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Ted Hildebrandt

Praise of God in Book II (Ps. 42-72) of the Psalter

Session 1: The Canonical Context of Book II of the Psalter.

By Ted Hildebrandt

This is Dr. Ted Hildebrandt in his teaching on the Praise of God in Book II of the Psalter. This is session number one, The Canonical Context of Book II of the Psalter.

Introduction [0:06-3:07]

Good afternoon. We are exploring a mini-series of lectures on The Praise of God in Book II of the Psalter and that's Psalms 42 to Psalm 72. This is an expansion of an article that I've written for Kregel that may be published in 2021 called The Biblical Foundations of Worship. Thanks for joining us. By way of an introduction and I'll be reading a lot of this back and forth because this comes from the article of the book.

We begin with a description of the canonical context of Book II in terms of its characteristics and flow as a unit. Next, we will examine the three main characters of the book of Psalms, the King, the Psalmist, and the enemy. The treacherous enemy taunts, shames and seeks to trap, devour, and destroy the Psalmist. The Psalmist cries out for

deliverance and protection. The divine or human king rescues, protects and renders justice. The Psalmist then praises the divine king. The cultic context of Book II also will be examined as a context in which the praise of God is expressed in the temple through sacrifices and music among the festive congregation. We will then demonstrate that the lament is often a basis for praise and even imprecation is frequently linked with praise. Next, the praises themselves will be examined in a discussion on the call to praise, the cause to praise, how to praise and the place of praise. Finally, these presentations will close with some implications for modern worship and the praise of God in Book II of the Psalter.

And now here's the introduction and I should have been clicking the button as we go through, but we'll be talking about the canonical context of the book. That's our mini-presentation for today. Then next time we'll go onto the three main characters, the King, the Psalmist, and the enemy. The cultic context of Psalms, and particularly we'll see that in Book II of the Psalter. We'll do lament as the basis of praise and then we'll also suggest that imprecation as a basis for praise. Then after we do those, we'll actually look at the praises themselves, a call to praise, the cause to praise, how to praise and the place of praise. And then finally in our last presentation will be the implications for modern worship.

Psalms as Tehillim (praises) [3:08-3:37]

So those are just by way of introduction. And then we want to talk about now the canonical context of Book II of the Psalter. The Hebrew title for the book of Psalms is called tehillim, which simply means "praises." You're familiar with the word already because it's built off a root called Hallel, which is our word that we've heard many times. Hallelu-Yah. And so that's "praise Yah" or "praise the Lord."

5 Books of the Psalter [3:39-6:22]

The book of Psalms is parallel with the Torah or the Pentateuch by its division in the five books. So these books, if you look at this, we can see there is Book I Psalm

chapter 1 through 41 largely Davidic Psalms, Book II a second collection of David, Psalm 42 to Psalm 72, Book III is Psalm 73 to 89 and Book IV from 90 to 106, and finally Book 5 107 to Psalm 150. Each book is marked with a concluding markers of "praise" and then also a doubled "Amen." And so this is how we know the unit, the book has stopped and moved on.

Compare the following, closing verses of each of the books. So what I've done is I pulled up each one of the closing verses. Here, for example, is the end of a Book I. And this is chapter 40 verse 13. It says, "Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting, Amen and Amen." Okay. "Amen and Amen." And that's how Book I ends. And so you can see that if you put up Book II. Book II ends in chapter 72 verse 20 and it says, "Praise be to the Lord God, the God of Israel who alone does marvelous deeds. Praise (and you get another praise or it's actually a dual praise here) be to his glorious name forever. May the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen and Amen." And then actually Psalm 72.20 signs off with this. "This concludes the prayers of David, son of Jesse." And that's how Book II ends. There is a very clear ending there. "This concludes the prayers of David." Book III is similar, you've got ends in Psalm 89 verse 52, "Praise be the Lord forever. Amen and Amen." And so that one ends with a double Amen and a praise. Book IV is similar. Chapter 106 verse 48 "Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting. Let all the people say 'Amen.' Praise the Lord." And so you get a single "Amen" there. And then finally, Book V ends in Psalm 150, which is the last Psalm. And Psalm 150, then there's a litany of "Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, praise the Lord." Then what happens at the very end, is you get the concluding word of the whole Psalter is "praise the Lord" or "hallelujah" is the last word of the book of the Psalter.

Focus on Book II [6:22-8:01]

This study will examine the features and uniqueness of the worship of God in Book II of the Psalter, Psalm 42 through Psalm 72. So, we'll be just looking at Book II. These books, by the way, are parallel to the Mosaic law. So, there are five books of the

Torah. And so here we have five books and paralleling in the Psalms. The Psalms were again developed, the Psalms of David. David's about a 1000 BC and the last Psalms are going to be exile or post-exilic around, 586 BC or thereabouts or a little bit after 586. So the book of Psalms was put together over a period of about 500 years. And so we're going to be looking at the features of Book II, but largely there are five books of the Mosaic Pentateuch, and there's then a responsive five books of the Psalms.

