, sometimes being handed over to the director of music to be sung in public. This focus on the king as a central figure provides a foundation for understanding the New Testament's interpretation of the Psalms as prophetic about Jesus Christ, who is considered the Son of David and the ultimate king, and whose life, prayers and sufferings are reflected in the Psalms.
- **What is the form critical approach to the Psalms, and what are the major types of Psalms?**
- The form critical approach, pioneered by scholars like Gunkel, categorizes the Psalms into different literary types based on their form and function. The primary categories include: hymns of praise (which includes royal psalms), laments (complaints or petitions), communal laments, and songs of thanksgiving. Each type has its own distinct features, motifs, and purposes within the overall collection. Understanding these forms helps in interpreting the individual Psalms.
- **How does the lecture explain the difference between "thanksgiving" in English and "thanksgiving" in the Hebrew context of the Psalms?**
- In English, "thanksgiving" often refers to a personal expression of gratitude directed towards another person, such as saying "thank you." However, in the Hebrew context of the Psalms, thanksgiving is not a private expression but rather

a public declaration of God's acts on the psalmist's behalf. It involves telling others about God's specific interventions in one's life and celebrating God's salvation publicly. Hence the lecture calls them songs of "grateful praise."

- **What is the significance of the literary features of the Psalms, specifically parallelism, figures of speech, and terseness?**

The Psalms are poetry and have three primary literary characteristics: parallelism (where a line is followed by a related one), figures of speech (using imagery to deepen understanding), and terseness (where verses are like snapshots instead of a moving picture). Parallelism highlights related statements, figures of speech adds a layer of imaginative meaning, and terseness forces the reader to connect the verses in order to understand the whole picture being conveyed. These literary elements create a powerful means of engaging with the message.

- **What is the main message of Psalm 92, and how does it relate to the prosperity of the wicked and the triumph of the righteous?**
- Psalm 92 is a song of grateful praise, with the central theme being how the righteous, in the temple, triumph over the wicked. The psalm addresses the problem of the temporary prosperity of the wicked by pointing out the wicked are flourishing just like grass that quickly fades away and will ultimately be exterminated while the righteous are like trees that live a long time and have great value, they will continue to flourish in the presence of God. The psalm describes the king's victory over his enemies and his role as an agent of God, whose ultimate plan is the vindication of the righteous and the end of evil, so that all creation may give him praise for his salvation.
- **What is the significance of the temple setting in Psalm 92, and how are the righteous likened to trees?**
- The temple is the setting for Psalm 92. It is a place of music, sacrifice, and proclamation. The psalm emphasizes that the righteous are planted in the temple like flourishing palm trees and cedars of Lebanon. The palm trees and cedars are like the righteous. Palm trees give life sustaining fruit and cedar wood is beautiful, strong, and long lasting. The temple can be likened to the garden of Eden. Just as Adam and Eve lived in the presence of God in the garden, the righteous are planted in the presence of God in the temple. The righteous are being supplied with spiritual food and water that they need to flourish and fulfill their purpose of giving praise to God.

- **How does the lecture emphasize the importance of intellectual engagement with the Scriptures, and what is the purpose of academia?**
- The lecture emphasizes that intellectual engagement with the Scriptures through rigorous academic study is important for deeper understanding and helps the church to avoid doing violence to God's word. The speaker challenges a trend of anti-intellectualism within some parts of the church by highlighting that academia contributes by refining our knowledge, offering new perspectives, and enriching the overall comprehension of Scripture. Academia is not to be mocked but rather is a valuable tool for God's people to come to a more accurate understanding of God's Word.