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Ted Hildebrandt

Psalms of the Exodus
Session 1: Psalm 136 – antiphonal liturgy
By Dr. David Emanuel

Introduction [0:06-1:50]

This is Dr. David Emanuel in his teaching on the Exodus. Psalms. This is session number one: Introduction, Psalm 136 - antiphonal liturgy.

Hello, I'm Dr. David Emmanuel. I teach here at Nyack College, in this wonderful setting, and Alliance Theological Seminary. My background is originally in computer science, but after a while I gave that up and I came to study the Bible. I studied 11 years at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in what is called Bible, but obviously is the Old Testament.

Today I'd like to begin taking you through parts of what I dedicated a great amount of time to at the Hebrew University and that's looking at the Exodus motif in the

Psalms. That's basically my background. So I've done a lot of biblical Hebrew, I've done a lot of Hebrew poetry, as well as basic understanding of the ancient Near East and the Hebrew Bible. So we're going to be looking basically in next few videos at the Exodus motif in the Psalms.

In order to do that, I want to begin really just by talking a little bit about the Exodus motif. If I take you all the way back to as I started my doctoral studies, when I began looking at it, I knew what my topic was. I knew I was going to study the Exodus motif as it appears in the Psalter.

Exodus motif—the most dominant motif in the Bible [1:50-4:38]

So I began looking at the Exodus motif itself. And as I read through the Bible, both the Hebrew Bible is well as the New Testament, I began to come to a conclusion, that perhaps the Exodus motif was the most dominant and the most influential traditions in the whole of the Bible. That's the feeling which I began to have as I read through the Bible. The more I read about the motif, the more I saw it reflected in so many different texts all the way from Genesis, even identifiable in the book of Revelation. So I saw that going on and I became so convinced that this was the most dominant tradition in the whole of the Bible. When it came to my introduction to my dissertation, I wrote this statement here as I opened it up, "The Exodus motif is one of the most dominant motifs in the Hebrew Bible." I wrote that because of my English reserve, I didn't feel quite comfortable saying that it was the most dominant motif, although that is what I absolutely believed. I handed the first draft of my introduction into my advisor and he looked at it and he made one correction to that. And here was the correction he made: "The Exodus motif is the most dominant motif in the whole of the Bible." Not one of the most dominant, but the most dominant motif. And that's what I found. So there's no real surprise at all that it appears in the book of Psalms. So before we actually look at the how it appears in the Psalms, we're first going to look at the motif itself. We'll look at a few Psalms it affects. We're going to look at the motif itself and then we're going to begin looking at the five Psalms which I've selected for this particular set of lectures. So

concerning the Exodus in the Psalms, one of the things we have to remember is that it is basically cross genre, which is to say, there is no one particular genre. If you're familiar with the genres as originally defined by Herman Gunkel: laments, songs of praise, hymns of thanksgiving, all of those, which I'm sure you've learned in other videos in Psalms class. But there was not one single genre to which the Exodus motif actually applies, but it's what we call cross genre in that it affects a whole variety of them.

Focus on Psalms of the Exodus: Ps. 78, 135, 136, 105, 106 [4:42-6:33]

I need to mention as well concerning the Psalter that there are a number of places where small mentions of the Exodus appear, such as Psalm 66, 77, 95 and 114 these songs will not be covered in this lecture series. There are even a couple more places we can think of, places such as Psalm 23, a psalm which many people know which has been connected to the Exodus because it has this idea of leading, which is reflective of the desert period and also settling at the end of the Psalm in the last two verses, which is an idea or reflection of settling into the promised land. So there are echoes of the Exodus tradition in other Psalms other than these, but in these places there's probably at least one or two in Psalm 14 a lot of it addresses or deals with the Exodus motif. For our studies, the most dominant content is going to appear in these Psalms here, some seven Psalms 78, 105, 106, 135 and 136. Those are the Psalms that I'm going to be focusing on in this lecture series.

How are we going to approach each of the Psalms when a number of things which I want to provide for each Psalm in order to help give us some kind of a structure to this series. The first thing I want to provide each Psalm is an outline, so I want to just give you a basic overview of the contents, which we're going to look at first, so you can have some kind of a roadmap so we can see what we're going to be looking at.

Why a Psalm was written? [6:35-8:25]

The second thing I want to speak about is the purpose or I want to cover that at some stage. We have to look at why the psalm was actually written. That's very important

because it's only when we understand why a Psalm was written, what was the psalmist trying to achieve; it's only when we understand that that we can then understand why he selects certain elements of the Exodus motif into his particular composition. We will see that there are certain things if they don't fall into his structure, his rubric, these things are going to be neglected, even though we may think they are central themes in the actual motif.

We then are going to look at, and this is not going to be something I'm going to be able to do at all to as much satisfaction as I'd like to because it would involve a lot more original language knowledge. We will, nevertheless, look at the connections that the Psalm has to the Exodus motif, particularly Exodus and the book of Numbers. You'll see that there is going to be other places as well. So we'll be looking at those, we'll be comparing some of those aspects as well.

The question of notable omissions is going to be addressed too. Those are places where there are key elements, we'll talk about the Exodus motif in just a moment, but there are key elements of the Exodus motif that I think are important in the book of Exodus at least, or appear in the book of Numbers which may be ignored. I want to raise some of those, bring some of those, mention some of those things as we deal with the individual Psalms.

Poetics, Reuse and Interpretation [8:26-11:32]

Another aspect I want to look at concerns the poetics of these Psalms. This is an area, this is one of my pet peeves. Often times the Psalms that we've mentioned, particularly Psalm 105, 106, and Psalm 78, these are Psalms that have been criticized in the past because they tell a story and because they have a plot and a narrative. These are Psalms that have been criticized as being less poetic somehow. It's a really an arbitrary judgment on the actual psalms themselves. I know this is not a class that did that or a series of lectures that's going to focus on Hebrew poetics, but it is something that I like and am very fond of. So I do want to talk about some of the poetic features that we find within these Psalms and particularly some of the emphatic structures. So I do want to go

over the poetics of certain of these Psalms.

Then there's the question of Interpretation and reuse. Here what we want to look at or begin to look at are those instances where what absurdly appears to be the author's source doesn't quite match up with what he's placed in his work. I want to just explore some of the relationships between the Psalm itself and the source to understand: why is this change being made? What is the change? You'll see as we go through some of these Psalms, the source may not actually be directly from the Pentateuch, but the Psalmist may have taken a different text, an oral tradition or something from another Psalm or another piece of literature and woven that and use that to tell his story because it suits his purpose so much better. So we're going to be looking at that question of interpretation or reuse of the biblical Psalmist.

For the most part, I'm going to be using the NASB, the New American Standard Bible in my quotations. I'll say that now that for the most part, but there will be times I will need to deviate from that because we find, and this is going to come up a number of times, that sometimes the English translators tend to mess about a little bit with the poetics in order to make the text more readable. So you may see certain changes in words here and there and it's not an ideal situation, but it's something that we nevertheless have. So I'm going to be adapting certain texts and I'll try to make you aware of when I'm doing that and what the actual point is for that. So that's basically how we're going to be looking at each of the Psalms.

Defining the Exodus Motif [11:33-16:51]

The next thing we have to do is begin to try and define the Exodus. What events are we looking at? This is just another overview so we can have an understanding of the components within the Exodus that we are going to be thinking about. The first one is this is the move from clan to the promised land. Here I'm referring to the end of the book of Genesis, and the beginning of the book of Exodus when it was, Jacob and his extended family, which is described as 70 souls in all. They go down to Egypt to meet with Joseph in order to escape the famine, the harsh famine, which has come across the land of

Canaan as it was at the time. So we've got them going in and they are just a clan and then from there they obviously multiply and become a people and that's when they become slaves in Egypt. A new king arises who doesn't recognize Joseph and he enslaves them because they multiply so much. We see that this is also something which is reflected in some of those Psalms.

A very important part of the motif is the deliverance from slavery, particularly the plagues. You'll see there are 10 plagues mentioned in the book of Exodus culminating in the death of the first born of the Egyptians. That's a very common motif, although the plagues, as we'll see are represented slightly differently across these Exodus Psalms.

We also have the miraculous sea crossing which I have a picture of here in which the sea is split. There are various aspects to that in which there's a degree of rebellion which takes place because the people accuse Moses of taking them from slavery, leading them to death in the beginnings of the wilderness or by the sea. So there's a bit of rebellion there, but that's when God performs this miracle. That's a concept we'll be talking about later on in splitting the sea, allowing them to cross it.

Then there's the story of provisions in the wilderness. There's a provision of water. There's a provision of bread. The manna which is a very popular tradition and also the provision of meat with quail as well. Along with the provision there is the sin which takes place in the wilderness. As the Israelites complain in various levels, they complained against Moses. Small groups complained against Moses, even his sister Miriam and Aaron complain against him. And there's this constant work of Moses having to intercede for the people and to bring their needs up to God and bring God's needs down to them.

Then there's what I think is a very important part of the story, which is the giving of Torah, when Moses ascends Mount Sinai and God instructs his people on how they should be living, if they are to be a covenant people. Obviously, we have whole books like Deuteronomy is dedicated to a lot of the exposition of the Torah, as is Leviticus too. So moving beyond the narrative, but there are also the aspects of law giving that takes place, as well. Then if we follow the pattern in the Torah itself, we will see that there's

also the initial conquest of the trans-Jordanian regions. Here we're looking at the territories of Og, King of Bashan, and Sihon, King of the Amorites. There's the initial conquest before they actually enter into the promised land. If I just draw this up real quick over here. This is normally how I would draw the nation of Israel with the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea there. This is Jordan. This is the area that was pretty much marked out for Israel and Israel comes to this point here at the end of Deuteronomy approximately in that sort of region. But all of this area here, which was originally not allotted to the Israelites belonging to the Amorites, because the Amorites, Og and Sihon, did not let the Israelites cross their territory they conquered it and they were able to sequester a large region before they actually crossed the Jordan into this land over here that was promised to them.

So those are the constituent parts of the Exodus motif. As we look at the Psalms, we're going to see how these parts are reflected and how they've been woven into other biblical traditions as well and how they've been woven into the fabric of Hebrew poetry too.

Introduction to Psalm 136 [16:52-20:34]

So that said, we're going to begin with Psalm 136 and beginning with Psalm 136, simply because it's one of the shorter Psalms and because of this introduction and the time limit I have in the first video, I'm going to need to fit a shorter Psalm in, in order to squeeze in the introduction too. So it's one of the short ones that needs the last one in the actual book of Psalms, the next one we do will be Psalm 78, which will be the first one.

So a quick introduction to the psalm itself and we'll see that it is basically a liturgical hymn, an antiphonal hymn in which after each line, that is, each verse that is said that tells the story that kind of contains the plot. We find the phrase, "ki leolam hasdo," which is the Hebrew phrase, "for his love, his covenant love, for his grace, for his mercy is everlasting." And so it's antiphonal. It seemed to be an antiphonal hymn in which it was set, most probably. I know this from living in Israel during the Passover. This is definitely a Psalm that's sung every year whereby the leader would say one

particular verse and then everybody else would take part by saying, "ki leolam hasdo," "for his love is everlasting."

Now I've mentioned just here, the response being nonorganic with a question mark. And that's simply because there are questions that arise certainly amongst scholarship as to that secondary line "ki leolam hasdo," "for his love is everlasting." There are questions as to whether that actually is original to the Psalm or whether it was inserted into a different work in order to create a liturgical composition. And there are relatively good reasons to assume that there is in the Psalm scroll at Qumran, for example, we have a copy of Psalm 145 which exists with an antiphonal line which appears all of the time after each verse. Now that's not the copy that we have in the Masoretic Text, but it would suggest that at least the early Israelites at some stage saw certain compositions and wanted to move them more into a liturgical context. So they would add a line in which the audience or the participants could recite in order to participate as well. So there's a possibility that that's not organic. There's another reason why and we're going to see that when we look at Psalm 135 so I'll hold off on that until then.

There are approximately 13 verses that deal with the Exodus, 10 to 22. We're going to see those in just a moment. We also have to note, or it's worth me noting now, that the juxtaposition is notable. The fact that we have Psalm 135 as well as it comes before 136 and we'll see a little bit later that there seems to be some kind of attraction between Exodus Psalms, which speaks something towards the editorial activity of the arrangers of the Psalter or the composers or the editors and redactors of the Psalter. But we will talk about that a little bit later.

God as Warrior in Psalm 136 [20:36-21:20]

Something that we see or one aspect that or we should notice in this Psalm is that God is very much portrayed as a warrior. He's somebody who fights for Israel and that seems to be the main thrust. It seems to be the reason why this Psalmist has grabbed onto or taken or adopted certain elements of the Exodus. The Exodus was a known story.

Everybody knew it and it can tell many different things. You can gain or you can prove many points from it. But this particular author seems to have grabbed onto the idea of God as a warrior, somebody who fights, somebody who is Israel's king and does battle with other kings. We'll see that in just a moment.

Structure of Psalm 136 [21:23-22:40]

So let's look at the structure of the Psalm itself. It begins with introductory praise and worship, which most Psalms begin with, even though they are Exodus Psalms. If they have anything to do with praise, then you will find an introductory part that will just kind of bring the audience into a spirit of song, a spirit of praise and worship. So we have that in verses one to three. Then we have God's work in creation in four to nine. We will talk a little bit about that when we go into more detail, but the idea of creation we have to think is more than just the initial act of creation, but it's about sustaining and maintaining the world as well. We're going to come to that a little bit later on.

Then we have God's work in the Exodus, two main aspects the deliverance from Egypt and then the defeat of the trans-Jordanian kings. Those are the two primary aspects of which the Psalmist focuses on. Then we've got a praise summary that summarizes God's deliverance. We'll talk about that as to what exactly it relates to.

Analysis of Ps 136:1-3 and Hesed [22:42-29:34]

But for now, let's continue and look at, let's take each of these sections or take a few parts of some of these sections and talk a little bit more about them. I won't read through all of the verses. They'll be up there for you to take a look at but I have highlighted certain parts of it. This phrase "give thanks to" or hodu le in Hebrew or hodu la Adonai is a phrase that repeat at the beginning of each of the three verses and that helps organize it and that helps tell us that this should be viewed as one particular section.

We have the idea of hesed which is introduced, the Hebrew word, which is introduced ki leolam hasdo. Here we have the Hebrew word "hesed," which I will put up here because it's a very important idea as to how it's interpreted. Something like that in

Hebrew. If I write it as well, I guess it looks a bit like that in English. It's a word that is kind of difficult to explain in one go, but it's to do with grace, it is to do with mercy. It's to do with covenant love in certain contexts, but not necessarily all of them. I wonder if "grace" is probably the best. "Grace" and "mercy" is probably the best phrase to use but even those phrases or words by themselves don't fully do this word enough justice. And we find this "ki leolam hasdo" repeated and the fact that it is repeated is kind of like an echo in the same sense that God's mercy is everlasting. So we keep repeating it in this everlasting fashion as well. So the fact that it is repeated reflects the idea of God's eternal covenant love. There are a couple of qualifications to that which we're going to find out about in just a moment.

We also have here, "give thanks to the God of gods." And then we have this phrase, Elohe Elohim in Hebrew, Elohe Elohim. And Elohim is another one of these key components. I know this is not a Hebrew class, but you have to talk about these words. It's a word, a common word for God. It would be Elohim like this, and written something like that, pronounced like that. It's a word that's used very often to describe the God of Israel. But what many people don't realize as well is that it's a word that is also used to describe other deities in the ancient Near East even among the Israelites. There was the idea of God, but the idea of other deities, angelic type figures, celestial beings was also very much prominent. And so, they use this word "Elohim" in certain contexts to describe these other gods as well as the God of Israel. That's a very important idea. It's only when we see the name of the Lord, the Tetragrammaton, Yod He Vav He, that we know for sure a hundred percent that we're dealing with the God of the Israelites. So here we've got "give thanks to the God of gods," which is kind of like almost suggesting as well, that they had a recognition that God, the God of Israel, was above any other god. Now, whether they recognized it was God, whether they thought it was angels, that's a different story. We'd need to look at those in different contexts. But there was nevertheless some kind of recognition of other beings as well as the God of Israel.

There's an allusion, a biblical allusion here, I believe, which goes down to

Deuteronomy. So we have this idea of Elohim, meaning they were describing a god other than the God of Israel. Now there's a potential allusion, which is what I was saying here between Deuteronomy 10.17 and the Psalmist here. What this will introduce is the idea of something that happens, a great deal in biblical literature in which there is very seldom again, it's my English reserve kicking in.

There is no book in the Bible which ever exists by itself. We often have a notion that the biblical books kind of exist like this, and in many ways we've been taught to read scriptural books and sections as though they exist as independent units written totally separately. But that's never the case throughout all of the books in the Bible. There is always, I mean absolutely every book in the Bible there is a very complicated network of connections in which the biblical authors were influenced either subconsciously or purposefully by other texts in the Bible. They would borrow phrases from different places and they would bring those phrases into their particular text. That happens all of the time. It's an important way in which we should be viewing all of Scripture, not just these Exodus Psalms, and I'm talking about the New Testament as well as the Old. We have to understand that people were immersed in Scripture they knew verses and words and phrases all the time and they were incorporating that into their texts. So this is just one instance of it.