The Davidic titles dominate Book I. And so we have the titles from chapters 3 to 41 are largely Davidic titles. This is called the First Davidic Collection. However, there is a bit more diversity in Book II with a Second Davidic Collection and that's in chapters 50 through 70. But in the second book in chapter 42 to 49, we have the sons of Korah. These sons of Korah are found in Numbers 16, where the ground opens up and swallows Korah, but then apparently later on they were priestly guys who were involved in some of the psalmic type worship, cultic worship there.

Psalm 42/43 opening pair [8:02-13:15]

So Psalm 42 and 43 are linked. 43 is actually an orphan psalm. Now, what's an orphan Psalm? An orphan psalm is a psalm that has no title to it. And in the opening pair bound into a psalm pair, by the refrain, "Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why are you so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my savior and my God." And this refrain then of "Why are you downcast my soul" is found in chapter 42 verse 5, chapter 42.11 and also in 43 verse 5 linking chapters 42 and 43 into what I would call a Psalm pair. Thus 42 and 43 form a Psalm pair similar to the pairs that are found in Psalms chapters 1 through 2 or Psalm chapter 9 through 10. Psalm 42 through 43, 44 and 45 are labeled all maskils and so 42, 43, 44 and 45 are all maskils. They are instructional Psalms and Psalms 42/43 through 49 all have the title "for the director of music" and so these titles link these from 42 to 49. There is one psalm of Asaph in Psalm 50 that is most likely pulled forward from the Asaph collection. The Asaph collection is Psalm 73 through 83. So why is Psalm 50 pulled forward like that away from the Asaph collection, even though it is an Asaph psalm? It is largely because of its thematic

connection with the adjacent Psalm 51 in Book II. In Psalm 50 God has no need for their sacrifices as he owns the cattle on a thousand hills. In Psalm 51, David offers a good sacrifice of a broken and contrite heart. So there's a contrast between different sacrifices between Psalm 50 and Psalm 51 where David offers a good sacrifice, which is a broken and contrite heart.

Psalm 51 through 70 is called the Second Davidic Collection. So let me see if I've got that up. We've got the maskil, for the director of music, and we probably should go back and look at this. I'm sorry, I should be pressing the button, but largely the Asaph, Psalm 50 is an Asaph psalm which has been pulled forward because of its connection with Psalm 51. Psalm 50 is a very famous Psalm, "he owns the cattle on a thousand hills." And that's put in a context largely that God needs nothing. He doesn't need your food. I don't need your sacrifices as food. If I wanted food, I own the cattle on a thousand hills. David then says, this is how you give a good sacrifice. So that's kind of where we are with that.

Now David offers a good sacrifice and Psalm 51 to 70, let's see if I've got this. Yeah, there it is. Psalm 51 through 70. We've got what's called the Second Davidic Collection. And again, "for the music director" is predominant as a title and 51 to 62 and 64 to 70. Psalm 71 is an orphan psalm and it's a basically a prayer that David be not abandoned in his old age. And then Psalm 72 it's kind of interesting. Let me go back to the notes here. Book II concludes with a psalm of King Solomon, David's son and the statement, "this concludes the prayers of David, son of Jesse." What you have in Psalm 71 is basically David, who's a feeble old man at this point, saying, Lord, "don't abandon me in my old age." And then what the response between Psalm 71 and Psalm 72 picks up with King Solomon in Psalm 72. So, there's a similar movement here between Psalm 71 and Psalm 72. And so what you've got is 1 Kings 1 where God talks about David's feebleness and that. So, we want to note that connection between Psalm 71 where David is feeble and praying God not abandoned him and Psalm 72 where Solomon then picks up in strength and goes out for justice and ruling as a King, Very, very similar to the 1

Kings 1 where David is feeble and Abishag and all that situation's taking place and Solomon then who takes up in 1 Kings, chapters two and three.

The Elohist Psalter (Pss. 42-83) [13:16-19:15]

So, Book III features the Psalms of Asaph and chapter 73 through 83. Next what I'd like to look at, and this is what's called the Elohist Psalter. The Elohist Psalter is Psalm 42 through Psalm 83. This designation is born out of the observation of the infrequent use of divine name Yahweh, that's why it's called the Elohist Psalter because Yahweh only occurs 27 times in Book II. Yahweh, is translated "Lord," capital L, capital O, capital R, capital D. There is an increase in the use of Elohim, Elohim is translated God, to 131 times. So, you have 27 times Yahweh, which is very minimal in the Psalms to 131 Elohim which is huge in the book of Psalms. The Elohist Psalter is Psalm 42 through 83. This is in contrast to the five to one ratio of Yahweh to Elohim in the rest of the Psalter. In other words, in the rest of the Psalter, Yahweh is used five times and Elohim, God, is only used one time to every five times for Elohim. So, it's about Yahweh used 260 times to Elohim used about 56 times.

There's a chart then that I want to do this and kind of get a flavor for this. Book I, IV and V favor Yahweh about six to one and Books II and III favor Elohim about six to one. So there's a clear difference and that's why it's called the Elohist Psalter because the name Elohim is featured in this book.