Here in Deuteronomy "for the Lord, your God is the God of gods and the Lord of Lords, the great mighty and the awesome God who does not show partiality nor take a bribe." Because this particular wording is quite unique to these two places. That's one of the signs that there is a high chance of scriptural borrowing in which the author is consciously or unconsciously knows of something and he's pulling it into his work.

Psalm 136:4-9 – Creation and Miracles [29:37-37:07]

So we then have God's work in creation verses four to nine. We speak of God's great wonders, his great wonders. This is another interesting idea because we're introduced to the idea or the language of miracles. In Hebrew, there's the word, there's a root pel'e, like this. I'll just write it like that as a root. And this word pel'e, I should

probably write out the English as well shouldn't I? This word pel'e is a concept that describes something that is too difficult for people. The ancients would separate the jobs, work tasks of individuals. So you would have work which a man could do, like a man can chop down a tree, a man can build a house. These things are within the realm of man. But when it comes beyond that, then we have the concept of niphleo't. These are words that describe what we know as miracles, ideas of miracles. In the ancient world, miracles were things that only God could do, things that were basically too difficult for man. So this word here "niphlaot" and this other word "gedolot" as well, when we see these words in the Bible or we see the word pele', we are talking essentially about miracles, things which only God can do. Again, I need to just talk a little bit about this because when we were dealing with this concept of the miracle, the ancients have a very different idea of what a miracle is than what we do today.

Today we think in terms of three strata, I think. We think in terms of what men can do, what people can do or what people do. People can build houses and people can chop down trees. But in contemporary society we have another layer which is maybe described as mother nature. We see things which nature takes care of, such as healing. If we get a cut or a scratch where we're healed, it comes down and this is ascribed to mother nature, the natural process in which we are healed. And then we have the idea of a distant God who sometimes comes in and we think of this in terms of a miracle, when God comes in to do something on top of that.

But in biblical days there were only two layers. There was an idea of a creator and created. And so everything that we couldn't do is ascribed therefore to God who maintains his creation. He doesn't just do it, but he maintains it. So if we do cut ourselves and are healed, it's not mother nature, but it's God who heals us because we cannot do that ourselves. So we have to keep in mind that's what the ancients were thinking of. There was no concept of nature. In fact, when I actually mentioned that once to my advisor, he jumped out of his chair and he looked at me and said, nature, there is no such thing as nature in the biblical world. So that's what we think when we read this word

niphla'ot / gedolot we see translated as "wonders." It might be translated, "signs." We need to think in terms of difficult deeds that only God can actually do. This is biblical miracle language.

More than that we'll find that the word pele' and this word niphle'ot is often assigned to the Exodus and the miracles wrought during the Exodus period. In modern Hebrew, they use a different word for miracle. They use the word "nes," which is a word that means banner. It does not have that word of anything kind of like, not supernatural, but magnificent in biblical terms. But that's maybe a slightly different story.

We find here that the pattern being adopted in this particular Psalm is general to specific, in that he first of all mentions a general principle and then he goes down into the detail of what he actually means. Because you've got here, let's take here, it says, "to him alone, who does great wonders." Then after that he goes and explains what these wonders actually are. So you've got this general to specific pattern, which we don't find in all of the Psalms.

There's a question here and every time I put a question mark by one of my statements here, it may be a degree of debate about it, but there is, a potential wisdom influence here because we have "he who spreads out the earth." Where are we? "to him who made the heavens with skill" here it's got "the heavens with skill." This word "skill" has a root, it's tebunah, which is translated elsewhere as "understanding." So this is the type of thing again, which we see not reflected well in biblical translations. "Skill" I can see why the translator used the word "skill," but I wonder if the idea of "understanding" which introduces the notion of God creating the world with wisdom. There's this tradition that wisdom was present with God in the creation of the world. So we begin to see that reflected here definitely in the Hebrew, even if it's not so apparent in the English translation.

So we have a specific mention here too, one more thing of the sun and the moon and this is something which doesn't really cause much of a stir. Okay. We understand the sun and the moon were created, but in relationship to the Hebrew text, we find that there

is a need for the Psalmist to be explicit because in the Genesis text at the creation of the world, the sun and the moon are never explicitly mentioned. All we have in the Genesis text are the great lights being created and the lesser lights being created. Now there are reasons for that, which I won't go into, but here the Psalmist reading presumably from a Genesis text wants to be specific and say no, that sun and the moon were created at that particular time. So, it sheds light on what was going on in Exodus.

Psalm 136 and the Exodus [37:07-44:43]

We then have the section dealing with God's work in the Exodus. The first thing which we see is the mention of his God striking the Egyptians' firstborn. And this raises the question we have in the chorus "for his love is everlasting." But when we read this, we have to qualify what the Psalmist means. Yeah, he's saying "for his love is everlasting," but really what the Psalmist is saying is "for his mercy towards Israel is everlasting." Because if you were an Egyptian at that time and your firstborn was struck, the last thing you were going to think is, "his love is everlasting." Yes it is, but not to us because we're suffering under it. So that is an undertone. It's not explicitly said, but it's clearly implied in this particular Psalm.

We have "he smites the Egyptians." And we also have "dividing the sea asunder" and this wording here is a little bit strange because we have that it says that he splits the sea legozer/ legzarim is the expression that's used legozer/ legzarim. This is nowhere else found in any of the Exodus Psalms to describe the splitting of the sea by God. So why would the Psalmist choose such strange words? He may have just chose them because they came into his mind, but he may also have chosen them under the influence of this text in Genesis 15.17, which is the story of the torch between the pieces where Abraham makes this sacrifice to God. "And it came about when the sun had set, it was very dark, and behold there appeared a smoking oven and a flaming torch which passed between these pieces." If you go into that text and you look at that text, you will see that it's a text, which many people believe is a text that foretells the Exodus. It foretells the Israelites with the sea splitting and them following after the pillar of fire, which goes before them

and leads them through it. You'll see even in that Genesis 15, when you read further on this prediction of what will happen to Abraham's forefathers is indeed mentioned at that time. So we've got this text, which is I'm going to say is a probable allusion, or if I had to, if I had to gamble, I'm not a gambling man obviously, but if I had to gamble, I would say that this text in Genesis was influencing his thoughts when he wrote this particular text, as he wrote this Psalm out.

The plagues are only a roughly a abbreviated here. We have the firstborn, as I said, it's the most popular one that's picked on. And then the others are kind of alluded to, but abbreviated and they're not specifically detailed at all. But we do have the specific mention of Pharaoh's destruction. So here, even when you read this text the emphasis seems to be more on, God smiting, God hitting Pharaoh and attacking Pharaoh that seems to be the biggest emphasis. We'll see this as we go through the other Psalms. There's more on that than it is on the deliverance or on anything else that God does. It's about the attack and the destruction of this particular king and we'll see that echoed elsewhere in this particular Psalm.

So we have the next section after the Exodus is God then takes his people and bouncing off the desert event, he then takes his people, through the desert. So here we're skipping over the 40 years of wandering around in the desert of the wilderness era, and we jumped particularly to the trans-Jordan kings where God destroys the two kings, Og and Sihon. Those are mentioned and as I said before, the emphasis in the short excerpt is not on the disobedience of the Israelites, but it is on the destruction or God almost fighting as a king almost being compared to the other kings. God defeated Pharaoh. He defeated Og and he defeated Sihon. He was their warrior. He was their king during the desert period and that is the perception of the Israelites, that God was their king during this time.

A question arises, why stop at the trans-Jordanian conquest? Why haven't we gone any further? Like even the initial conquest of the land and the most popular reason for this in contemporary scholarship is that the Psalmist was predominantly working with the

Torah, the first five books of Moses and that's as far as it goes. The end of Numbers, the beginning of Deuteronomy only stops at the trans-Jordanian conquest and doesn't go any further. So this may lend towards the idea that the Torah at the time of the Psalmist was somehow a collection. I want to say inspired, but that's a bit anachronistic, but it was seen as being very important and seen as being a collection of books at the time.

And then we move to the distribution of land. This pattern that we see here, it's a poetic pattern. it's an emphatic structure. It's called a terrace pattern. And I'm going to just mark it out. I know this is not a poetry course, but it's schematized as, A B / B C where this B element is repeated for emphasis. And so in this particular case we see "and gave their land as a heritage," and then we have "a heritage" repeated again "to Israel, his servant." So we've got "and he gave their land" would be the A part of this, "heritage" would be the B, which repeats twice. And then we have "to his servant Israel." See right here. The fact that there is this, "for his loving kindness is everlasting," is inserted in between. It kind of destroys the terrace pattern. That's just another reason for many people to assume that this chorus line is in fact a later addition to the psalm because it breaks up the poetry and it doesn't read quite as well. But in any event, there is the text that we have before us.

Praise of God's deliverance [44:44-45:52]

We then have a summary of praise of God's deliverance to finish the Psalm. The time frame is difficult to establish. It speaks about God remembering Israel in their lowly estate, but we don't really know. Is this a reference to the Exodus when he delivered the slaves from Egypt or is this, in fact, a reference to something that the Israelites or the Psalmist had gone through such as the exile in 587. It was difficult to determine for sure which one of these or maybe it was written in a particularly dubious way in that either one of those scenarios could be attributed to it. We have again, this word give thanks to the Lord which appears here. Remember as I said at the beginning of the Psalm, we've got three times that phrase was used. So this creates kind of like an inclusion for the Psalm and it reminds us of the beginning, but we were talking about that concept later on.

Juxtaposition of Exodus Psalms and the Arrangement of the Psalter [44:53-47:46]

Juxtaposition, I'd mentioned this before. So, let me just say a few words about it now. There seems to be an attraction of Exodus Psalms. Psalm 77 which contains some Exodus material appears next to Psalm 78. Psalm 105 in which again, Exodus dominates. It appears right next to Psalm 106. Here we have Psalm 135, which is before our Psalm we've just looked at Psalm 136. So there appears to be some kind of a cognizant effort by an arranger to group things together. And we know that this is true elsewhere in biblical literature. It's something called the principle of association, which I discuss in my dissertation and in other forums and I will not go into right now due to time constraints, but it is the content of the material of the Psalms does dictate to a certain place what Psalms are placed next to each other. They're not just thrown together entirely randomly.

So this was just my question: how did this situation come about? There are two ideas. One is that it is random and coincidental. I don't know how many people think about this type of stuff, but some people just think it's random. They were randomly put together. But I would argue that there is editorial activity that the editors of the Psalter were aware of each Psalm, the content of each Psalm, key words within it, how one ended, how one begins when they put things together. That is evident here and also elsewhere, although we won't go into that just now.

Summary on Psalm 136 and the Exodus Motif 47:47-50:40]

So, for summary, what can we say about this first Psalm we've looked at Psalm 136. The first of all is it's taking the idea of the Exodus and it's using it to describe or portray God as a warrior or a warrior king. The second thing is it has a liturgical purpose. So it's something which was deliberately, it had a setting, a very particular setting in all likelihood, the Passover. I don't want to swear to that, but in all likelihood it would have been the Passover, but it would have functioned as part of a greater ceremony. Israel in this song is totally passive. They don't do anything. They don't make any decisions. They don't rebel. They don't think. They're only there to be delivered by an almighty God. That's not always the case, but it is in this particular Psalm. It's the way in which the

Psalmist has chosen to portray God's people.

It lacked, as far as the Exodus went, there was not much in the way of direct allusions. We're going to see how this changes later on where there'll be many more places in a Psalm where we can say, yes, he's looking at this particular place in all likelihood or no he's not, or he's summarizing this particular place. We didn't have this so much. And the Psalmist seemed to be more general in his reference to the Exodus events.

Then we have the question of chronological order. There seemed to be a little bit of a change where the firstborn was mentioned first and then all of the plagues got used to deliver Israel. So this is a small example of it. We'll see more later, but it introduces the idea or the notion that even though we have the Exodus as a set or sequence of events for the Psalmist, it's more important to teach something or to create poetry. So the chronological order becomes far less important. So we're going to be discussing that as well in some of the other Psalms.

Then there's this question of qualification of loving kindness, even though the Psalmist repeats this idea of ki leolam hasdo, for his love is everlasting. The idea of loving kindness is really gaged towards Israel. What the Psalmist really means is "for his love is everlasting to Israel" or "to his people." So that's the summary of the Psalm. That's the first Psalm which we've completed. The next one we're going to look at is Psalm 78.

This is Dr. David Emanuel in his teaching on the Exodus Psalms. This is session number one: Introduction, Psalm 136 - antiphonal liturgy. [51:01]

Psalms of the Exodus
Session 2: Psalm 78 – God Chose David
By Dr. David Emanuel

Introduction [0:05-1:14]

This is Dr. David Emanuel in his teaching on the Exodus Psalms. This is session number two. Psalm 78 - God chose David.

Now in this video, we move on from Psalm 136, which was the last in the sort of the Exodus Psalms. We're going to go back and try and follow the order of the Psalms by looking at Psalm 78 which I have entitled "And God chose David." Psalm 78 is the second longest Psalm in the Psalter. Many people know the longest Psalm in the Psalter is, you can identify that as, 119 but the not many people know what the second longest Psalm is. So if anybody asks you that in a quiz, you can claim to know it. Psalm 78, which is dedicated to the Exodus motif second longest Psalm.

Psalm 78 -- Wisdom Framework, not chronological [1:15-3:03]

We saw that the Psalm 136 was set in the liturgical framework that was meant to be recited together in some kind of a ceremonial, some kind of festival. Here we find a psalm that is established in a wisdom framework which we'll see as we look at the introduction. You'll see many words and a lot of wisdom vocabulary that certainly brings us to think about literature such as the book of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes. The psalmist here has sacrificed chronological order. Chronological order is something that we have baked into our minds as being the guiding force in the arrangement of biblical literature or of literature generally. It's something that the ancients were certainly less concerned with. For them, it was more important to teach a point, to teach a message, to encourage people to good works, to know God. These are the aspects that were more important to them. If that meant that they had to sacrifice chronological order, then so be it. They were

happy to do that, so long as people got the message of what they were trying to teach. That's a very important principle we need to understand. It's an important principle which you need to keep at the forefront of your mind when you're reading biblical literature generally. Just because X comes after Y, it does not necessarily mean to say chronologically it occurred in that particular way.

Complex Redactional History [3:03-5:12]

This Psalm has a complex redactional or history, which is to say that within the psalm was, there are layers of this psalm and that it was developed. The version that we have today was probably not the first version that was originally written. Now, how you identify redactional the layers in the Psalms that's not for this particular series of lectures. But this is something which has been identified by many scholars of it. For our purposes, what this means is that the psalm has the definitely two strata within it that kind of point towards two different messages, two different points to its composition.

The first of them is learning from history. So as we read the psalm, you will see a very strong movement towards, teaching people how important it is to remember what your ancestors have done and not to repeat the same mistakes. That is something we'll see as we go through the psalm and that's a prominent theme within it. The second one is the selection of David and Judah, and we find that at the end of the psalm. Now as we will look at the structure of the psalm in just a moment and you will see how these two points are emphasized within the psalm itself. But the selection of David and Judah basically the selection of the Southern kingdom of Israel for the establishment of the temple and Jerusalem, the Holy city, that is something as well which is taught and the rejection of Ephraim, which is symbolic of the Northern kingdom of Israel. So we see these two aspects within the psalm and it obfuscates a lot of the narrative flow within it. But if you keep these two things in mind, you should be able to make some sense of it.

Structure of Psalm 78 [5:14-10:46]

So let's take a brief look at the structure, very brief, look at the structure. Verses 1

to 8, the importance of recounting the deeds of the Lord, remembering the deeds of the Lord. That's something that is critical to the psalm. But more so to that first message, remembering what God has done for Israel, particularly his miracles. We then have Ephraim's unfaithfulness in 9 to 11. We'll talk about that a little bit more because the notion of Ephraim switches a bit from the tribe to the Northern kingdom. In the Northern tribes Ephraim was very big and influential. There were many members of that tribe, and so oftentimes the Northern kingdom of Israel was known and is referred to as Ephraim.

Then we have a series of recitals about, the faithlessness of Israel against the kindness of God. That's a series of different incidents from history and from the Exodus in which this is drilled through. God is kind by doing things. Israel responds by rebelling. God is kind for not punishing to the full extent, but he does punish them. But then he's merciful to them. He's kind to them and they rebel against him and that recycling and that idea of that pattern, goes throughout that particular recital. Then we have a Psalmists summary verses 34 to 41 approximately where the Psalmist basically emphasizes the point. It's more, it's not enough just to mention examples. It's always important as well to specify in explicit words what your point is. That's what's going on here. We see this idea in parables where Jesus tells a parable he won't just mention the parable, but frequently he will say, so don't be like this, so don't do that. So, you give the example, but then you make sure to be explicit and say exactly what your point is.