Now I want to put up a chart that, this is a graph that makes it really clear and then just talk about this. So you have Book I, the usages of Yahweh are about 85 times. Yahweh is translated "Lord." The use of Elohim has only 15 times over here in Book IV Yahweh is used 86 times and Elohim, God, only 14 times. In Book V Yahweh is used 89 times and Elohim is used only 11 times. Now look at the contrast. So, in Book I, IV and V Yahweh is predominantly used six to one. But in Book II where we are noticed that Yahweh is only used 14 times and Elohim is used 86 times. The same thing with part A of Book III, 13 times for Yahweh, 45 times of Elohim. So, you can see these two sections, why they put them together and call this the Elohist Psalter, Elohim, the name,

God, or Elohim. God is used predominantly in Book II and in the first part of Book III and the second part of Book III then flips back the other way. Two to one 31 to 16. Yahweh, with 31 and Elohim at 16. And so that's basically just describing, the Elohist Psalter and the heightened emphasis on Elohim we're going to see in the Book II, which is where we are.

Now, there's another proof of this. And I want to just bring this up. What we have in the Psalms is a parallel of almost identical psalms. Psalm 14 and Psalm 53 they're almost identical psalms, word for word identical -- Psalm 14 and Psalm 53. Psalm 14 is in Book I, Psalm 53 is in Book II. So, I want to compare the two psalms to see if there's been some switches made. Indeed, what we find is there are switches made. And so walk with me through this. I'll walk you through this.

So, we've got Psalm 14 compared to Psalm 53. Now Psalm 53 is in the Elohist Psalter and Psalm 14 is in the first Book. So that's going to favor Yahweh. What you have is it says, "the Lord looks down from heaven." "Lord," here would be Yahweh. We translate the word Yahweh into "Lord." Now when you jump over to chapter 53 it says, this is the exact same verse, it says, "God" or "Elohim looks down from heaven." So, you can see there's been a clear switch from the name Yahweh to the name Elohim, God, in these two verses that are exactly parallel. A similar thing happens here in verse 14.4 "and who do not call on the Lord." "Who do not call on the Lord." Then when you look over in Psalm 53, it says, "and who do not call on God [Elohim]." So again, you see Yahweh is used here for "Lord" and over here "Elohim" is used for "God." So, you see Psalm 53 is consistent. It's just not random. It's consistent in how these things are shifted. Same thing in 14.7. By the way, you guys may know the Psalm 14, Psalm 53, "The fool has said in his heart there is no God." That's the Psalm 14 and 53 "the fool has said in his heart there is no God." So here, "When the Lord restores the fortress of his people," you can see it's Yahweh. And what would you expect? Just guess over here you would expect "when God (Elohim), restores the fortunes of his people." And so you see these psalms, that are an exact parallel of each other, and you see how consistently it moves from where in the first

book Yahweh to God Elohim in the second book. That's why it's called the Elohist Psalter. It's just a fascinating thing. We're looking at Book II and so this is one of the features of that book.

The Canonical Flow of Book II [19:17-38:14]

Now, I'm just going to sketch a flow of these, of Book I or Book II rather. Another shaping of the canonical context in Book II may be sketched loosely as follows. Psalm 42 and Psalm 43 is an introduction to Book II. So Psalm 42 and 43, we said 43 was an Orphan Psalm. Those two psalms blend together into a pair because of the refrains. The refrains are exactly the same in those two psalms. So those two go into a pair. And then the question they're asking here is expressing the desire to be with God "as a deer pants after water. So my soul pants after thee O God," that kind of a thing. It remembers God's people in procession and the festive throng but now the Psalmist faces exile and chaotic waters below Mount Hermon in the North, 42.6, and is cut off from God's temple / altar being twice taunted and haunted by the question, and this is the major question coming out of 42 and 43. He's taunted by the enemy. "Where is your God?" And this then in 42 and 43 "his soul pants after God," but yet he's up in the North, up below Mount Hermon and his enemy then taunts him. And the statement haunts him, "Where is your God?" The Psalmist hopes for a return to the altar where God is where the Psalmist can once again praise God with lyre in the house of God. Psalm 43.4 that hope guides and sustains the Psalmist in the thrice repeated refrain quote, "for I will yet praise him. I will yet praise him."

Three times and refrain, separated by about six verses, each time in the refrain in Psalm 42.5, 11 and in 43.5 which binds these two psalms 42 and three into a pair even as Psalm 1 and Psalm 2 were bound into an introductory psalm pair. So, Psalm 1 and 2 introduce Book I and actually introduce the whole Psalter. But 42 and 43 introduce Book II with that same kind of pairing technique that was used in Psalm 1 and 2. Also Psalm 9 and 10 also are bound together in a pair.