We then have a second recital of faithfulness in light of God's kindness. Here we go down to the plagues, a lot of it's down to the plagues and the initial entry into Israel. This second recital kind of parallels the first one here. You will notice as well that because the plagues are mentioned in this recital, the plagues that occurred before the splitting of the sea and the wilderness tradition. So, for the Psalmist, this example here even though it's chronologically before this one. He reverses the order and it's not a problem because this is the point where that he wants to emphasize. That's the direction in which he wants to go in right there.

Then at the end it's a conclusion, which is the rejection of Ephraim. Judah and

David are selected, as God's shepherd for Israel, taking over from God's responsibilities.

Now in this Psalm, in this structure, it's worth noting a couple of things. One of them is the central position here and we'll see that it's bracketed by the two recitals. Then it's bracketed again by the mention of Ephraim. I can draw this out. It's called chiastic, but strictly speaking, it's not exactly that, but we see and we'll see this elsewhere as well, so we'll see, in this particular case, you'll see an A, B, X, and then you'll have B and then you have A here. So you'll have these corresponding positions here. Then these corresponding positions here and this X, is usually what we call an emphatic position, an emphatic location. It's a place where the heart of or an important part of your message is saved and it's reserved for that particular part of the Psalm. For us it's the psalmist's summary of events of rebellion and constant sin, which we find here. So that's one thing we have to remember.

The second, or another very important emphatic position within a psalm, comes at the end. Frequently psalmists, not just in Psalms, we find this in biblical prose as well, when they want to make a very important point, they leave it until the end. So, when you finish reading that composition, that is the flavor you're left with. So, they want to make it emphatic, they want to make it very strong. So, you are leaving with the important message that they seek to portray. Good.

Detailed Analysis Psalm 78 wisdom opening [10:46-17:13]

So let's look at some individual parts. We're not going to be able to look at all of it. It's a very long psalm and time is limited. So I'm going to take from certain sections. I want to look at some of some interesting points within the psalm itself. We begin here with this expression "listen to my instruction." This is one of the phrases that we have, which links to the idea or let's say it's one of the interpretations that we have that links with the notion of wisdom. "Listen to my instruction" which occurs in the first verse. I'm sorry, I haven't actually put it up there. The word for "instruction" in this particular location is the Hebrew word "Torah." We find this in verse one, which I said I haven't actually mentioned there. Torah is the word for "instruction." Now most people when you

ask them what does the word Torah mean, the first thing they say is that it means "law." But that's not the way we should be translating it all the time. Oftentimes in wisdom literature, we find that the word Torah is translated as "instruction." That's probably a better meaning than what we have in Torah. It's about guiding. It's about leading. It's about instructing someone in the way in which they should or they could go. So that's the first hint we find of wisdom literature in this particular psalm.

But we find other examples as well. I've mentioned before, how do I identify wisdom literature? By the vocabulary. We have these phrases and expressions. We have the psalm, the initial psalm title, that is, it's called in the title a "maskil." A maskil is from a root sekel -- sin, kaf, lamed. That's the root which means wisdom, understanding, intelligence. It has those types of meaning to it. Let me just change that I mean, sekel. It's a sin not shin. Sorry about that. So that's very much a word that implies wisdom. But we also have these expressions too "the words of my mouth" found in Proverbs 4.5 and 5.7. That's an expression frequently used in Proverbs. We find the word "proverb" (mashal) in verse two. So, I don't have that up here now, but it's another word which is frequently used in wisdom literature. Mashal is a short saying, an aphorism that teaches the reader. We also have this word "hida," which is a riddle. That's one way of understanding it. But once we enter into the world of poetry we have to always be very careful with applying meanings of words because often times you will simply have if a psalm let's say uses the word "proverb" in one part, in one half in a colon, in order to balance that, he needs another word that has a similar meaning. So, he might choose the word "hida." It doesn't necessarily mean to say that we have to understand the pure meanings. It just means to say that these two are related words and he's using one to balance the other one out and that occurs in biblical parallelism. Again, this is not a course on Hebrew poetry so I won't go into too much detail, but it's something that you need to be aware of.

We have over here repetition, which occurs and that's what I wanted to show you in this particular slide. We see the idea of telling and instruction repeated in various ways. We have, "our fathers have told us." It says there "to teach them" and "to tell them"

and that is repeated throughout the psalm. We also have the idea of children, children, children, children, four times. Just in these verses here I've got verses from three to seven. So in this small section, a relatively short section, we have this emphasis on teaching children, teaching children. It's something as we read Psalms generally and we need to be very, very cognizant of it if we see ideas repeated, then it means that the Psalmist is insisting that we listen to this particular thing. It's an important point in the whole of his creation. So we have that repetition. We also have this word niphelot in verse four. "Praise of the Lord, the strength and his wonderous works," if that's how it's translated here. But that is the Hebrew, again, niphelot that's the word pele' which we saw in Psalm 136, which basically means that it's a deed, a work, that is greater than man could actually do. It's miracle terminology and I'll say even further that oftentimes when we find the word in this particular format which is niphal participle, it means specifically the Exodus, the miracles wrought at the Exodus, whether it was the plagues, or whether it was the splitting of the sea, whether it was the provision of food. All of these are counted as niphelot, things which are too great for men to do.

Ephraim's Unfaithfulness [17:16-22:17]

We then have in the next section, a very peculiar section, a very peculiar content which deals with Ephraim's unfaithfulness. The text seems to be speaking of a mysterious event that we don't know much about. The sons of Ephraim at some stage, we have nothing in the Bible that specifically speaks of this, they turned back in a day of battle. They retreated in a day of battle and it's about in connection with a refusal to obey or to follow the laws of God. We do not have any evidence of this in the Bible, at all. So we have to begin to ask the question, well, where does it come from? As it's unlikely that he's just made this stuff up to fit in his Psalm. He's trying to create a work that's going to have appeal or are going to have a degree of understanding to his contemporaries. So it has to be something that they know about and he knows about that he could therefore reference.

So there is a high likelihood that he's dealing with an ancient tradition that we do not have recorded in Scripture. Let me just take some time to explain that notion. We

know that the Bible has been written and obviously covers a historical period, a huge historical period, a couple thousand years. It's often thought or it's easy to think that within the Bible we have all of the historical traditions captured and nothing else was going on around it. But that's not the case. There were many other traditions around the Bible. Some of them paralleling the events that we have recorded that are very similar but not exactly the same. There were many of these things around that everybody knew about. Often times psalmists, poets, but also other biblical writers would draw upon some of these traditions. Now they never knew that these other traditions were not going to be crystallized in Holy Writ. So, they were able to draw and touch upon some of these other traditions. We have if you think of the New Testament, we have that in the Gospel of Thomas, which is not in our Bibles, but it's was another gospel that was written that people would have known about, the Gospel of Judas. We have these things around so it's not a totally unfamiliar idea.

So in this case here, it would appear as though many people think that there is a tradition involving Ephraim which is not in the Bible. Now, in order to find out or to dig up where these other traditions might appear, a nice place to go is the Targums. The Targums, the early rabbinic writings, the early Jewish literature as well from the second temple period. These are the places that we need to go to see if we find echoes of it. In Targum Psalms we find this is mentioned here, "While they were living in Egypt," this is the Israelites, "whilst they were in Egypt, the sons of Ephraim became arrogant. They calculated the appointed time and erred" (they made a mistake) they went out thirty years before the appointed time (that's before Moses led them) with weapons of war and warriors bearing bows. They turned around and were killed on the day of battle." So we have an echo now that is always the very big question concerning, is the author of Targum Psalms, is he reflecting the true same tradition that is recorded here in Psalm 78 or is he creating his own Midrash? He sees that this is not in the Bible and so he generates this story as well. That's a big question. We can't be a hundred percent certain, but I do want us to be aware of the possibility of another tradition echoed in this psalm

because later on in the psalm we may see signs of another tradition too. So we have to be aware of it.

There are two possibilities that we just need to be, just need to be cognizant of as we go through the psalm. I've mentioned here other instances. I think there are other instances of traditions which seem to be seeping into the psalm, which are not recorded explicitly in biblical literature.

First Recital: Sea splitting and Manna [22:18-33:40]

So look at the first recital that begins with the sea splitting and it speaks "he divided the sea." "He made the water stand up like a heap" and this is simply wording that echo's Exodus 15.8. We know that Exodus 15, the Song of the Sea, was highly influential in poetic renditions of the Exodus. It seems as though rather than the prose tradition, that the Psalmist has used or adopted the poetic tradition from Exodus is rather than the prose. Throughout this psalm, you'll see as well, the emphasis is very much on miracles, on magnificent works that God actually does that are really, really impressive. These are the things, it's as though God is working overtime for the sake of the Israelites, in order to really encourage them to respond correctly to the things he is asking of them.

What of Pharaoh? We don't hear about Pharaoh in this particular psalm. He goes back to the Exodus. Remember in Psalm 136, Pharaoh was destroyed. He's mentioned there. God is portrayed as this warrior, this King type figure. But here it's the miracle. It's the magnificent work of God that's being emphasized. So we don't hear about Pharaoh. We don't hear about the destruction of his army into the sea because it's about the miracle. It's about the miraculous power of the God of Israel.

We move on to the provision of bread and we see again this idea, another idea of the doors of heaven. It's an example of God's response, his merciful response to disobedience. I mean, prior to this, in verses 17 to 20, the psalmist says that they sinned against God testing him in their hearts. So even though they have this sinful response to his miracle, God is still merciful and he wants to provide them with bread. We have this is obviously a rendition of the manna tradition. There's one in Numbers 11 and there's

another in Exodus 16, which speaks of God providing a miraculous provision of bread. But the rendition I would argue, in this poetic case, is far more I wouldn't say exaggerated, but it's more miraculous. It's more exaggerated. "He rained down manna upon them to eat and gave them food." And when you read that, it's as though they're walking and this manna is falling down from the sky. That's the way he's portrayed it. But when we look at the story in Exodus, it's much more basic. Mist would rise and there's this kind of stuff on the ground that they had to pick up and do various things with. So the way in which it occurs is really quite different. So we've got the power, the magnificence of God is being emphasized in all of this.

Here as well. We see this idea "whereas they did not trust in God." He rained down manna, you opened the doors of heaven. We've got this idea of "the doors of heaven" being opened. And I just want to say a couple words about this. There is an idea in a biblical literature that up in heaven, the perception of the world was not quite as we would have it, but up in the firmament of, I draw this out the perception of the world was such that there were rivers here and mountains, and this is the world and there is land here. But there was a perception that up in the sky there was something firm. There was something hard and concrete, which in Hebrew, it's called the rakia, which is in English, they call it "the firmament." It was a solid thing here, which occasionally it would open up briefly and rain would come down from it and then God would shut it down again. That's the way in which they perceived the ancient world. In addition to that, there was also the idea that up here, so if we go back here, there were various store houses. So, there were storehouses for wind. There were storehouses for rain. In addition to that, there was a storehouse for other things, for provisions that God wanted to provide people. So, there was the idea of the doors of heaven being open to provide things, the windows in heaven.

We see this idea echoed in 2 Kings 7:2 "Behold, if the Lord should make windows in heaven, could this thing be," and this was in regard to a famine in the days of Elisha. So they had an idea that in in heaven there could have been windows that would open up

and just pour down all of these supplies. We see it in Malachi as well. "'and test Me now in this,' says the Lord of hosts, 'if I will not open for you the windows of heaven.'" So we've got this idea of heavenly windows opening up and food just coming down and those notions which the Psalmist obviously would have known about, we see being applied in this particular situation with the Israelites.

Something else concerning this food is the manna which is described in a very relatively peculiar way. I've mentioned before the book of Numbers. Manna, well, it's a type of natural seed. It's a residue. It's something that comes from the ground. It's something that is, I want to say plausible something that we can easily understand. You pick up from the ground and you bake it, you crush it, you roast it, you do whatever you want with it. That's the way in which it's perceived in Numbers. The for the Psalmist, it becomes more than this. It becomes almost a divine food. It is described as food, divine food, "the bread of angels," "he sent them food from heaven, the bread of angels." Here there's the notion or there is at least hints of a tradition that what's being eaten is the same food that angels eat. So there's a suggestion, there is a tradition, out there that in heaven, they eat food and it's from this supply, this heavenly food that we then find God giving to man. This idea of angels' food being given to man, it's an idea we see it again, as Targum Psalms mentions and hints at it as well. "The sons of men ate food that came down from the abode of angels; he sent them provisions onto satiety." We see this idea here, but we also see this same idea with Elijah, when Elijah is fleeing from Jezebel, he runs into the desert and he throws himself under a broom tree and says, "Let me die. Let me die, Lord let me die." And then he is woken up and the angel comes and gives him this with bread and he takes this bread and he eats this bread and it sustains him all the way to Mount Sinai. So this idea of angels' food coming to men, it seems to be an idea, a notion, a tradition that was out there during the days of the Psalmist. It's being tapped into right here at this particular point.

The provision of meat which comes afterwards, seems more in keeping with the tradition in Numbers. We have both of them mentioned the wind and East wind here,

which is modified with the direction from which it comes. But we have with the idea of a wind bringing the quail at this particular time as well. So, in this, in this case, there isn't a whole load of similar wording between the two, but the allusion is quite clear as to where he's coming from.

But we also see an omission because we have all of these cases, we have the provision of food. But the law giving at Sinai is not mentioned, neither is the rebellion of Miriam and Aaron against Moses. None of these find any kind of a mention. They're not part of the psalmist's plan. For the Psalmist, his main enemy or the main conflict occurs between the nation of Israel on the whole or even the tribe of Israel and God himself. So this is one psalm where God's enemy is more aptly described as the people, the nation of Israel as opposed to any other people or nation.

The Psalmist's summary, I mentioned this before, it occupies the central position, which was very important. It's an emphatic location. So he basically, speaks out or summarizes, the behavior of the Israelites making statements such as God was gracious, Israel ignored him and rebelled against him. They paid him lip service. They faked repentance towards him. Most importantly, they forgot his miracles. That's what they did and if we go back to the beginning and that emphasis of telling and of sons, we see that forgetting his miracles is a sure way to walk into his punishment and his judgments. So all of this is done, a central position, again, as a warning to future generations.

Second Recital – Plagues [33:42-46:36]

From there, we go back into the second recital. Here it's mainly taken up with the plagues. Now up here, I've got a list of the plagues as they appear in Exodus and as they appear in the psalm, giving the order. You will see that there is a difference. Lots of the plagues are the same, but the order is different. The number in the psalm is different as well. We'll be addressing that in just a moment.

But let's look, take a brief look at the plagues, first of all. We have blood, which is in the first place. Both plagues traditions begin with that, with God striking the water. He strikes the water and it becomes filled with blood. The water becomes undrinkable. Then

we have the plague of swarms. Now I'm specifically saying swarms, which comes, you'll notice as well before frogs. You've got blood, swarms over here and swarms is down here. I have to qualify that by saying swarms of what? Now in the Hebrew Bible, as many people are familiar with, the plague being referred to here is in fact or usually called "flies," the plague of flies. The Hebrew word though is in fact 'arob which literally means "swarms." It is undefined. It does not have to necessarily mean flies. The reason why we find flies in most of the English translations of the Bible is because they take their interpretation from the Septuagint, which reads "dog fly." So that's why we see it there. But it's very important to remember that it the swarms, the idea of swarming is undefined. What is interesting here is that these swarms in the Psalms, they have the power to devour. They have the power to eat and they have the power to consume, which begins to suggest that it may not be flies that he's actually talking about. It may not actually be flies he is actually talking about.

When we go to a different tradition of this, in the Targums, when it talks about the plague of 'arob, this is what it says. "I will stir up among thee, and thy servants and thy people and thy house, a mixed multitude of wild beasts and that houses of Mizraim (which is Egypt) shall be filled with a swarm of wild beasts, and they shall be on the land also." So here in this Jewish tradition, in the Targums, the swarms are not flies, but the swarms are wild animals, a swarm of wild animals taking over the land. This kind of seems more in keeping with the idea of devouring because if you have wild lions, wolves and everything else, then they are more likely to perform an action like devouring. So that could be one way of explaining it. This tradition as well, it's worth mentioning, is the tradition or the understanding of 'arob, which we find in contemporary Jewish literature as well. So, I was actually dismayed to see this when I was looking at but the first time my daughter was in grade school, she came back during Passover and when it came to the plague of what I knew was flies, it was a group of wild animals and it's because that's the interpretation which they had, which differed so much from the Christian tradition.

The next plague is that of frogs, which in Exodus are a nuisance, but here we've

got frogs which destroyed them. So they cause some type of damage. Now what kind of frogs were they? Very difficult to know what's going on, but you kind of wonder as well if there is a bit of thinking of Revelation in this. Because if we look at the book of Revelation, I said before that the Exodus motif is everywhere. In the book of Revelation, we find animals with weird locust with huge teeth that devour people and cause people a great deal of suffering. So we may find this type of hyperbole in the description of the plagues and the damage which they do. So that's potential for frogs, which we have there.

We then have the plague of locusts, which is here in the psalm as number eight. Again, a difference in order and it comes directly from God. He sends them. This introduces an idea that we see in the Exodus Psalms quite a lot. The role of men is frequently pushed down and the role of God is elevated. He is the one that directly performs a lot of the plagues and the miracles and we see much less of Moses and Aaron. There's a degree of repetition here in this particular Psalm. We have locust and young locusts. And I've mentioned before, we can't make too much of this, but in biblical parallelism, we have to have word pairs that balance each other out. So we have that in this particular case.

Then we have the plague of hail in which two verses are dedicated to it, and it effects on both plants and animals. You'll see why that's significant in just a moment. At this particular point we've got the plague of hail in verse 47. "He destroyed with hail stones their vines and their sycamore trees with frost." This is another one of those emphatic patterns, a chiastic pattern. I go to the board again just to schematize it. It's basically a normal Hebrew parallelism would look like this, A, B, A a parallel, A and then a parallel B like this. Where these two words would correspond. They would have the same semantic play. So you'd use, in this case, locust and young locust in the B portion of it. But what's happening here in this verse is we've moved to an emphatic form in which we have an A and a B, and then it switched around and then we have a B corresponding and an A. This is something which is called a chiasmus. I don't know how, different people refer to it differently, but it's an emphatic structure and we see it not just

used here, it's used in a number of other places. But I would argue, and I am arguing in another paper which I'm writing, that this is a very much an important controlling structure in the whole of the psalm itself.

Good, moving on, we have this phrase that comes on an insert. So, he kind of devotes a verse for each plague. Then he doubles it. And then he speaks about God's burning anger. He's not talking about a plague, but he's building up to the last plague and he speaks of a band of destroying angels. "He leveled the path of his anger. He didn't spare their soul from death, but gave over their life to the plague." That's what he does here. This is pestilence. This is the plague of pestilence right here but there's an added build up towards it, a dramatic buildup for emphasis. We have something else as well, which is another poetic form, which is called delayed identification. What is happening is what the psalmist would describe and talk about something and not mention it specifically until the last word or at the very end of the sentence, the verse or the actual section. So he would build up and he will talk about it and then he will mention it, and finally be explicit about it. It's called the delayed identification it can create a degree of emphasis. We'll see another example of it. In this case here, it's the whole description of him becoming angry, destroying angels, but the plague itself where he's emphasizing this doesn't come until last, so he mentioned it finally. Men seem to be affected in this plague of pestilence, although in Exodus it's more of a cattle plague and on the beasts. But this seems to be slightly different.

Looking at the plagues here as well, darkness is not included, boils are not included and neither are lice. So, we've got the plague of the firstborn which has the ultimate position in both of these renditions. So, he has maintained something of the what we know is the original, although whether it is or not is a different story.

Some general comments on the plague. One is we notice a 7 plague tradition in Psalms versus a 10 plague tradition in the book of Exodus. 7 in the Psalm, 10 in Exodus. The two numbers 7 and 10 are I want to say basically the same because they're both numbers that represent completeness. If you look at these two examples of how they're

used, there was a popular expression, amongst the Israelites, which uses this number. One instance of that expression occurs here in 1 Samuel where Elkanah, her husband, said to Hannah, this is the mother of Samuel, "Why do you weep and why do you not eat? Why is your heart sad? Am I not better to you than 10 sons?" So, it's a complete number. "Am I not better to you than 10 sons." But we find in Ruth we've got the same expression, "who loves you is better to you then seven sons." So, we've got the idea of completeness expressed in 10 in one case and 7 in another. So, it's not really a huge surprise that in one tradition it's 7 and in the other it's 10. They are both numbers that represent and express the same thing.

Is there a question of increasing severity? Possibly? Certain scholars have argued for this. It's very general to see, it's not that explicit moving from the blood in the waters which doesn't actually kill anybody it just causes more of a discomfort to the swarms but they then begin devouring people so it's harder to argue here. Certainly, once we get to the idea of pestilence the build-up is greater and we have God speaking about his anger and his band of angels he is going to send out against them. Then we come to the plague of the firstborn which is definitely the most severe plague suffered. Some would argue there is a question of increasing severity but when we look at Psalm 105 I think there is a clearer picture of that possibility.

Omission of Moses and Aaron [46:36-48:42]

Something else we need to bear in mind is Moses and Aaron do not appear in any of the renditions of the psalm. When we're talking about poetry and most of the renditions of the plagues it is God who does it directly. The heroic deeds are performed by God and for the most part men only sin against God, rebel and complain and that's a pattern that we see expressed in most of the Psalms in different ways.

After that we find God leading; God as shepherd. This is very important for the remainder of the Psalm. He led them forth, he led them safely, he brought them to his holy land. So, God is Israel's shepherd as he takes them through the desert, out of Egypt and through the desert. That's important to remember, and it's probably for this reason

that we find the change in order, because we've already seen the desert events, but now he's focusing on this aspect of God leading Israel. He is their shepherd. It's basically a summary of the wilderness activity. But the details were given earlier all of the sin, all of the testing of God for bread and for other things.

After this, we have a rebellion and punishment whereby the Israelites, once they enter into the promised land, they didn't learn anything from the desert and they rebel against God. So, he punishes them, they continue to test God once they get into the land. These are general references to the high places and the idols and the high places were hills upon which altars were built and which people worshiped God as well as the God of Israel. They would worship other idols and other deities as well.

Intertextual Connection to 1 Samuel 4—sleeping deity? [48:43-52:39]

As a result of this, God kind of abandons his people and this psalm makes a reference to the destruction at Shiloh. This is probably an allusion to 1 Samuel 4, in which the Israelites went out to war with the ark of the covenant. They were defeated by the Philistines and the Philistines stole the ark. They took it away. This is probably a reference here. "He gave up his strength to captivity." And the word here is 'az, which in other contexts is a direct reference to the ark of the covenant. So that's probably the allusion that we've got here. and more so here because you've got "his priests fell by the sword." This is probably an allusion that Hophni and Phineas are dead. So those were two of the high priest's sons, Eli's sons, who went out to war and they are killed. So, we've got priests falling by the sword right here. Probably that's in all likelihood, that's the reference being made. So, you've got the priests, Hophni and Phineas, dying. But then you've also got another reference being made to his widows could not weep. In this particular place after our dead person there, we've got the instance of Phineas' his wife, who was unable to mourn because as she was giving birth, she died after she gave birth. So, she wasn't even able to mourn because she died as she gave birth early as a result of finding out the ark was taken, her husband was dead, Eli was dead, and all of these things had happened. So, she died and was not able to mourn "and his widows could not weep."

So, this is probably a reference to this whole incident right here.

Then we have something God gives up his people. Then we have something which is very rather daring imagery that says "then the Lord, awoke as if from sleep" and so the question is not just sleeping, but it's overcome by wine. So, the picture here very much is of somebody who is not just in a deep sleep, but somebody who's in a drunken stupor that he is totally out through alcohol. And as a result, it seems like this, that God is not doing anything. But as we know from Scripture, as we know in certain places, God does not sleep Psalm 121.4 says "he who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep." That's an image which we have, which is later. But certainly, before that in the days of the monarchy, the early monarchy, there was a notion that of the sleeping deity. There was a notion that God, it would seem at least to the people, did sleep. And so we have passages where Isaiah says, "Awake, awake, put on strength O arm of the Lord." He's saying he's actually kind of telling God, wake up "as in the days of old" and do something. We see here as well in Psalm 44, a clear example, "Arouse Yourself, why do you sleep? O Lord? do not reject us forever." So it's a perception that we have, or perception that's created, that God is asleep and that he needs to be stirred through prayers and intercession and shouting and whatever it is into action once again. That's the image that we have here, that of the sleeping deity who awakes and then he comes to the rescue of his people, Israel.

Ephraim Rejected / David Selected [52:40-54:50]

Here we've got our climactic ending, in which I've said we've mentioned the first important part of passing information down and now we come to the second part. The second important part is the rejection of Ephraim. Ephraim's rejected the Northern kingdom and the people of the North are not selected for the housing of God's holy city and the holy tabernacle as well. So, Ephraim is rejected. Instead, Judah is chosen for the temple. The tribe is the location, approximately of Judah, where the temple was actually built up in Jerusalem. More importantly than that, David is selected as God's leader, if you like. The important thing here to remember is that throughout the Psalm, it is

conspicuous, the omission of any individuals named. We don't have Moses, we don't have Aaron, we don't really have Pharaoh. Names aren't mentioned. So, when all of a sudden, we see here the name David, it's a big deal because now the Psalmist is revealing the importance of this particular individual. More than just, revealing him, if you remember a few slides back, we saw God was leading Israel, guiding them as their shepherd, but now it's like God takes their reigns of leading and guiding Israel and he hands them over to David. It says, here "you brought him to shepherd Jacob." So, he shepherded them and he guided them and all of this is language of leading and guidance, which was once belonging to God, but now it goes down to David and it's his responsibility to be God's man.

Summary Conclusions on Psalm 78 [54:52-58:26]

With that said, let me just summarize before we close up this psalm with a few points. First of all, Psalm 78, it's long. I know I haven't done it justice; it would take a few more weeks to do that. But it focuses on God's miracles for Israel, less on people, but more on the miraculous power of God. It also focuses on the rebellion of Israel in light of his goodness, in light of his going above and beyond to help them out. They rebel against him. They don't act appropriately to what his great power deserves.

Then the other emphasis also was learning from the past. In this sense, as I said before, it was connected with wisdom traditions that you would learn from it.

Some omissions are the giving of Torah not mentioned again. I'm not sure why it would seem as though there would be a good instance to talk about the rebellion because while they were waiting for Moses to come down the mountain, they get Aaron to create this golden calf. But that's not mentioned. We also have the word "Torah" mentioned in the Psalm, but it's not the incident of the giving of the Torah. The law giving is not specified. The individual rebellion of Dathan and Abiram these are not mentioned either. It's mainly the Ephraimites and the Israelites who do battle with God and become his enemy.

Something else I would mention too is the hints of lost traditions, the bread of

angels and the Ephraimites retreat when they pulled back in battle. We don't have clear evidence of that in biblical literature. So, it seems as though, and in my view at least, the fact that we have these other traditions kind of hints towards the earliness of this particular psalm. I don't want to get into dating in this case because there's a lot of controversy about it, but I think it kind of hints to the earliness, the early nature, the early feel of this particular psalm.

Then we have the elevation of God, Moses and Aaron absent. God does everything directly. He splits the sea. It's God who provides the bread. It's God who provides the quail. He does all of these. He sends the plague and there's a sign of God. So, we have the elevation of God. The other thing is I'd mentioned before, only David is named in all of the Exodus tradition. If you think about it, the psalm so much focuses on speaking about the Exodus, yet there's nothing mentioned of Moses. Nothing mentioned of Aaron, but David is recalled and that should again, really emphasize the central point of this psalm. So that Psalm 78, the second longest psalm that we have in the Bible, is dedicated to the Exodus tradition.

This is Dr. David Emanuel in his teaching on the Exodus Psalms. This is session number two. Psalm 78 - God chose David. [58:26]

Psalms of the Exodus
Session 3: Psalm 105 – Remember and Obey
By Dr. David Emanuel

Introduction [0:05-3:22]

This is Dr. David Emanuel in his teaching on the Exodus Psalms. This is session number three. Psalm 105 - Remember and Obey.

So, we've looked at Psalm 78, second longest psalm in the Psalter, and now we turn our attention to Psalm 105 which I've entitled "Remember and Obey." Introduction. The Exodus motif is part of a much longer selection of history in this particular psalm. So it connects all the way back to the promise given to Abraham in Genesis. So it's a much longer history. It's not, if you remember, Psalm 78 focused pretty much everything, most of it, about 80 to 90% of it was just on the Exodus motif and various parts of it and he chopped and changed with the order behind it. Psalm 105 focuses more on the Abrahamic covenant and it doesn't chop and change quite so much. Psalm 105 has a relatively strong connection with written tradition. I'm not able to show you this as much as I would like to, but there are many places in the Psalm, we'll see some examples, but there are many places in the Psalm where we can see that it clearly links back to a written tradition, Israelite tradition. We have excellent examples of biblical allusion where the Psalmist would use particular phraseology, particular words to connect the reader back to certain texts.

We'll see some excellent examples of that here. We'll also see, I won't discuss it, but it's worth mentioning, that this psalm is reused in the book of Chronicles. The whole, I think it's the first 15 verses of the psalm, appear I want to say verbatim. But it's not quite verbatim as there are a few tweaks, but there is no doubt at all that the Chronicler has appropriated the material of the Psalmist. One could say it's the other way round, but the likelihood really is that it's the Chronicler who actually borrows the material from the

psalm. That's a discussion which I'm not going to go into right now.

Something else we're going to see in this psalm, which is remarkable. We saw in Psalm 78, that the Israelite rebellion is a key theme against the backdrop of the miracles performed by God. In this psalm we struggle to see anything negative at all. The whole Exodus is viewed as a positive experience from the beginning.

Psalms 105 – Structure [3:23-5:26]

So let's look at the structure. We begin with this summons to worship in verses one through six approximately. We will look at it in more detail. Then there's the promise to Abraham. The promise to Abraham really kicks off the theme or the plot for the whole psalm. God makes a promise to Abraham and throughout the rest of the psalm we see that promise in danger and we see God coming to defend it and protect it until it's brought through to fruition. So, we have the incidents that create these narratives, on the protection of the promise. We've got the patriarchs, we have Joseph, and then we have Israel in Egypt and then finally Israel in the desert. So, we've got four instances recorded, from the Exodus as well as from the earlier historical material that narrate how the promise that God made to Abraham is endangered and God has to come in and intervene supernaturally. I won't say supernatural, it's a horrible word, but using his miraculous power, his great power, he has to intervene to preserve the promise until it finally comes through to fruition. Then at the end there is the fulfillment in 44 and 42.

Then at the end of it, as I've said before is an important location in Psalms, is the very end because that's where the point is being made. That's where the big lesson occurs that the reader has to seriously pay attention to. That's what we find in verse 45. God, making a promise, keeping a promise, being faithful to that promise doesn't come without a price for the Israelites or for those who are the recipients of his benefits that he makes.

Psalm 105:1-6 Analysis, Todah [5:28-9:56]

So let's begin looking at the psalm. We begin here with, "O give thanks to the Lord." The notion of giving thanks, kind of creates a context of praise as opposed to

wisdom literature. It gives a context of praise and thanksgiving. But the notion of giving thanks is a little bit different than we understand it today. Biblical days, particularly with Psalmist when we speak of giving thanks we're not just talking about saying "thank you," which is what happens today in many contexts. But when you give thanks, you have to do two things basically. One of them is that you have to declare it aloud with your mouth. The second thing is you have to recite what it is that you're giving thanks for. So you have to be able to say, "thank you Lord for" I don't know "saving me throughout this day." You would say, "thank you Lord," and you would detail exactly what it is he has done and that is your expression of thanks.

In certain places, you will see that the word "thanks." Let's just take a quick look, the word's "todah" in Hebrew. It would look something like this, I guess. It is from a root yadah. Like this. This word actually means, or has the sense of to confess and to speak out. So we see in the instance in the book of Joushua after Achan after the conquest of Jericho, when God says don't touch any of the stuff, any of the materials to be destroyed. Achan, one of the Israelites, sneaks in and he takes a few articles of clothing and a piece of silver and stuff like this. As a result of that the Israelites lose their battle against Ai, even though it's a relatively small town. Then Joshua turns to God and says, what's going on? Why is this happening? And God says, because somebody stole something. Then God begins to give him the process of filtering out who did it. The family of Achan is isolated from the rest of the Israelites and Joshua turns to him and it's a very interesting phrase, but he says something like, "Give glory to God" and it says, "give him thanks." Give him todah and that's how it often gets translated. It's give him praise but the real sense is confess. Speak with your mouth what it is that you have done. That's the sense which we have in this psalm here when it says give thanks. Speak with your mouth, confess what it is he has done. That's the sense and that's what happens in the psalm because the Psalmist is about to recite what God has done rather than just saying, "thank you." He verbally goes through it as well.

We've got "make known his deeds amongst the people, speak of all his wonders."

Again, we mentioned that the niphelot, these phrases niphelot / gedolot which are miracle phrases that actually happen. More importantly, we've got here the word "remember" "His wonders which he has done." When we speak about biblical remembrance, it is 99% of the time not a mental act. Biblical remembrance is not something that resides in the mind. It doesn't live and die in the mind. Biblical remembrance is a process that may begin in the mind, but it's always intended to have a practical action attached to it. So when he's saying, "remember what God has done," it's not to sit back over a cup of coffee and have nostalgic memories about something, but it's to remember what he has done so that your behavior might change and that you might be different as a result of what you have actually heard. So, we have to keep that in mind with this concept of biblical remembrance.