Psalm 44 follows and we want to pick up this. Psalm. 44 follows the individual

petition or lament of the psalm couplet 42 / 43 with a communal petition. Moving from a I/me/my to, to a we/us/our, so one is individual, 42 43 is an individual lament. And then what you have in 44 is what's called a communal lament. We/us/our first-person plural rather than first person singular as they lament the defeat before their enemies as a result of the rejection and absence of divine support. So, in Psalm 42 we read in the first-person style. Let me see if I've got this up. Yeah, in 42 we read. "Why, my soul, are you downcast? I say to God, my rock." Notice the first person I/my "I say to God, my rock, why have you forgotten me?"--First person singular. There is a significant movement in Psalm 44 to the first person, plural, we/us/our. And so we read there, "we have heard it with our ears. O God. Our ancestors have told us our hearts had not turned back. Our feet had not strayed from your path, but you crushed us and made us a haunt of jackals. You covered us over with deep darkness." And so this is called a communal lament because it goes from, instead of being I / me, it's a we / our / us kind of thing. Psalm 45 then moves on to a delightful marriage of the king and the praise of the king in Psalm 45.

Now, one of the big questions that Book II introduces is he's haunted by the question taunted by the enemy, "Where is your God?" So, in 46 through 48 it shifts and it shifts then over to Zion, the place where God dwells. So "where is your God?" Now his answer in 46 through 48 it shifts to "where is your God?" -- the presentation of Zion, the city of God. Chapter 46 verse four of chapter 48 verse one, two and eight as "the holy place where the Most High dwells, God is within her." God is within whom? Within Zion. And so, this is chapter 46 verses four and five, God reigns over the nations. So, he's not limited to Zion. He rules over the nations. And so, 47 kind of has a little bit of a corrective there. In Psalm 46 God rules in Zion and 47 is basically that God will rule over all nations. And so out from Zion, God's worship and God's exaltation goes to move to the ends of the earth from Zion centering his presence on his holy mountain, Mount Zion. And it's called "the city of the great king," "the city of the great king." in chapter 48 verse two. So Psalm 48 is one of those great psalms, if you're ever in Jerusalem, Psalm 48 is a great Psalm about Jerusalem and Zion and God's worship that centers there. 46 draws to a

close with the divine statement. "I will be exalted among the nations," which is then echoed in the Psalmist final response in 47. So, 46 is connected to 47 by the end of 46 where God says, "I will be exalted among the nations." Chapter 47 says, "for the kings of the earth belong to God. He is greatly exalted." So, this exaltation at the end of 46 is linked with the exaltation of God among the nations in 47. It is from the temple that the praises of God resound to the end of the earth, Psalm 48 verse nine.

The Zion motif continues through chapter 51. And this is a what's interesting here and let me just see, I think I've got these verses. I'm going to show the continuation of the Zion theme, not just through 46 to 48, but it continues beyond that. And so, in 51, at the end of chapter 51, the penitential Psalm of David, it says in verse 18, "in your good pleasure make Zion prosper, build up the walls of Jerusalem." And so there you get a very strong statement at the end of David's penitential Psalm after confessing his sin with Bathsheba, you get this statement for "build up the walls of Jerusalem." Then you go to chapter 52, which is a kind of a really negative psalm about sin and about the evil people and enemies and stuff. Then at the end of it, he switches to the positive side. He says, "I am like an olive tree flourishing in the house of God." And that "house of God" then is the temple of course. And then Psalm 53 coming in there, "Oh, that salvation for Israel would come out of Zion." So here again you've got the Zion hymn breaking out of past 48 and going into 51, 52, 53 that motif. Then actually 55 even here. So, Psalm 55.14 says, it reflects on the processions at the house of God where, "we walked among the worshipers," which would be at the festival times when they go up and they ascend up to Jerusalem. So, you can see that the answer to the question of 42 and three, "where is your God?" is responded to in chapters 46 through 55 that God is in Zion, that God is in Zion, and his worshipers go up to worship him there, but he is exalted beyond the nations and so this goes back.

So, all right, so that's a big part of a Book II of the Psalter. Once God's location in the temple and Zion is established. A wisdom psalm follows exposing the impotence of wealth in the face of death as the wealthy perish just as the beasts in the refrain in Psalm

49.12 and 20. Psalm 50 returns to the theme of Zion. 50 verse two where God declares his aseity clarifying that he has no need of their sacrifices. Why does he have no need? God doesn't eat their food. Their sacrifices are not food for God. Instead, he said, if I wanted food, "I own the cattle on a thousand hills." You remember that great song that used to be sung in the churches Psalm 50 verses 9 through 13. David's great penitential Psalm 51 after his affair with Bathsheba clarifies by acknowledging "you do not delight in sacrifice or I would bring it" as he presents his sacrifice of a broken and contrite heart as a prerequisite for approaching God. Psalm 51 then shows how the penitential righteous confess their sins, offering sacrifices from a newly created and cleansed heart, Psalm 51.7 and verse 10. Psalm 51 concludes with a call to prosper Zion and to build the walls of Jerusalem linking back to the Zion hymns in chapters 46 through 48. Psalm 50 addresses the righteous by contrast, 52 through 53 describes the wicked through the figure of Doeg, a murderous Edomite, returning to the theme of the futility of those who trust in their wealth linking back to Psalm 49 verse 20 and further developing the fool who says in his heart there is no God, Psalm 53 and in Psalm 14 that we had just made the comparison.

Now there is a new article that has come out by man named Botha in the Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament in 2017. The article shows how 52 through 55 link. So, we've been talking of the Zion theme coming out 51 through 55, but Botha has shown how 52 through 55 linked together. And so, I just want to kind of run through some of his argumentation. What he does is he says 52 through 55 are linked together by this term "maskil" or a "Psalm of instruction." So, you see how the titles of Psalm 52, 53, 54 and I believe 55, yes. 55 are a similar type. So, these four Psalms, he links together "for the director of music, a maskil," or "a Psalm of instruction of David. When Doeg the Edomite" did his nasty stuff. Psalm 53, the title "for the director of music according to Mahalat, a maskil of David, maskil of David, you see how these parallel each other. "For the director of music," again, "for the director of music with stringed instruments," this time. "A maskil of David, a maskil of David, a maskil of David. When the Ziphites" did

their nasty stuff. "For the director of music," again, director music, "director of music, with stringed instruments a maskil of David." Again, four times in the titles of these tying them together. So, this is going to be a group of Psalms tied together, those four.

Now, Psalm 50, okay, before we go on. Let me develop some more. The theme of boasting and trusting in riches and power is manifest in Psalm 52.7, "See the one who would not take refuge in God but trusted in abundant riches and sought refuge in wealth." As well as by the contrast in Psalm 55 "but you O, God will bring down the wicked into the pit of corruption. Bloodthirsty and deceitful men will not live out their days. But as for me, I trust in you." So, there is a contrast of those who trust in riches versus those who trust in the Lord in Psalm 52 versus 55. Botha then links the words "trust," "boast" and "riches" with interestingly enough, Jeremiah chapter 9 verses 22 to 23. And Botha is making a connection between Psalm 52 to 55 with Jeremiah 9. I think that connection is a very interesting one and one that should be pursued, one that should be pursued.

The tongue as a dangerous weapon. In Psalm 52 verse two through four, it says "you are plotting destruction. Your tongue is sharp, like a sharp razor, you worker of treachery." Then in Psalm 55, the same thing with the tongue "his speech is as smooth as butter. Yet war is in his heart. His words are more soothing than oil, yet they are a drawn sword." This also connects with Jeremiah chapter 9 verse seven. So there seems to be some connection there between these four Psalms and Jeremiah 9 and I would suggest that many of the psalms, especially Psalm 1 in the connection with Jeremiah 17 should not be overlooked. There are connections between Jeremiah and the Psalter. Psalm 52 and 54 are linked by a final emphasis on the name of God and chapter 52.9, 54.6 and both Psalm 54 and Psalm 55 begin with a call to God to listen, 54.2 and 55.1 and 2.

This string of maskil Psalms, 52 through 55, is followed by a group of miktam titled Psalms. Let's see if we've got this down here. In 56 through 60, it uses this word "miktam." We don't really know what the word "miktam" means, believe it or not. So, they don't translate it. They just put it in the text as this is a miktam. The director of music is again in the Second Davidic Collection. And this is in these miktams in Psalm

56 to 60. So, 52 to 55 are the maskils for instruction. Psalms 56 to 60, those are all linked by this term miktam, which we don't know what it really means. So, it just calls it a miktam.

Jumping ahead to Psalm 63 as perhaps an answer for this thirst and divine absence in chapters 42 and 43, which now shifts to, "I have seen you in the sanctuary." So, in the first there's the absence of God, where is your God? He goes to Zion in chapters 46 through 52 or three. And now in 63 he says, "I have seen you in the sanctuary," vowing to "praise you as long as I live" with lifted hands, Psalm 63 verse two and verse 13 and following. Without going through the whole rest of Book II in the earlier Psalms petition, lament and complaint predominate as one moves closer to the end, the hymns of praise and Psalm 65 through 68 even as the Psalter itself. Now just run over and just let me catch this a little bit. So basically, we started out with psalms of lament, communal lament, we/us/our, or individual lament I/me/my, and now basically what we've got is toward the end of the book are the hymns. And so, 65 to 68 are the hymns. The hymns are going to be where a lot of the praise is. Then we said Psalm 71 is the feeble David 1 Kings 1, and then the feeble David at 71 is followed by the strength of Solomon and that's very similar then to 1 Kings 2 through three where the feeble David with Abishag and the whole situation there where Solomon is becoming king and then being enthroned. The enthronement of Solomon in spite of his brother Adonijah and his struggle there that happened. But David was feeble that same feebleness to strength of Solomon is seen at the end of the book of Book II. And so, this is kind of an interesting connection there.

And also, then is a connection, Book II flows from the initial lament of God's absence and distance to from the place of praise. Psalm 42 / 43 to Zion, the city of God, 46 through 48 to wisdom chapter 49 and then dips into sacrifices, Psalm 50 and 51 and sin in 52 and 53. The laments in 54 through 64 have a pair of "be merciful psalms" in 56 and 57 both starting out, "be merciful to me" and an echo of thirsting for God, the thirsting for God motif drawn from 42 and then starting 63 the thirsting for God is a deer pants after the water brooks.