Psalm 105:7ff – God's Promise to Abraham of the Land [10:00-12:13]

So we moved to the second section which is basically God, the promise, which is being made. The promise which is being recalled to Abraham way back in the book of Genesis. We have here a clear biblical allusion going back to Genesis 15. "On that day, the Lord made a covenant with Abraham saying, to your descendants, I have given this land. To you I will give the land of Canaan as a portion of your inheritance." There's a pretty clear allusion back here. This is the promise which the Psalmist actually has in mind that he wants you to think about. So, the connection is relatively clear at this point, but there is an alteration being made which is quite subtle that we have to be mindful of. In Genesis, when this promise is made, it is made not just for land, but it is also made for progeny and it's also made for protection. "He who curses you will be cursed, he who blesses you will be blessed." But these aspects are not the focal point of the psalm. All he cares about is the promise of land. Land has a very important relevance for this particular psalm. It has been argued that the psalm was written after the exile. It's a post exilic Psalm or during the exile. So, it may have been written at a time when the Israelites did not have their own land and they are remembering this promise of land, that was given to them. Or they had just come back to the land and they were recalling that promise of land

saying, "yes, we actually belong here." That's a reasonable thing to assume whether how factual, would I go to Vegas and bet on it, I'm not quite sure. But it's a logical thing to assume from the context of the psalm.

The Promise in Danger [12:15-17:55]

Moving to the next section, we have the promises made for the land of Israel and now we move on to these short narratives or narrative type sections, which speak about times where the promise is in danger. We begin with this one here and this is what makes this psalm so masterful and so excellent is that the Psalmist is basically using the concept of biblical allusion as we know it. So, he's says here "when they were only a few men in number, very few and strangers in it." Now, if you don't know the Bible, if you don't know biblical history, you would just think, okay, there was a time in which the patriarchs were only a few men in the land. But if you know biblical literature, and I believe that's what the Psalmist is depending on as we read the psalm. If you know biblical literature, then you will know this passage in Genesis 34.30.

What happens here is that two of Jacob's sons instigate a slaughter on the people of Shechem. As a result, Jacob feels highly threatened. He thinks that the people in the neighborhood or the surrounding cities will hear about this and they will come and they will threaten him. So, he makes this statement, "you have brought trouble on me by making me stink to the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites and Perizzites. My numbers are few and if they gather themselves together and attack me, I shall be destroyed." This expression "are few in number" occurs in these two places in this narrative context. So, it is clear what the author is doing is he's activating the reader's mind. So, this was a case in which the promise was in danger if Jacob's fears come to fruition. If the Canaanites and the Perizzites come against him and destroy him, then the promise made to Abraham is null and void. It's failed because the people are dead and Abraham's descendants will not be able to inherit the land.

So, we see in just a small phrase here, the author is reaching out into your image, if you know the text, and he's pulling the whole context of Genesis into his psalm because

it reinforces his point. He doesn't have to quote the whole incident. Obviously, there was no chapter and verses which he could go to. He does that by using a few words that will connect you to that particular story and you will therefore fill in the rest of the gaps.

The same thing happens again. "They wander from nation to nation, they're approved kings for their sakes, do not touch my anointed ones and to my prophets do no harm." Now I've highlighted it in that particular way because again, we see another emphatic structure. This chiasmus mentioned here again, which is the A, B, followed by B, A. Let's put tags on there. So, we've got that crossing action going on right there. So, we have "Do not touch is" the same, equals to "do not harm" and we've got "my anointed ones" and you've got "my prophets." Those are the two corresponding elements there. It's emphatic. God intervenes to stop or to protect his anointed ones, his people. Here, once again, we've got this idea of a biblical allusion being activated and it comes from this word "prophet." The only time the word "prophet" is used in connection with the patriarchs comes in this instance here, when Abraham goes into a Philistine country and Abimelech takes his wife. God has to intervene through a dream and say, give this man his wife back. He does. Though God intervenes, he rebukes the king which is exactly what happened. He reproved the king of the Philistines, not by saying these words, but he said, "this man is a prophet, return the man's wife. He's a prophet, that he will pray for you and you shall live." So, we've got another excellent biblical allusion where the Psalmist reaches out, grabs a larger text and brings that meaning in. He's being relatively economical with the choice of words that he actually uses.

Psalm 105:17-22 Joseph Story [17:57-23:16]

Psalm 105.17 to 22 we have the Joseph story. Again, if Joseph dies then his family in Jacob back in the land of Canaan would have died from the famine and the promise would have been null and void. The promise is always hanging in the background. It's hanging on a thread. Can God fulfill it? Can God keep that which he said he was going to do? So, we have the Joseph story right here. No mention obviously of the brothers and they're selling him. There is no mention of what went down with Potiphar and his wife.

Everything is positive at this particular time and everything is very much from a godly perspective. God is in control throughout the whole of this psalm. We see it's almost as though events take place on the earth and it's almost as though in this psalm we can see the strings going up to a master puppeteer who is God and he is controlling every situation that happens. There are no mistakes. There are no coincidences. There are no accidents. God is in total control of what's going on and we see that throughout this psalm. It says here that he called for a famine upon the land. We look at the Psalmist's perspective of what's going on. God calls the famine. If we go to the book of Genesis, it simply says there was a famine on the land. It says nothing about God calling for it, God making it happen. So, we have this divine perspective or we have this view of God controlling everything that happened and orchestrating it perfectly according to his will.

We also see this instance here "until the time that his word," that's God's word, "came to pass, the word of the Lord tested him." So here it's an interpretive lens we're being given because when you read the story of Joseph, as Joseph goes through all of these things with his brothers, with Potiphar's wife, he doesn't know what's going on. It's not saying that God did this and God did that, God did the other. It just happens and he has to deal with it. But here in the psalm is the Psalmist portrays it, it's God testing him. It's like testing metal. You're heating up metal to get rid of the impurities. You're making it pure. You're making it fit for use. So that's as the Psalmist views this particular scenario.

I'll say a brief word as well about this phrase here. It says, "the king sent and released him." There are different ways in which we can even understand that. It says that "the king sent and released him." I argue as I've argued before, that there are at least two ways of reading this. In Hebrew that might look something like Shalah I think the article on shalah melek. I guess it would look something like that. Shalah melek, "the king sent" literally this would be "he sent" and this would be "king." I raised this because one way, or the common way, of understanding it is that the king sent and released Joseph, but the Hebrew, because it's in poetry because it's relatively sparse, we could just as easily read

that God sent though he is not the king, but he in fact is God. So "God sent the king" and then the king was obedient and released Joseph. I like that way of reading the psalm because it puts God in automatic control of everything and that's certainly the MO of the Psalmist. So, it fits in very, very well.

And the other thing that lends towards that interpretation is simply that the word shelah appears if three other times in the psalm and God is always the subject of the verb, never anybody else. So, there's a degree of ambiguity in how this is actually rendered. There are a couple of literal versions. I think Young's literal translation does actually render it such that a God sends the king and the king is obedient. I just feel that that actually works better in the psalm.

Ps 105 – Israel in Egypt, inclusion [23:18-26:44]

So we move on to the Israel in Egypt. This is when they go in. This is moving from between the gap between Genesis and Exodus. We see more of this change of responsibility. It says here "he (which is God), caused his people to be very fruitful." When we read the text in Exodus, the sons of Israel, they were fruitful. They were just fruitful through no special means. But now with the Psalmist perspective, God's role is elevated and he makes them fruitful. It wasn't an accident. All of this worked according to the purposes and the designs of God. We see something very clever being opened up here with the word "Egypt." That's the opening of something which is called inclusion or inclusio. In this case it's quite cleverly marked out. What the Psalmist has basically done is he's used the word, if this is the Psalm schematize the Psalm like that. Then he uses the word "Egypt" and then he goes into his description. What he does that's particularly clever is he never uses the word "Egypt" again until the Israelites leave Egypt. Inside this section of the text the Israelites dwell in Egypt, but he never uses the word even though he has opportunity to do so. So he will use different types of synonyms. We'll see a couple of them or he uses pronouns "them" and things like that, but he never uses the word "Egypt" again until the Israelites leave. This is something called inclusio or an inclusion. It's a means by of segregating or separating certain texts from the rest of the

material. In this case is a wonderful opportunity for the Psalmist to use Egypt, but he says, "and miracles in where the land of Ham." He does that all the time throughout this section, which is really quite clever.

We have something here. Moses and Aaron are both mentioned. They're given a mention, but it's almost a perfunctory mention because even though they appear and they are named, if you remember in Psalm 78, we didn't see any mention of them. They are named here. But when it comes to the plagues and the things that God does, they don't really do it. We run back to that third masculine singular of God doing, performing everything himself. But at least they are mentioned here. They kind of get, some kind of cameo role in all of the proceedings.

The Plagues in Psalm 105 [26:45-34:57]

When it comes to the plagues on the whole, we're going to look at these in more detail as well. The plagues, the references of the plagues, only occur in Psalms 105 and 78. Only they have a full rendition of the plagues. Everywhere we'll only have really just mention the firstborn or in a general kind of "he smote the Egyptians." But now we have another full rendition of the plagues in this particular place that's just an image of the 10 plagues of Exodus. But as we're going to find out, we don't get 10 plagues here, once again, we only get seven. It appears as though we only get seven. So, we begin with darkness, sending darkness and making it dark. We've got this expression here that they did not rebel against his words, which is really, what didn't rebel? Was this a reference to Moses and Aaron not rebelling or is this a reference to the darkness and these plagues are not rebelling against his word? A bit of a dual meaning there perhaps.

Darkness is seen as the least severe and with these plagues, we're going to see that is a stronger case for growing intensity as we go through them all. So we begin with darkness. Obviously, a move from the Exodus account, which is lost and now we're up here. Then we've got blood which kills fish. That's the damage, which it does a little bit harsher than the darkness perhaps. I would say as well, because we have all of this up that there's I mentioned that the full rendition of the plagues is only in Psalm 105 and Psalm

78. But I will say that there's a scroll in Qumran. I think it's 4Q 4.2.2, which also has a rendition of the plagues, but there are only about nine plagues mentioned there. It would seem that scroll I still think needs some work being done to it. A couple of articles have been produced on it, but I just get a feeling that psalm text needs a little bit more work dedicated to it.

So, what's next? Next we have frogs, which are viewed as a nuisance. There are frogs even in the chamber of the kings. Unlike the frogs of Psalm 78, these aren't devouring frogs or these aren't ones that do any physical damage. They go into the king's chamber. They affect him, but they don't cause any harm or lasting damage. Then we've got swarms again. We come back to the issue of our 'arob. What are 'arob? I said before in the book of Psalms, in Psalm 78, 'arob seemed to be a wild animals. At least there was a tradition, certainly very strong in Jewish literature. 'arob how would you do it? Let's just do that for argument's sake. But here it seems to be coupled with gnats. So swarms here's got swarms of flies and gnats. But if we go back to the that meaning of 'arob as swarms then it may be better to read "and there came forth swarms, gnats in all their territory." In that sense, the second part of the verse would explain the first part. So at first you would have a general description that there were swarms and the second part is more specific "gnats in all of their territory." That's another way of looking at it. It's in order to move away from this idea of swarms necessarily meaning flies, which I actually, I prefer not thinking of swams specifically as flies because that's not what the word actually says. So is this one or two plagues? I would count this as one and this is another non-destructive plague that sent against the Egyptians. And once again as well, these are things which he spoke and these are things that God has done deliberately. It doesn't say they spoke, it doesn't suggest Moses and Aaron spoke, but it is God who speaks and he implements these plagues directly.

Hail and fire only affects plants. But here we see two verses per plague, that's this one here. But we have hail and fire which is recognized also in the Exodus tradition. So that's pretty good. Also, the locust, which still affects plants. Another two verses

dedicated to it. "They came locust and young locus without number ate all the vegetation and ate up the fruit of their ground." So, we've got this, what seems to be some kind of intensity building up.

Then, of course, we have the firstborn. So, in both Psalm 78 and in this psalm here, the firstborn is always the ultimate plague. Now, the plague of the firstborn is, it's always the ultimate plague. It's always seen as being the most significant. It's significant in this sense that all of the other plagues could possibly be explained by creation somehow running rampant. So, you've got all of these frogs, you've got all of these swarms. These are phenomena which they may well have experienced in the past. The plague of darkness, this could have been an eclipse of some description. A plague of blood, as some people in sciences today have said there could have been a particular type of algae which affected the rivers at that time. Locust what locust came anyway. Hail, they came anyway. But when we're talking about a plague that only effects the firstborn of the Egyptians, this is very different. This is as it's written scripture, the hand of God. This must be something that only God can do. So, it's not just destructive. It's not just powerful in its in its effects, but it's powerful when you think about the cause of it. This is pointing to a holy God who is being incredibly selective in whom he strikes down. So it's incredibly relevant, which may be why it's always in that last position.

We've got to take a step back and remember, this is all about defending the people. If the Israelites are kept in slavery in Egypt, there can be no Exodus. They cannot enter the land, then the promise of God fails. So, God has to intervene to get his people out, to protect them, but more importantly to protect his promise. So now they've come out. Then he brought them out with silver and gold and it mentions here, Egypt was glad and here we go. They've left Egypt now. So now we see the word "Egypt" appear that was the end of that inclusion, which I had mentioned earlier. This is where we see it.

The Protective Divine Cloud [34:58-36:59]

Up until this point in the psalm, there was danger from people, the kings who were threatening the patriarchs. We had Pharaoh threatening Joseph and also the Israelites,

enslaving them. But now as they go out into the desert, the threat is not from people, but the threat is from creation. It's from the sun and it's from hunger and things like that out in the desert. We see an interesting description of the cloud. "He spread a cloud for a covering." This is interesting because in Exodus, the cloud doesn't function as a covering. The cloud is a guide. It's a pillar of cloud that leads the Israelites during the day that they follow it. That's also a pillar of fire at night. So it's a guide. But here it seems to reflect a different tradition of the cloud as a covering. And here in Isaiah 4.5 there's something kind of similar. "Then the Lord would create over the whole site of the Mount of Zion and over her assemblies a cloud by day and a smoke and a shining of a flaming fire by night." So here this is in the context of Isaiah 4.5. This cloud here is protective against the heat of the sun during the day, and it seems to reflect this idea here as well.

Then there are other Jewish traditions. I think in Ben Sirach you will see a similar idea of this reflected too in which the cloud is not just a guide, but it also protects the people. That is the notion of protection, I would argue is stronger in the context of Psalm 105 because God is protecting his people in the same way that he's protecting his promise from anything that might endanger it.

Omissions: No Rebellions [37:00-37:37]

So we see this rendition of the desert motif, no hints to complaints for water complaints for food, no rebellions against Moses. If we only have this account of the Exodus, it will be the most joyous of occasions. That's what the Psalmist wants you to believe, at least for this particular time. So he skips anything negative, and this is an aspect of biblical interpretation. He's only presenting the positive side. It was obviously written by an eternal optimist.

Return to the Abrahamic Covenant and Human Response [37:38-39:26]

Now we come to this section here where we return to the promise and there's an allusion back to the earlier part of the psalm right here, "He remembered his holy word with Abraham," the covenant which he made with Abraham and his oath, the Isaac. So

now we're going full circle. He did all of this. "He remembered this holy word," that promise, which he made all the way back in verse nine. Yes, he's remembered that promise and he's been faithful to it and "he brought his people out with joyful shout, and he gave them the lands of the nations." So that which God promised to do he was able to keep.

He did bring them to that land and that's wonderful, but it doesn't end there. Yes, he did that. Yes, he preserved his promise. Yes, he was good to his people, but now we have the obligation of the people "so that they might keep his statutes and observe his laws." Yes, he did it, but all of this is for them to realize that they need to serve him. They need to keep his law as a result of his faithfulness to them. It's kind of like what didn't happen with Psalm 78.

Once again, we see this chiastic pattern. "keep his statutes, his laws observe." That's at the end and you'll notice as well that this chiasm is often used at the end of a psalm where the end of a very critical section because it drives home a very specific message to the readers.

Interpreting the Plagues in Psalm 105 [39:27-40:38]

Some interpretive notes on the plagues. This idea of gradual intensity from the darkness, the first plague to the firstborn has been mentioned by certain scholars. There's a harmless inconvenience with the darkness. You've got the blood which kills fish, doesn't affect people. The frogs become an inconvenience to the king. So now we're encroaching onto the royalty. You've got the swarms and lice which is a dual attack possibly or just lice, with the fact they've got the mention of both of them, which are recorded as two different plagues in the book of Exodus may suggest a degree of intensity. We then have a move to two verses per plague with the hail and also with the locust. And then finally you've got the death of humans. So many have seen this as a gradual level of intensity in which God gets slightly more angry, slightly more angry, slightly more angry, then he kills the firstborn. Then it's all over.

God's Word and Omissions in Ps. 105 [40:39-45:19]

A few more things right here - interpretive notes. God's word is extremely important in this psalm as a binding motif or an idea. If you look at verse five, "remember the wondrous works He's done, the miracles and the judgements." He utters the judgments that God speaks. We find direct speech. God says, "touch not my anointed ones." And if you look at that in light of verse five, one of the judgements he utters is to the king saying, "don't touch my anointed people." God called a famine on the land. It's something he uttered again, a judgment of his mouth, that he speaks. The word of God, a word, an utterance of God, tests Joseph in verse 19. Verse 31 God spoke and there came forth flies. Again, he speaks and then it happens. He spoke and locusts came as well. So we see this emphasis on the spoken word of God. We never saw this in Psalm 136, we never saw this in Psalm 78 either. It's something very peculiar to this psalm.