It then moves on through several hymns and 65 through 68 and Book II concludes with a transition from the feeble aged Psalmist David, Psalm 71, as in 1 Kings 1, to the vibrant King Solomon in Psalm 72 which is also similar to 1 Kings 2 and 3.

Lament to Praise Movement in Book II and in the Whole Psalter [38:15-39:16]

Book II, which is Psalms 42 to 72, ends in a way that is characteristic of many books in the Psalms with a double praise and a double Amen. "This concludes the prayers of David, the son of Jesse." So, there's a movement in Book II, like there is in the whole Psalter. They front-load the laments and so many in the first Book, chapters 3 through 41, many of those are Davidic laments. And yet the Psalms ends for 145 to 150, it ends with praises. So, it begins with laments and the whole Psalter then ends with praises. So does book II. It begins with these laments, where is your God? It goes to Zion. And then it concludes with these hymns of praise, toward the end of Book II. Then you have David, this transition between David and Solomon that takes place. The book concludes, "the prayers of David, son of Jesse are ended." And then the book concludes with a praise and double Amen.

Review of the Canonical Context of Book II [39:18-41:49]

So this is the flow, the lament to praise flow, that we've talked about. And so, I just want to go back and just review what we did and then we'll call it a day. We began by noting that the book of Psalms was called tehillim. And this tehillim comes from the word "Hallel," which means hallelujah is "praise the Lord." So, the title of the book of Psalms comes from Hallel means "praises." And we talked about that. We talked about the five books of the Psalms or the Psalter matching up with the five books of Moses, the Torah, the Pentateuch. So, we have Book I chapters 1 to 41. Book II 42 to 72 that's the one we're going to be focusing on its praises. And then Book III 73 through 89, Book IV 90 through 106, and Book V concludes it with 107 through 150 that "praise and Amen." "And the prayers of David are ended" and "praise, Amen." at the end each of those books indicating that it's ended. From the titles in Book II, we've got what's called

the Second Davidic Collection Psalm 51 to 70. It's called the Second Davidic Collection. The First Davidic Collection is Psalm 3 through 41. The sons of Korah are found in chapters 42 through 49 and it concludes with a Psalm of Solomon after an enfeebled David in Psalm 71. The Elohist Psalter we discussed was a shift from the name Yahweh or Lord in Books I, IV and V to Elohim favored in Psalms 42 through 83. We compared Psalm 14. "The fool has said in his heart" to Psalm 53, which says the same thing, but the name shift from Yahweh to Elohim in the Elohist Psalter is apparent and the Elohist Psalter overlaps our Book II chapter 42 to 83.

So there was a shift in name and that the narrative flow of the book from lament to praise and the question, "where is God?" leading us to Zion and leading us from there to the ends of the world. The links, Psalm 52 and Psalm 53, in the Botha article is maskil, the tongue as a weapon. And those Psalms linked together, four Psalms linked together very nicely there. Now, that's what we were going to talk about today.

Introduction to the 3 Main Characters of Book II and the Psalter [41:50-43:24]

In our next presentation, we'll introduce the three main characters of the book of Psalms and also particularly focus our attention on those three characters and how they fit into Book II of the Psalter. The first will be the enemy. So, the enemy will taunt and he will try to trap. He will shame, dishonor and try to kill, destroy, use his tongue to destroy. The enemy will be there in the book of Psalms very strongly. Then the Psalmist, the Psalmist will plead because he feels helpless before the enemy. The Psalmist will become the suppliant who goes to God and says, "God, please help me." So, you have the enemy faced by the Psalmist who's being abused here. Then largely God is portrayed as a king. I want to develop next time these three things, especially focusing on the metaphor of God as king. That metaphor is key to understanding the book of Psalms. Indeed, that metaphor is key to understanding the Old Testament. So, these three characters play a big role, and we'll look at those three characters next time. Thank you. And we look forward to being with you in another presentation.

This is Dr. Ted Hildebrandt in his teaching on The Praise of God in Book II of the Psalter. This is session number one, The Canonical Context of Book II of the Psalter.

[43:24]

Praise of God in Book II (Ps. 42-72) of the Psalter

Session 2: Three Characters of the Psalms: King, Psalmist and Enemy.

By Ted Hildebrandt

This is Dr. Ted Hildebrandt in his teaching on The Praise of God in Book II of the Psalter. This is session number two, Three Characters of the Psalms: King, Psalmist and Enemy.

Review of Session #1 Canonical Context [0:06-7:09]

Welcome to our second session on The Praise of God in the Second Book of the Psalter. In this session, we're going to introduce the three major characters of the book of Psalms and, in more particularly, in Book II of the Psalter and that's going to be the King, the Suppliant or the Psalmist himself, and then the Enemy. We'll be going through and seeing how those interact and then those all leading to the praise of the Great King. So we'll be coming back to the notion of praise, the Praise of God in Book II of the Psalter.

So, these are the three main characters. But before we do that, I just want to kind of run through and review a little bit about what we did last time. So last time we went over the canonical context for Book II and we noticed that the Psalter was divided, like the Pentateuch, into five books matching the Mosaic Torah. Chapters 1 to 41, chapters 42 to 72 that's our book. And so this is the one we're going to be examining today for the Praise of God in Book II. Book III is Psalm 73 to Psalm 89 and then Book IV is 90 to 106 and 107 to 150 is the end of the Psalter with its 150 chapters. Actually, the Psalms is not the longest book in the Bible, the Old Testament, even though it's got 150 chapters, Jeremiah is actually longer because many of the chapters in Psalms are very small and many of the chapters in Jeremiah are humongous.

The second thing we started out showing the connections between them and we noticed that it starts out with the Psalm pair similar to how Psalm 1 and 2 go together as a pair. Psalm 1 and 2 go together as a pair for the whole Psalter. So Psalm 42 and 43 go

together and they're both laments and basically the haunt that haunts them is: where is your God? Then the response then comes in the next psalms where Zion is presented and where God is in the city of God, in Jerusalem and Zion. There are several Zion songs there that respond to this question, "where is your God?" coming out of the introductory psalms [Pss. 42/43]. There was a general movement from laments in the beginning of the Book to praise at the end of the Book.

We noticed that that's very similar to how it is in Psalms itself, the whole Psalter does, where you have the early chapters, chapters three, four, five, 13 et cetera, where there's a lot of laments in the early Psalms. Then later in the book of Psalms and Psalm 145 to 150 they're all hymns, hymns of praise to God. Indeed, the Psalter ends with the word "Hallelujah," which is "praise the Lord." With this linking of the Psalms into pairs, we're working here with the intertextual relationships between the Psalms. Largely we're working off a fellow named Gerald Wilson, who back in the eighties and nineties developed this notion that the Psalms were connected to one another and did some brilliant work opening the doors for this reading the Psalms intertextually, that is, comparing one psalm to another and showing how they're linked together and giving us kind of a bigger context rather than taking each psalm as an isolated psalm. So the work of Gerald Wilson has been followed up on by people like David Howard and many others, McCann and others. So, we're just showing these two of them are linked to each other.

There's a cluster of Zion Psalms. There is Botha, we just have a brand new article within the last few weeks came out about the maskils linking Psalm 52 through to 55 together. Just after the maskils then there's a Miktam section. Again, we don't know what Miktam means, so it's not translated, but these psalms are linked as Miktams. And then there's a series of hymns, 64 through 68 are hymns. 56 to 60 are Miktams, and then 71 and 72 is this transition from David who is in feeble and weak kind of like a 1 Kings 1 in the shift from Psalm 71 where David is feeble, weak, and old, praying God not abandon him in his old age, to the strength of Solomon, David's son, Solomon, the temple builder,

Solomon, the son of David. Does that sound familiar? The temple builder, destroy this temple and in three days I'll raise it up, the son of David. So, this transition here at the end and then "the prayers of David are ended." Psalm 72 ends our book and begins Book III. We noticed there was a Second Davidic Collection [Pss. 50-70]. There's a Davidic collection and the first Book chapters 3 through 41 and then there's a Second Davidic Collection here, but it's not the whole book there. Sons of Korah and they write Psalm 42 to 49. The sons of Korah are labeled in the titles and so there are different elements here. Solomon writes Psalm 72, so there's many more hands at work here as the editors are putting the book of Psalms together. Now the book of Psalms took from the time of David until the time, there are exilic Psalms where we're talking 500 years that the Psalter came together and was put together. So, it would be worked over by many editors editing these books together over a period of 500 years.

As Psalms came together, we noticed there was what's called the Elohist Psalter. The Elohist Psalter is Psalms 42 to 83. It goes a little bit into Book III. And what we noticed was that, Book I, Book IV and Book V are six to one favoring the name "Yahweh" or "Lord." When we come to the Elohist Psalter 42 to 83 Elohim predominates about six to one. So, you have in Books I, IV and V, the favoring of Yahweh's name. And then in Book II, largely Book II but then a little bit into Book III, Elohim is favored six to one. We said we can prove that by looking at Psalm 14 and 53 these are exactly parallel, almost identical Psalms. "The fool has said in his heart there is no God." And then what we noticed was that while it says Yahweh in 14 three times, it was switched to God (Elohim) in 53 showing that the somebody when they put these songs together was working with the name of God in that regard. So that's what we did last time.

Introduction of the King [7:10-9:00]

Now what we'd like to do this time is introduce the three main characters of the Psalter. What we have here is we're going to start out with the king. Now the king is mostly going to be divine. We'll be talking about God is king, but there also be a human

element. In Psalm 45 and in Psalm 72 the human king will be talked about. Psalm 45 will be the wedding of the king and Psalm 72 will be Solomon as the king. Then what you have is, and let me just make one more comment while we're here.