Negativities are absence, with no negative events. Abraham's lie. He got himself into trouble twice telling kings that Sarah was his sister. There is mention of that. Joseph's brothers selling him, no mention of that. Only the positive things. Food complaints in the desert, the rebellion at Kadesh, the great rebellion where they didn't want to enter the promised land the first-time round. All of these things happen in the Exodus account, but because of the psalmist's goals, he doesn't mention anything negative.

So, to summarize in this particular psalm the focus is God fulfilling his promise and defending the people and the promise. Those are two things which are linked together. If the people are destroyed the promise fails. The history covered is not just the Exodus, but we go from Abraham all the way to the entry to the promised land. Nothing is mentioned as we saw in Psalm 78 of the entrance into the land and the idolatry that goes on there. We stop at the giving of land. It's that idea of land I mentioned before that is quite important because it could have represented a time when the Israelites were either divorced from their land or had been newly reunited with it. In omissions, the giving of the Torah I think is very important. There's nothing mentioned about Sinai because

obviously at the end of the psalm, obedience to the law is what's being required, but it's giving was never mentioned. That could just be because it was too closely aligned with the rebellion tradition, the golden calf. But we nevertheless have it omitted.

And perhaps the most important aspects of this particular psalm is the elevation of God as he tests Joseph, he multiplies Israel; he calls a famine; he enacts the plagues directly. God's role is drastically changed from Exodus to the psalm. As I said before, he is portrayed as this master puppeteer controlling every event exactly as he wants. So, his purposes are fulfilled.

So that brings us to the end of Psalm 105 it is very different than Psalm 106 another long psalm. But the emphasis is far more positive as the Psalmist filters out those individual negative things from this work.

This is Dr. David Emanuel in his teaching on the Exodus Psalms. This is session number three. Psalm 105 - Remember and Obey. [45:19]

Psalms of the Exodus
Session 4: Psalm 106 – Standing in the Gap
By Dr. David Emanuel

Introduction [0:06-1:53]

This is Dr. David Emanuel in his teaching on the Exodus Psalms. This is session number four. Psalm 106 - Standing in the Gap.

We come now to the fourth psalm, Psalm 106. We just looked at Psalm 105. This one I've entitled "Standing in the Gap" and you'll see why because the message of the Psalm is very much geared towards biblical intercession. But we'll see that as we move along. The psalm is a lament. We haven't seen this yet, not in Psalm 78, neither in Psalm 105, or 136. It is a lament. That's one of the genres according to Herman Gunkel. So, it's a psalm in which the Psalmist or the people at the time of its writing were in a period of distress and they are crying out to God for help. So, they have to describe their distress in various means. So, we've seen the Exodus motif used so far in different contexts, in a wisdom context, in a liturgical context, in praise contexts, and now it's in a lament. The same Exodus story, different aspects of it have been taken and used for very different purposes. I've noted before that the Exodus Psalms attract each other. So, we have Psalm 105 followed immediately by Psalm 106, just because they are both Exodus Psalms.

Psalm 106 – Uniqueness [1:53-5:42]

It's easy often as the case when I speak to people about these Exodus Psalms, they basically have the feeling that they're all the same. They contain the Exodus material and they're called recycling historical recitals. They assume that because there were some Exodus pieces in there, they're all the same. But as we look at them, something I'm hoping that you are beginning to feel now is that they are incredibly unique and each Psalmist has done, has rewritten, the Exodus very specifically according to details and

according to a program that he wants to promote. So, they are very unique contrary to what people think.

A big difference is the contrast that we have here. In the previous Psalm, everything was absolutely amazing. There was nothing negative in there whatsoever. But in this psalm we'll see, particularly with the same period covered, the desert period covered, we'll see the total opposite. Instead of everything being rosy and wonderful for Israel, we'll see more stories of rebellion and sin and falling short of the model that both God and Moses were the demanding of the people.

We have the scope goes from the sea crossing all the way through to the exile. So in instead of going from Abraham as Psalm 105 was to the promised land, there's an overlap. But this psalm moves ahead and it speaks about the period of the monarchy, albeit in vague terms. We had some monarchy descriptions as well in Psalm 78, with just before the monarchy, but it did relate to it slightly. Here we have another taste of that. But once again, it's not in any detail. We don't go into the sins of kings. We don't go into the sins of Israel in any depth or detail during the era of the monarchy.

In this psalm we'll see something very peculiar as well. I said that they're not all the same, but we'll see active characters. We'll see individuals such as Moses, Phineas. We'll see Abiram. We'll see these people being active. In literary terms, these would be complex characters or even round characters and that's something we haven't seen so much. We've only had kind of lip service paid to Moses and to Aaron and stories of rebellion. But here the people become much more pronounced, much more active and we'll see that their actions are much more sinful when compared to God's righteous actions.

There are loose literary resources. Again, I can't enter into as much of the intertextual works as I'd like to because of the differences between Hebrew and English, but there are certainly clear allusions to texts and we'll see some of those as we move along.

Something else that's very, very particular in this psalm is that it is centered or it is

framed around an individual's confessional prayer. The notion of the I, of the me, of the self, is very much pronounced in this Psalm. We do not have that in any of the other Exodus Psalms. So, some things to look at as we work through these psalms, it's very important to remember, yes, they all have the Exodus, but they are all incredibly different from each other. And it's identifying the differences and appreciating the differences that helps you to appreciate the individual psalms.

Dating of Psalms and Ps. 106 [5:44-10:08]

I want to say a few words here about dating psalms. So far, I haven't mentioned that. That's why I want to begin with Psalm 106. I haven't mentioned it so far because dating psalms is generally a very difficult. When dating compositions like the psalms or any biblical literature, we normally look for datable persons, datable events or datable places. Once we find those, if there was, let's say, a particular individual who's mentioned in that particular time, that we know lived in a certain era, then we can date the psalm in relation to that particular person. So that's normally what we do. In Psalms, because of their nature, the nature of them being poetry and oftentimes not being very specific with respect to their environment and individuals, they become incredibly difficult to date, generally speaking. But this particular psalm, I think we have a clue as to when it was actually written.

When we try to date psalms, we basically attempt to locate psalms in three eras and this is true for the most part biblical literature. We have the pre-monarchy. Let's just say pre-exilic, the pre-exile. We have exile and we have post-exile. This [exile] being approximately 587, during the exile in 70 years afterwards. So, when we were trying to date biblical literature, we normally think of the pre-exile, we think of the monarchy era or something written during the exile or something written during the post-exilic era. That's all we try to do. Anything more than that is really quixotic. We can't look to say, "Well yeah, this psalm was written in 794 or 798." That's not really going to happen. We'd like it to, but we don't have a decent frame of reference, a good enough accurate frame of reference for most of them.

So with that being said, we can probably place this psalm, Psalm 106, to the exile. We probably place it to the exile. The exile may seem like a small, 70 year period with the exile. It seems like a short window, but there are often very clear clues that something was written during this period. For this psalm itself we've got this verse here, the last verse, apart from the doxology "save also O our God and gather us from among the nations." This statement here, not just myself, but a lot of scholarly consensus has it probably written during the exile in 587. Now a case could be made and you can argue and say, well, maybe it's talking about other exiles and there is a possibility for that. But in spite of all that, when you look at the history that's covered within the psalm, or you look at the language of the psalm, I think it's quite safe to assume that this was written in exile as an intercessory prayer. Now, it doesn't have to be used in that function now, but I think I would suspect strongly that those were its origins. If you think as well of a psalm like Psalm 137 "by the rivers of Babylon," which is another psalm, which again seems to indicate an exilic setting. And there's always an argument that says, Yes, but it could have been this or could have been that, but the likelihood nevertheless is that we're dealing with an exilic setting.

Structure of Psalm 106 [10:10-14:46]

So the structure, there is an introductory call to remember. We'll look at that in more detail, which is kind of like just very much an introduction to the psalm itself. We then have this a case of God's deliverance at the sea and this serves as the pinnacle of the psalm the high point if you like, as regards to obedience, as regards to following the will of God, God's deliverance at the sea and Israel's correct response. Everything from this point onwards is a degradation as regards to the quality of service to God. Everything down, there's a moral decline after this and the Israelites just find themselves going further and further and further away from God, rebelling, sinning, and adding to it again and again and again. But it all begins after this big event of God delivering the Israelites at the sea. So, it begins, they forget the deliverance of the sea and they begin complaining.

Then we have jealousy of the appointed leaders and this is when Korah and Abiram and Dathan complained against Moses. So, we have further sin and rebellion. Then we have Moses interceding at Sinai. So, we have the sin of the golden calf and this is very interesting because now we have Moses, a human figure doing something positive, doing something active and positive. He stands in the gap and he intercedes on behalf of the people of Israel successfully. So that's really important. It's the first time we've ever seen it in any of the Psalms. So we have to take note. Why is it being included here? What is its importance? What is its significance here?

Then we've got the rejection of the land, another desert at Kadesh, another incident that occurred in the desert. Then we've got the sin at Baal Peor in which Phineas stands and he averts judgment in a similar way to Moses. Phineas, we never hear him mentioned in any of the other psalms. We know Moses was there, but Phineas has this very exalted position in this psalm because of his act. Think again. Psalm 78 nobody was mentioned. It was only David at the very end. No individuals of the desert scenario were mentioned at all. Same with Psalm 136 and also with Psalm 105. Moses and Aaron are mentioned as being God's servants, but that's it. They don't do anything actively that's deemed as being positive or deemed as being somehow righteous. But this psalm is very, very different in that regard.

Then in verses 32 and 33, the Israelites cause Moses to sin and this is at the mayim Meribah, the waters of Meribah, where Moses, as it's called in Numbers, fails to honor the name of God by striking the rock. There's a lot of mystery concerning what exactly he did wrong there, but it's recalled here and it seems to be the Israelites to blame more so than Moses.

Then we have in these verses here just kind of like a general cycle of sin. We'll talk about that in just a moment, but nothing specific is really given. It's difficult to locate or to identify the biblical texts concerning what the Psalmist was actually referring to in these particular places.

And then at the end, the final verse is a plea for national deliverance. Then we have a doxology. Now I'm not going to talk too much about this doxology, whether it's organic to the psalm or not a slight degree of contention arises, with many people, myself included, don't feel that it's actually organic to the psalm, but it's part of the doxologies that we see that have been added to certain books in order to create the five books of the Psalter.

Introductory Call to Remember and Passover Reversal [14:48-18:21]

So let's begin here with the introductory call to remember. Now here, I mentioned before, you can see it clearly, you've got this emphasis on individuals, on an individual. "Remember me, that I may look upon the prosperity, that I may rejoice." So it's this very personal aspect. We'll see why that's important later on, but that very personal aspect of the psalm makes it unique. We don't have that in any of the other Exodus Psalms.

You also have the recognition of the community too. In many senses we've got here in verse six, "We have sinned like our fathers, we have committed iniquity, we have behaved wickedly." Now I put here that this is a Passover reversal. And what do I mean by that? Here I'm referring to the aspect of the Passover whereby the people who sit at the Passover meal, the idea is that everybody who takes part in the meal participates in the Exodus from Egypt. It's as though we were there. By eating the meal, it's something that's done, we've done for generations to generations. It is as though, you are there. So, you are partaking in that same meal that the original Exodus generation took. This is kind of like a reversal because we have a Psalmist who's probably sitting down in exile in 587, 586, 585 whenever, but he's sitting down and he's saying, "we have sinned like our fathers, we have committed iniquity, we have behaved wickedly." So, he's saying in the same way in the Passover, people will eat the meal and they've taken part in the Exodus. He's saying that I have taken part in the sins of my fathers as well. I'm as guilty as they are. So he's not detaching himself from them saying they're all wicked. But he very much owns and accepts a lot of the responsibility that his forefathers have had.

And we see something very similar to this in the book of Daniel as well. When

Daniel intercedes for Israel, he says, "we have sinned." Daniel really had nothing to do with everything else that caused the exile. He was a child and he grew up in Babylon, but he nevertheless as part of his prayer, he has to own this prayer and says, "yes, we, I am part of the nation. Though I wasn't there. I still have some of the blame and I can't detach myself fully from it." So what we see in this is one man interceding for the nation, one individual, he's praying on behalf of the nation, not detaching himself from their sins, but interceding as part of it. This idea, this notion is very important because it helps to explain why he includes some of the events that he does within the psalm.

Egypt and the Enemy [18:23-19:53]

So then we have the deliverance at the sea, when it splits open. We have a number of synonyms for Egypt used: enemy, hater, adversary. We also have Egypt is mentioned once, but we also have a morphological allusion. We have an interesting phrase that's used mitsarav. If I write it in Hebrew first. It's "from his enemy." This is similar to the Hebrew word mitsraim [Egypt]. Hopefully you can see the similarities just between some of these letters here. So you've got this clever, allusion to Israel. But you've also got a number of these synonyms – enemy, hater, adversary. And this could be because in as much as the Psalmist is recalling the deliverance from Egypt, he's also kind of hinting at the deliverance from his own enemies, haters and adversaries; because he's in Babylon. He's thinking in the same way you can deliver those Israelites from Egypt, you can also deliver us from our enemies, haters and adversaries, which effectively are the Babylonians.

Rebuking the Sea [19:55-21:27]

So we have the positive beginning with the deliverance at the sea and everything's wonderful. There's a bit of a poetic transformation we see within these verses in which it says the sea is rebuked. Now that's not what happens in the book of Exodus, but when we are speaking about the rebuking of the sea, we're really beginning to use creation terminology. We're thinking in times of ancient creation myths in which when God

created the world, the first thing he had to do was somehow still the waters and rebuke them and control them in order to really begin his work. Now, there are other connections to that, but I'm sure that's going to be revealed in other videos so I won't go into it now. But it's nevertheless creation imagery being drawn upon here in order to describe the splitting of the sea. And that's not just here.

We often find the Exodus as it appears in other texts as it appears in Isaiah. You will find language that is often used to describe creation as being used to describe the splitting and the parting of the waters at the Red Sea. So, this is common, even though it's really the first time we're coming across it in this series of videos.

Complaining and Rebelling [21:30-24:25]

The manna and quail incident after this great miracle at the sea, everything falls to pieces. They quickly forget his works. They rebelled basically against God and they start to complain. The God who parted the sea and brought us through. Now all of a sudden, he's run out of power. What's going on? And they start complaining. The allusion here is clearly to Numbers 11 and the provision of quail. We have this text right here, "but they craved intensely," which is translated, "had greedy desires."

Now this is just a pet peeve of mine, which will occur that we'll speak about again, I'm sure, that is, when a Psalmist alludes to a biblical text, what he normally does is he takes a unique phrase from the biblical text and he places it directly into his own composition so that his readers, when they read his texts will be drawn to the other text. And for me if the Psalmist has taken so much time and energy to make his wording exact, why can't our English translators do exactly the same? This is a pet peeve. I understand the value of translations. I appreciate translations all around, but I think it's just seems to be, almost the violence to the text when the English translator doesn't appreciate what the Psalmist is doing or what a biblical interpreter is doing. But anyway, let's just put that down for now.

This is the same phrase that we find that links this text to this one down here. That's the allusion Numbers 11 but there's kind of a strange addition of "they did not wait

for his counsel," which we see. Well, there's nothing in the Numbers text that suggests that there's a degree of impatience. So, we don't know where this comes from. Is this another tradition that the Psalmist is trying to include or is this part of his frustration sitting in captivity describing the situation around him and lack of patience was a problem there? He's inserting it and maybe he's speaking to his community saying, we need to wait for his counsel too. So, it's a strange addition. You can only assume that it would have been very significant for the writer himself.

Dathan, Abiram Rebellion – minus Korah [24:29-26:55]

Verses 16 to 18, now we have the jealousy that arises with Dathan and Abiram and they rise up against Moses, and say, "All God's people are holy. What are you doing? Why are you hogging the leadership for yourselves?" And he raises up a company against Moses. Three individuals rise against Moses and Aaron in Numbers 16. The psalm recalls the same punishment with the earth opening up and swallowing them up and also fire consuming their company. So, it's interesting that it's clear that the Psalmist does have something very similar, at least to what we have in our Pentateuch, and he's using that. So, he calls the same punishment.

But it's a very interesting alteration which we do see and that is the omission of one of the antagonists. We have Korah, Dathan and Abiram, and in Psalm 106, we just have Dathan and Abiram. What happened to Korah? This is a question many exegetes have stumbled across. A couple explanations which we could have for it. One of them is simply that the Psalmist was trying to keep everything balanced in a cola, in poetic cola. So, the addition of a third name may have set things out of kilter. But the other explanation could be simply that Korah we know was somebody who established the famous Psalm school of Psalmology. So, it could be also that what the Psalmist seeking to do is protect his name. So, take his name out of it because he doesn't want to cast shame on this particular individual. Now that's a possibility. So, we hold possibilities like that to the side and say, well, are there any more cases like this within the Psalm that we see? And if there's another case, one or two cases, then we could say, yeah, that might be

a strong possibility. That might be something that the Psalmist is doing. So, for the time being we're going to hold it in our minds. These are those explanations here is either poetic abbreviation or protection of Korah's name, the sanctity of Korah's name.

Moses and the Psalmist as Intercessors [26:56-30:40]

So we're going to keep those two things in mind and move on and look at the first intercessory note in which Moses intercedes. "They made a calf at Horeb, worshiped a molten image. Thus, they exchange their glory for the image of an ox." Looking at this text here clearly refers to the worship of the golden calf. This was when they first came out of Egypt and this was before the quail, which we've already seen. So like Psalm 78, this particular author has no regard for the sequencing of the biblical texts at all. He's teaching his point, he's making his own Psalm, his own creation, and the ordering of things is disrupted. But that's okay. That's what Psalmists do. The chronology issue is ours that we need to really get over. Failing to remember, this ties back to verse seven. The fathers failed to remember. Remembering and forgetting are important to the Psalmist's plan. Remembering obviously leads to obedience, forgetting leads to disobedience.

So, the Psalmist is hoping that because he is remembering all of these things, his generation in exile hopefully will receive the benefits of God unlike those who forgot long ago, which speaks of the desert generation. I mentioned before about the appearance of Moses as an intercessor. In spite of the sin, had not Moses, his chosen one, stood in the breach before him and turned away his wrath from destroying them. So here we have, and no other Exodus Psalm does this, Moses not as somebody who brings plagues, not as somebody who parts the sea, but as an intercessor. What we have here is an example in the Exodus tradition where one man is able to turn aside the wrath of God for the nation.

The Psalmist is very keen to bring this instance up because he stands in exactly the same situation. He's in exile, one man, and he is hoping to steer away God's anger from the nation. So, in bringing this particular example up, we can see, wow, he sees himself as a Moses figure in that instance.

I would say as well, as we spoke earlier about Korah, the potential of omitting Korah because they didn't want to cast any shame on him. "They made a calf in Horeb." Who actually made the calf? It was Aaron. Aaron is not mentioned anywhere here. And again, is this another question of him trying to protect Aaron's name and not having him in any of these proceedings at all? If you look at the actual text in Exodus, it's clearly Aaron who's done the wrong thing. In spite of what he says and his excuses of, "I just threw this gold in and this came out." It was Aaron who basically led them in this, but it would seem as though the Psalmist doesn't want to cast any negative shame on him. He clearly has a high respect for the early leaders of Israel.

Who's glory gets exchanged? – Tiqqun HaSopherim [30:42-33:53]

We've got here an example of something, a phenomenon that I just want to mention briefly. I know this is a text critical issue, but I still would mention it. We've got here in the New American Standard, the New International Version, the New Living Translation, it says "they exchanged their glory for the image of a bull eating grass." In the ESV, it says "they exchanged the glory of God for the image of an ox that eats grass." There's subtle change in what's going on here. This is from the ESV. What's going on here is one of the examples, I think of 18 cases of a phenomenon known as Tiqqun HaSopherim, which is "the corrections of the scribes." And in here, I'm glad to see my Hebrew is preserved, but this word here is kabodam means "their glory." That is what is written in the text itself. That's what's written, that's what's it is translated as. But scribes know and exegetes know that the original reading is kabodo, "his glory." So, what happens here in certain scribal renditions, and this is a known phenomenon in other places as well, is that kabodo or "his glory" is more correct, but they don't want to do anything to profane the name of God. So, they don't want to directly include God in this. So instead of saying "they changed his glory for the image of a bull," they change it to say "they changed their glory for the image of a bull."

And this type of thing, not just tiqqun HaShopherim, but the idea that a scribe would or a writer would change something to preserve God or to preserve a biblical

figure is by no means strange. The Bible is in fact littered with it. I could go into other examples. If you look at the book of Job, that just comes to the top of my mind right now, you will find that when Job, after he gets struck down with his initial illness, his wife says to him and your English translations will read "why don't you curse the holy one, curse God and die?" But the Hebrew doesn't read that. The Hebrew actually says, "why don't you bless God and die?" You cannot say, "curse" with God as the object. That's horrible. That's a horrible thing to say. So, you change the wording to preserve the sanctity of the name of God. This is a similar type of thing, at least 18 such corrections as this exists, but I'm sure there'll be a textual criticism, a series of videos that we'll be able to cover a lot of that material.

Kadesh refusal to enter the land and exile [33:55-35:19]

Verse 24 to 27, "they refused the land." Here we have the incident at Kadesh, allusion to Numbers 14, the first failed conquest where God tells him to go into the land. They spy it out and then 10 spies come back with this negative report. Notice however, that the Psalm changes things slightly. In the Psalm it says, "therefore he swore to them, that he would cast them down in the wilderness." Well, he did. God said "40 years, none of this generation is going to see the land. You're going to die in the desert. The next generation will go in." "And that he would cast their seed among the nations and scatter them in the lands." Nowhere, it doesn't mention this in the book of Numbers. So where is this actually coming from. Well the idea of having their seed amongst the nations is something that's very real to the Psalmist because he sits in exile, he sits in Babylon, he sits after the destruction or the loss of the Northern kingdom as well, where they have been scattered. So, we see this once again where the Psalmist is kind of like merging what's going on with the desert generations, with his generation and the situation that he is going through as well.

Lexical Connections [35:21-37:48]

The next section, we have a lot of texts here just as well it's a video, but we have,

the allusion I wanted to show you some of the lexical connections. "They joined themselves also to Baal-peor." So, Israel "joined themselves to Baal-peor and ate sacrifices offered to the dead." Here it's just "sacrifices of their gods." So, it changes it slightly, but you can see a clear connection between these two texts here. And also at the ending of the plague. "And so, the plague was stayed." "So, the plague on the sons of Israel was checked." And again, you're probably going to find it's the same wording that's not been copied. That's another story. So, you've got a clear connection with this text to Numbers 20.25 and the intercession of Phineas. The Psalmist makes an addition, "ate the sacrifices offered to the dead." Is this just a question of hyperbole? Is he now mentioning speaking that the idols or the gods of these people are dead and are worthless, which may well be the case. But we find something more, I think more interesting to me, is a degree of interpretation which he places. The Psalmist says here, "and the plague broke out among them." If you go to the source in the book of Numbers, maybe I'll just flip back a couple slides here. Here the only thing we have in the book of Numbers is a description of the end of the plague. "So, the plague on the sons of Israel was checked." We don't have in Numbers any wording suggesting that a plague ever broke out in Numbers. So, this is something that the Psalmist addresses in his rendition of the story where he actually explains, yes, at this point, a plague did break out.

Phineas and the Psalmist as Intercessors [37:50-39:46]

In this passage as well, we see another intercessor, Phineas. This is his sole appearance in any of the Exodus Psalms. Just like Moses, he stands up as one person interceding for the whole of the nation and because of his righteous act, the nation is spared. This is really important again, it's the second time we see it because the Psalmist is seeing himself in that model. He is that one individual. His prayer of intercession, he's hoping in the same way God respected it in the past, he would do it again. One man can stand before God to turn away his wrath. As a result of this, we see this wonderful exaltation of Phineas. It says, "it was reckoned to him for righteousness to all generations forever." This is not in the biblical text, but for those of you who know Scripture and it's

clear what the Psalmist does. There's clearly an allusion to Abraham. "Then he believed the Lord and he reckoned it to him as righteousness." So, Phineas is being exalted and placed in a position high and exalted to that of Abraham, one of Israel's forefathers. The question is, is the Psalmist thinking about this for himself? Is he, saying, if I do this, will I be exalted that much or do I consider myself as being that righteous if I do the same act as Phineas? But it's a very deliberate act of allusion at this particular point. But in order to get it, you do need to know some Scripture yourself.

Waters of Meribah [39:48-42:20]

We then go to the waters of Meribah in which the Israelites provoked God, Numbers. 20.1-13 is the case here. There's a subtle shift, I said, in accountability at the waters of Meribah. Moses was told to do one thing. He did something slightly different and God's name was profaned. It wasn't made holy among the Israelites. As a result, God punished Moses. Here the accountability seems to lay on the Israelites' shoulders. It says, "because they were rebellious against His spirit, he spoke rashly with his lips." It's their fault. He's just trying to do God's will. They push him to this place where he has to speak rashly with his lips and therefore he is punished. So, the Psalmist is giving Moses, and out in this particular case saying, yes, he didn't do what was right, but nevertheless it was their fault. Here we just see that. Numbers recalls Moses disobeyed God, the Psalmist recalls the people's responsibility in that particular action.

So, we move on to a cycle of sin and punishment in the land, which we see. It is very difficult to locate specific passages from the Bible, from the Hebrew scriptures. It speaks of after the Israelites conquer the land and the monarchy. There's possibly an addition of child sacrifices. "They even sacrifice their sons and their daughters to the demons." Is this an allusion to Manasseh who passed his son through the flame and sacrificed him? And as a result of what he did, the Israelites were, according to Kings anyway, destined for exile.

But in spite of all of this, the end of this section, it closes with, "he also made them objects of his compassion in the presence of all their captors." We see a closing statement

in this section of God's compassion for his people. So even though they sinned and they were punished for it, God remains compassionate to his people.

Summary [42:22-48:14]

So let's summarize this quickly. The Exodus in Psalm 106 is a confessional prayer. It's different from all of the others. It's used to confess the sins and to even intercede for the nation. The two sections that highlight intercession were Moses and Phineas. It's particularly, if you ever watch these videos together, you'll be able to see, it's very strange to have individuals, one portrayed as being so righteous, human individuals, and also to be so proactive in the things that they are doing. So that stands out very much. This question of these two individuals standing as intercessors highlights the Psalmist case, when he can say, "remember me, O Lord, with the favor of your people." And in this way, the Psalmist aligns himself with those individuals saying, "in same way you remembered them and you delivered the nation, now please do the same thing to me." And just finishing that section there, we're going to talk about, I can highlight again, these active roles by the individuals is rare among the Psalter and the reuse of scripture.

A couple more slides, I just want to go through right now. One of them is Psalm, the connection between 106 and 107. We spoke about the attraction of Exodus Psalms and that was just one way in which similar content attracts, seems to have attracted the redactors of the Psalter. But I'll say this much.

There are other reasons why Psalms are juxtaposed as well. And if you look at the end of Psalm 106 it says "Save us, O Lord our God, and gather us from among the nations." The Psalmist is in exile. He's saying, please help us out. I don't think it's by coincidence that the beginning of the following Psalm says, "let the redeemed of the Lord say so, Whom He has redeemed from the hand of adversity and gathered from the lands, From the east and from the west, from the north and from the south." Where? "From among the nations." So, it certainly looks as though somebody has put these two psalms together. One is a request for help. Now the editor by juxtaposing these Psalms can say, "Aha, Yes. God has answered this prayer and he has delivered us from dispersion

amongst the nations." So, we see this kind of interaction, which is going between these two Psalms, which further highlights the cognizance of editors and redactors in the arranging of the Psalter.

The last thing I want to say concerning this Psalm, well concerning the position of this psalm is that it comes at the end of book IV. I've mentioned before, there's a doxology at the very end of the Psalm, which means it closes Book IV. Book IV of the Psalms, of the Psalter, contains from Psalm 90 to 106. Because of its character it is often been termed "The Book of Moses." Why is it called "The Book of Moses"? Well, one reason is because the opening of this group of Psalms begins with the prayer of Moses, the man of God. It is the only Psalm to which Moses has been attributed as an author. Another reason is because seven of the eight times the name Moses appears in the Psalter is in this particular book. The only other time he appears is in Psalm 77. There's a degree of dispute as to whether that was a later addition to the Psalter if you look at other earlier manuscripts in other languages, you will find evidence that Moses was not actually original to that psalm. So, most of the occurrences appear in this particular section of the Psalter. We also have the desert theme in Psalm 95, 105, 106 all found within this small concentration of Psalms. And this was a time, and this was a period, in which Moses was Israel's leader.

And also, what we find here is the theme of God is King in these Psalms. Psalms 95 to 99 we have the phrase, either "the Lord reigns" or "God is King" or he rules, something like that in those particular Psalms. All of this together points to a particular time in which David was not the king of Israel, but God was their king. This was reflected in Psalm 136 in which God acted as a King, fighting against other kings, Pharaoh, Og, and Sihon in battle to defeat them. So that ends Psalm 106 we have one more to go. We have 135 to do next.

This is Dr. David Emanuel in his teaching on the Exodus Psalms. This is session number four. Psalm 106 - Standing in the Gap. [48:17]

Psalms of the Exodus
Session 5: Psalm 135 – The Lord's Supremacy
By Dr. David Emanuel

Introduction [0:05-3:20]

This is Dr. David Emanuel in his teaching on the Exodus Psalms. This is session number five. Psalm 135 - The Lord's Supremacy.

We come now to the last psalm we'll be looking at. We began this journey looking at Psalm 136. We've come full circle now and we've reached the last one, Psalm 135, which I've called "The Lord's Supremacy." So, we have here, that notes should give you a clue, basically a hymn of praise, what Gunkel defines as a hymn of praise. So if you think in terms all of the different genres we've seen, we've seen Psalm 136, which is a type of hymn of praise. But then we've seen Psalm 78, which is more kind of a bit like a lament or more like a wisdom psalm even. We've seen another hymn of praise in Psalm 105 that's very unique and different. We've seen a lament, a definite lament with Psalm 106. So we can't say all the Exodus Psalms, are of one particular genre, but they cross genres and that's fine. That's okay.

The Exodus material is not that much and it is abbreviated in this particular psalm. But the way in which the Psalmist uses it is special; it's individual and it's a bit different from what we've seen previously. The primary use of the Exodus in this particular psalm is a means of demonstrating the omnipotence of God and, you will see, in particular regard to the impotency of other idols. So, there is a direct comparison, we'll see how that works in just a moment, but there's a direct comparison between the power of God and what he can do and the impotency of the other idols.

Something else that makes this psalm unique is that it is highly dependent on biblical literature. I don't think there is a single verse within this text that is not connected to another place in biblical literature. So that's something that you're going to see. We

haven't seen that before. For that reason alone, there is a strong indication that this psalm is relatively late. As a hymn of praise as well, like Psalm 105, you'll find too that it's a relatively positive theme and anything negative that Israel does has by in large been omitted.

Structure of Ps. 135 [3:23-5:23]

Looking at the structure, it begins with an introduction, which has to do with where you normally find a hymn of praise in which the psalm invites people to praise God and to come together as a community. We then have a description of God's omnipotence in creation and in Exodus. We've seen before that the two themes were linked where we find Exodus, we will often find creation. We found that in some of the descriptions, the description of God rebuking the sea, is an image that we find in the creation narrative.

In Psalm 105 that's a case where there's no evidence of creation there in that particular psalm. But if we take a step back to Psalm 106, you will find that 104 is, in fact, a creation psalm. So it leads right up into the Exodus material. And being as I'm on that topic, it's worthwhile just taking a brief look at the three psalms that we've just previously dealt with, being assigned here. Now Psalm 104, 105 and 106, and if you look at them together, you will see that 104 covers creation. And then we go, as we have seen, from Abraham through to the entry of the promised land. Here we go from the crossing of the Sea all the way through to the exile. And so when you look at these psalms together, you kind of have a summary of history from creation all the way through to the exile. So that was just, by the by.

Praise Introduction and conclusion, Hallelujah [5:23-8:25]

God's omnipotence in creation and in Exodus. Then we have a small praise intermission, two verses, which don't really talk about any sort of historical event, but they recall the introductory praise. Then you have a description of the impotency of the nations' idols, the silver and gold and the shapes which they mold and how useless these

things are. Then finally, there's an exhortation to praise in verses 19 through to 21. The structure that we're dividing up this psalm in this particular way, you will see that there is a degree of correspondence between the initial introduction and the exhortation to praise. Both of them have this idea of praise. Both of them use this phrase, "hallelujah." More importantly is the comparison, therefore, between God's omnipotence, which is matched directly with the impotency of the nations' idols. So that comparison is forced and in the center. We have our praise intermission and we're going to talk about that in just a moment.

So, we've got the introduction to praise. We've got "Praise the Lord." Now this is another one of those pet peeves is joined towards this as well. We've got the Hebrew phrase, "hallelujah," which literally does mean "Praise the Lord." But you will see variants in the translations. Some actually write the word "hallelujah" as one word. Others try to split it, as I have done here, to show that what we have here in this phrase, which I think is a very important and a powerful phrase is we've got two words in Hebrew that are joined together which actually may look something like "Hallelu" and then, "Yah." So, we've got Hallel. This word here, is an imperative, which is like a command telling you to praise or to boast about Yah -- to boast about the Lord. So, it's not just a word that you say. It is in fact a word which should be encouraging people to praise the Lord and it translates differently in different places. Praise the Lord. Sing praise to him.

Israel as God's Special Possession [8:25-9:47]

"The Lord has chosen Jacob for himself, Israel for his own possession." And there's a very important word here. Segula, they are an "am segula," a people, which is a special possession. If you go to the book of Ecclesiastes it uses this word that talks about a treasure, a special treasure that you would have and you would keep aside, which is your personal property. That is what the idea of segula basically is. So, it's not any possession, but it is a very special possession. It has links to this passage in Exodus. This is just to show you as well that connections to the Exodus motif are not necessarily on

these supernatural acts. But here we've got a connection, a covenant connection, where God says, "if you obey my voice and keep my covenant, then you shall be my own possession, then you will be my segula," which is "my special possession from among the nations." So just having the translation, "his own possession," I perhaps think is a little bit of a disservice to the strength and the weight of that particular word. But that's how I feel.

God above the gods of the nations [9:50-11:45]

Once again, you've got Elohim. When you've got this, we began with this God or gods "that the Lord is great and that our Lord (Adonenu) is above all gods," "above all Elohim." It's that word again, which doesn't refer to the God of Israel, but it refers to other gods or idols of the nations. This as we read the introduction to the psalm, we should have our senses up. Previously when we read an introduction to some of the psalms, we read the introduction to Psalm 105, we read the introduction as well to Psalm 78 and both of those psalms to introduce the psalm, we had the word nephelot and I mentioned that, or gedolot, which was this miracle language. Even in the introduction, what that tells you is that it gives you a hint of what's to come in the psalm. We're going to be discussing, what the gedolot, what the nephelot of Adonai actually are in the psalm.

So here's a hint of it. In this case here we've got God is a great God and that our Lord is above all gods. Here as well, we've got the similar indication and a similar case and the psalmist is saying, "Hey, this is what I'm going to be talking about. This is the main topic of what I'm saying. Our God is greater than all other gods. If you don't know how, then keep reading and you're going to find out and I'm going to explain that to you." So you've got the basic theme being established in the introduction to the psalm, not just here. It happens quite often there'll be clues, there'll be hints, there'll be allusions, to what is coming on.

God's Resume [11:48-16:19]

So now we come to this section of the greatness of God and we first see examples of omnipotence in creation. Now when we think about creation, oftentimes in our minds,

in the modern person's mind, creation is an event that happens in six days, six periods of time. It's not my job to enter into the theology of the whole situation, but the biblical text says happens in six days. But people see creation is happening in that period. God came down, he created the world, made mankind, and then he takes a step back and he moves back. I mentioned this before, some would then have it that he then finds mother nature to go and run things for him whilst he rests in this eternal rest. This idea of creation, it's not the biblical notion of creation. The biblical notion of creation is that God creates the world and he continues making things turn. He continues sending rain, he continues sending the sun; he continues growing crops, trees, and plants. He continues to be active and involved in the world. He hasn't taken a step back at all. So, when we look at God causing the vapors to ascend from the ends of the earth, this is an act of creation. He keeps the world moving. He continually remains involved in the running and the management of this world and of this planet.

So, we've got the omnipotence in creation, followed by the omnipotence in Exodus with kind of like a bit of a reversed order here. The first thing it mentions is the smiting of the firstborn in Egypt, both man and beast. Then it says he sent signs and wonders into your midst. Well, he did the signs and wonders, if you like, first. He did the other plagues and then he did the firstborn. But the firstborn is mentioned first. We also have this mentioned that upon Pharaoh and his servants, which recalls what we did first in Psalm 136. Now the relationship between these two psalms is quite special and I'll be discussing that a little bit later on. So, it says again in a summary statement: "He smote many nations and slew mighty kings." For example, who, and we've got this focus again on the trans-Jordan region where he speaks of Sihon, king of the Amorites and Og, king of Bashan. So, by now there should be a sense of deja vu because we have heard this in Psalm 136.

And as a result of all of that, because he owns creation and runs creation, he is able and he is qualified to distribute land as a heritage to his people Israel. And that's exactly what he does. Once again, you see more clearly here though the terrace pattern of "he gave their land as a heritage." So, you've got "a heritage" repeated here, "a heritage to

Israel, his people." And again, those words will ring a bell with the previous psalm no doubt.

In many ways, as we look at this section of the psalm, we need to understand it as a divine resume. What the Psalmist is doing is he is portraying a picture of the God of Israel. Who is this God? What does he do? Well, here is his resume, he runs the world. He smites kings for the sake of his people and he distributes land for the sake of his people. That's what our God does. This is who he is. In the same way, we would have a resume that describes what we have done in our lives and who we are. So, we have the divine resume laid out at this particular point.

Praise Intermission [16:20-18:25]

Then we go on to a praise intermission that speaks of "Your name O Lord is everlasting, Your remembrance O Lord throughout all generations, For the Lord will judge his people, And will have compassion on his servants." This is very much as I mentioned before, a literary hinge. It comes in the middle of the psalm. We've had an introduction, we've had God's resume. We're hinging now before we go and look at the resume of the gods, the idols of the nations. In this case, we've got the word "judge" "for the Lord will judge his people." The expression "judge" has various connotations. It's the idea of apportioning that which is good for the good people and that which is punishment for the bad people. So when "the Lord will judge his people." He can judge. It's only a positive action, if the people are righteous. You would assume that the Psalmist is assuming his people are righteous because if the Lord will judge his people, that it's not so much judging them as it is vindicating them. You are righteous and therefore I'm going to give you all of these positive things. Therefore, it's something to be welcomed. But if you want God to judge your enemies, you know they're doing wrong and therefore punishment is going to be given to them.

The idea of name, "your name," it goes back, harkens back, to verse one. It says that "Your name, O Lord, is everlasting." And the idea of the Hebrew "name" in this context is the idea of one's reputation. It's his reputation, the things that you do rather

than just thinking in terms of the divine name. It's everything that's attributed to it, the power that's behind it, the authority, the omnipotence, that's behind it as well.

Resume of the Idols [18:29-20:39]

So now we turn to the resume of the idols, the idols of the nations. Here through the structure as I've shown you before, the comparison is directly with the Lord and what the Lord can do. The idols of the nations basically have features but no function. They have features but no function. This is in direct comparison because if you know the God of Israel, he has no features but is all function. He does stuff, but nobody knows what he looks like. Nobody has an image of him, which is the total opposite of what's going on with these other idols made with silver and gold. An interesting inclusion here, we saw one with Egypt in Psalm 105, but here we have one with "mouths." "Mouths they have, but they do not speak. They have eyes, but they don't see. They have ears, but they do not hear, Nor is there any breath at all in their mouths." So, what you have here is between the two words "mouth" is the description of the gods of the nations, regarding their facial features. So that's just a way of encapsulating a group of particular series of characteristics through what's called an inclusion. From this you would assume that the purpose of this psalm really is to discourage idolatry. It is to say, if you recite this psalm, you are saying that, Our God is great. So why worship idols? They don't do anything." So it is quite negative and it is quite disparaging concerning the gods of the other nations. So it is there to dissuade people from turning to other idols.

Group Exhortation at the Temple [20:40-21:45]

The last section we have here is a group exhortation in which various groups within the temple, it's assumed that there would have been different groups, different choirs there, and it would have been assuming that it was recited in the temple, they would have been encouraged to bless God. So, you have "a house of Aaron, the house of Levi, those who revere the Lord," God fearers basically, "those who fear the Lord" is probably a better description. Then you've got this general blessing. So, we've got some

kind of a temple setting with different groups in the temple.

We've got praise the Lord, which is mentioned here, and this is another inclusion where the psalm begins and ends with the words, "Hallelujah." So that encapsulates everything that's in the psalm. This is a song of praise and the beginning and the end are cast the same way.

Psalm 135 and Other Biblical Texts – Frankenstein Psalm [21:46-28:07]

What is very peculiar about this psalm is that it is as I've mentioned before, highly dependent upon other biblical texts. Not in just the sense of it alludes to other material. It's much more severe than that. In certain senses, if you allow me to be so crass as to name it this is kind of a Frankenstein psalm in that it's a psalm that has been put together almost from the spare parts of many other psalms. And in spite of this, the Psalmist has still been able to create it and shape it very carefully into his own work.

So, let's take a look of some of the more brash examples of literary borrowing within this psalm. If we look here, these are two texts. This is Psalm 135.7. And this is Jeremiah 10.13. "He causes the vapors to ascend from the ends of the earth; Who makes the lightning for the rain, Who brings forth the wind from his treasuries." "He causes the clouds to ascend from the end of the earth, he makes lightening for the rain and brings out the wind from his storehouses." These two passages. Now, once again, I'm going back to my pet peeve. The Hebrew wording here, apart from a change in tense, is exactly the same. Yet the NASB has translated "vapors" here and "clouds" here, even though it's exactly the same. I know it's not important, but it's still kind of bothers me that if the Psalmist has been so careful so as to copy words from one place into the other, why can't the translators do the same thing? There shouldn't really be a change here, but that's for another day. So, we see this is exact copying apart from one this participle, which is changed for a vayiqtol, a vav plus an imperfect form. Apart from that this is exactly the same wording that's used in this particular place.

Let's look at this example here. Verse 14 to Deuteronomy 32.36 "for the Lord will judge his people and will have compassion on his servants." Once again, we have judge --

mishpat. It's the same word, but we have "vindicate" here but "judge" here in the two places for whatever reasons. Maybe the people who translated Deuteronomy were in Toronto and the people who did the psalm were in Texas and they just never spoke. But there's a deliberate copying and borrowing that the Psalmist has done, which is messed up a little bit in the translational issue. But the wording here is exactly the same. So, it's just taken from one place and put into another.

We have another example here from Psalm 136. So, we've come full circle now. We find this description of God who "smote many nations and slew mighty kings." We've got "smote, great kings." Now if you kind of ignore the "for his loving kindness is forever more." You will see some similarities. "Sihon, king of the Amorites," "Sihon, king of the Amorites" again, ignore this. "And Og king of Bashan," "Og, king of Bashan" "and he gave their land as a heritage." "He gave their land as a heritage," "a heritage to Israel," "a heritage to Israel." So, we see the exact wording which has been taken from a another psalm. In this case it happens to be the psalm which actually follows it.

And if this were not enough, we can then go further to looking at Psalm verse 15 and Psalm 115.4 and in this case we've got "the idols of the nations are but silver and gold" "their idols are silver and gold." "The work of men's hands," "the work of men's hands," "they have mouths but they cannot speak." "They have mouths, but they do not speak" again. Let's not talk about that. "They have eyes, but they do not see." "they have eyes but they cannot see." "They have ears but they do not hear." "They have ears, but they cannot hear." "Those who make them will be like them." "Those who make them will become like them." "Yes, everyone who trusts in them," "everyone who trusts in them" Psalm 115.4. This is the same wording that has been borrowed from another psalm. And so we see this.

This is why I would describe it as a Frankenstein psalm because the Psalmist is clearly borrowing wording from all of these individual places and this is not the end of the matter because there's much more to it. We just don't have time to go into every detail. These are the clearest examples, but it's clear that he is borrowing material and

even more strangely, some of the Exodus material. He's not going back to Exodus to use it; he's using another psalm. So, he's just like we saw in the first example where the Psalmist borrowed from Exodus 15 from a poetic example with the prose example. Here he's is going to another poetic tradition in order to help create his work. But in spite of that, he does nevertheless create something new, something very new from these old bits and pieces. So even though we can see these clear literary allusions, we should not be lulled into a sense of thinking that somehow it's a cheap work that has no creativity in it because there is still a great deal of creativity in the way in which he has ordered his parts.

Summary of Ps. 135 [28:09-30:36]

So to summarize, we're going to summarize this psalm and then afterwards I'm going to try to wrap up everything else that we've learned about the Exodus Psalms in closing. The first thing is we have the Exodus as a hymn of praise. So, it's a hymn of praise again like Psalm 105 but it's very different from Psalm 105. The historical period covered is really quite different. There's much more addition of other material such as the creation material we have here as well as this direct comparison with other idols. So, yes, they are similar, but we mustn't forget. They are very, very different and very unique. If I can even say also in this psalm, we have no intermediaries. We don't have a mention of Moses, we're back to where we started off. There is no clear mentioned of Aaron, of any of these figures, any of these Israelite leaders, at all. These things are all skipped over.

Also, like Psalm 136, we can see this theme of God versus kings and that's borrowed from the following psalm, another reason why they may be juxtaposed. But it's borrowed from the following psalm and we have a mention of the kings of Pharaoh plus the kings of the Amorites of Og and Sihon that God does battle with these people and fights for his people in that sense. All of this is there to show that God, it's not to demonstrate his eternal mercy and his eternal love, which is what it was used before. But here it's to demonstrate his potency versus the potency of the idols of the nations.

Then the last thing which we see in this psalm as well, is that it blends creation

with Exodus. It links the two things directly together. I've mentioned before those two themes are in explicably linked throughout Exodus Psalms and throughout the Bible. So that ends Psalm 135.

Final Summary of the Exodus Psalms overview [30:37-38:12]

What I want to do now is just quickly go through some final summary points of all the Psalms of the Exodus. I want to emphasize some of the important things that we need to really grasp when looking at its appearance within the Exodus Psalms within the Psalter - so some summary points.

First of all, it's important to remember as I began that the Exodus is the most influential biblical tradition in the Bible, the most influential tradition. It permeates absolutely everything. It goes from Genesis. I'd mentioned before, we saw an example of it in the book of Genesis with the torch between the pieces. I could be more explicit and we could talk about, Abraham going into Egypt. If you think about that story when he first goes in, in Genesis 12, when Abraham first goes into Egypt, he goes down into Egypt to escape a famine. Whilst he's in Egypt, he is then oppressed by a Pharaoh. Through that oppression he is then delivered by God. God intervenes. Pharaoh's house is plagued and he is then set free. When he leaves Egypt, he leaves Egypt with more silver and gold. So that's what Abraham does and this is a direct reflection of Israel who leaves Canaan and goes into Egypt because of famine. Whilst in Egypt they are oppressed by Pharaoh. God intervenes, plagues Pharaoh and as a result they leave Egypt with silver and gold just like Abraham. So, there's a clear mirror right there between what goes on in Genesis and also in the Exodus. So, in that sense, Abraham's actions foreshadow the Exodus later on. And that goes all the way through to the book of Revelation as well, where we find, the plagues being described, the sent upon the earth. The locus, the frogs, all of these things are coming from the Exodus motif. It is across the whole of the Bible and so to find it in the Psalter should not at all come as any surprise.

The next thing we need to be aware of is that there is clearly a conversion from prose to poetry. There is when we look at biblical Hebrew poetry, it is slightly more

flamboyant. It's slightly more exaggerated. So there has to be a necessary change from recalling or transferring a prose story into a poetic story and we see that change going on. We've seen it in some of the language of some of the Psalms we looked at in Psalm 78, where things were exaggerated slightly and other traditions were recalled. So we had the doors of heaven being opened. We have angels' food being eaten by people. So this is kind of transformation of the prose into a poetic version of the same rendition.

It's very important to realize as well that the Exodus occurs in different genres. It's not limited to one thing. This is something, as well, many Christians limit the idea of the Exodus to the simple practice of salvation. It describes how we were slaves to sin and how we've been freed from our sin into something else. That's just one use of the Exodus, but it appears in many different ways and it's used in many different ways in the Psalter and indeed for the rest of the Bible. So, the fact that it appears in different genres is a reflection of the way in which it's used differently.

Perhaps most important is the elevation of God's role in the Exodus. There is a repetitive theme throughout the psalms we've looked at whereby the deeds of men are pushed down and minimalized and the acts of God are elevated and he becomes so much more in direct control. He sends the plagues, he sets people free, he splits the sea. It's not about Moses and his staff anymore. It's not about Moses and Aaron going to Pharaoh saying, "Let my people go otherwise." It's about God taking action and directly coming into confrontation with creation in the water and in the desert and with people as well.

Then there is perhaps the most important point of touched upon before and that it's tailored for specific purposes. By this I want to really just finish up all of this by emphasizing that when we are looking at the psalmists who deal with the Exodus motif, we are dealing with people who tailor it for specific purposes. What this basically means is that when we talk about psalmists, we're not talking so much about songwriters, but we are talking about biblical exegetes. We are talking about people who are performing biblical exegesis. They're reading a narrative and they are taking that narrative and they are making it work for specific purposes to teach a particular point. This work of the

Psalmist I think has been generally underplayed. We simply think of them as songwriters. We think of them, as people sitting on a hill with a harp in their hands, writing beautiful music and listening to the birds and taking it all in. But really, we should be thinking of the Psalmist as people who are sitting in a library with books before them who are opening up stories of Abraham, stories of the Exodus, and they are taking these things together and they are reshaping them into a message that is unique to their audience.

So that's where I end, and I hope you've enjoyed it - this brief presentation. And if there's anything else, there's nothing else, that you take from all of this, it is very important to remember that the Psalmist is a biblical exegete.

This is Dr. David Emanuel in his teaching on the Exodus Psalms. This is session number five. Psalm 135 - The Lord's Supremacy. [38:16]