With this notion of king, we're talking about metaphors and the Old Testament, Dr. Darko, who I teach with in the New Testament has made a very interesting observation that in the New Testament, the main metaphor for God, is Father coming off the mouth of Jesus calling him Father, teaching us to pray "our Father" and also that we are the children. We can be called "the children of God." And so, Father is a huge metaphor in the New Testament for God. In the Old Testament, the King is the predominant metaphor for God. In the Old Testament, many of your theological traditions talk about the sovereignty of God coming off the kingship of God as sovereign ruling over the world, ruling over Israel, ruling over the universe. The King, the great King, giving his covenant. We talk a lot about the covenants, three major covenants in the Old Testament, the Abrahamic, the Sinaitic and the Davidic covenant. That all comes out of the king. The king makes a covenant with his people. So, the king is a huge metaphor and that metaphor then goes right into the book of Psalms. So, we want to explore the notion of the King and that metaphor in the second Book of the Psalter.

Introduction to the Suppliant/Psalmist and the Enemy [9:00-11:09]

Now after the king, we also have the Psalmist or the suppliant. Now who is the suppliant? What is a suppliant? A suppliant is somebody who's in need, someone who's needy, who comes to God, pleading for help. So, a suppliant is basically one who pleads for help, petitions God, petitions, actually, there's going to be laments here too. The suppliant laments and petitions God for help. So that'll be the role of the Psalmist.

And then there's the enemy. The enemy gets involved and the enemy is very well defined in the book of the Psalms. So, we want to take a look at this enemy and how the enemy interacts. What we have here is the enemy will plot, taunt, harm, devour, snare and shame the Psalmist. So, the enemy will have his actions directed at the Psalmist. The Psalmist is then the one who's feeling beat up and bullied and things like that. So, the

enemy plots against and tries to trap the Psalmist. The Psalmist then will lament and cry out to God, plea and petition and sacrifice to God and say, "God, please help me because the enemy is beating me and seeking to destroy me. The divine King then, his role will be to save, deliver, rescue, protect and render justice.

So, the divine king then comes down and saves and delivers the Psalmist. He fights against and defeats, punishes and renders justice against the enemy. So the divine King will render justice against the enemy who's doing bad things to the Psalmist. He will save and deliver and rescue, protect the Psalmist. The Psalmist then will respond with sacrifice and praise. So the response back up after the great King has delivered him will be to sacrifice and praise to God and that's where praise comes in. It's praise in the second book of the Psalter. And so that's kind of the format of what we're going to be discussing now and we'll try to go through these one after the other.

King as Metaphor for God [11:10-14:47]

What we want to look at first, then we're going to take the King, the King as a metaphor. The divine King is a metaphor. We aren't going to do too much with the human King in chapters 45 and 72 but we're going to focus on the King. The King is the major metaphor as we said, for God in the Psalter and also, I would suggest in the whole Old Testament. So, God being portrayed as a King is huge. What I'm going to do is I'm going to read you some verses that prove that. And so, I'm going to give you a series of verses so it can be kind of like a listing. I'm using these verses as proof to prove the divine kingship metaphor is a major one in the book of Psalms. So, I'll just read through these and what I'll do is as I click through, I'll give you a summary of each of the verses as I read the whole.

So here in chapter 44 verses four and five "You are my King and my God" and you can see "my King" and "my God" being a parallel there. And so "you are my King" what's more, "You are God." The three characters are cited in these verses. Let me just read these verses to you. Psalm 44 verses four and five, "You are my King, my God, who decrees victories for Jacob. Through you we push back our enemies." So you notice you

have the Psalmist, pushing back enemies and the place of the divine King. "Through your name, we trample our foes, through your name, we trample our foes." In chapter 44 verse eight, just three verses later, it says this, "in God, we make our boast all day long and we will praise your name forever. Selah." "We will praise." So God brings deliverance, and as a result of deliverance "We will praise forever. Selah." So this King, doing his actions of deliverance, then renders the basis for praise. So this notion of the King, the King is the one who should receive praise for his deliverance and rescuing of the Psalmist or Suppliant.

Then down in chapter 47 verses two through three we get these verses. "How awesome is the Lord most high, the great King over all the earth. He subdued nations under us, peoples under our feet." So there again, you see the great King being on the side of these people and they're defeating of the foes. And chapter 47 just down a little bit from that, we get this passage saying 47.6 through 8, "Sing praises to God. Sing praises, sing praises to our God. Sing praises to our King." Who is King? God is King. "Sing praises to God. Sing praises. Sing praises to our King. Sing praises for God is King of all the earth. Sing to him a psalm of praise." So, this is Psalm 47.6 through 8 a major thing here where God is praised as King of all the earth and therefore the response because he is King, should be praise, to praise him, because he is the King.

Psalm 23: The King Metaphor [14:48-17:25]

Now with this one I'm going out of Book II, but everybody knows this Psalm. So I just want to make a comment on Psalm 23. Psalm 23 has a problem. There's an inherent disconnection in Psalm 23. Psalm 23 is the most famous psalm probably in the Psalter. It starts out, "The Lord is my shepherd. I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside the still waters." You notice at the end of that psalm, that all of a sudden the imagery goes from the Lord is my shepherd making me as the sheep lie down in green pastures by still waters. At the end of the Psalm, there's a shift in metaphor to the one of the royal host. And so "he prepares a banquet before me in the presence of my enemies." Okay? you see the enemies there? "He prepares a banquet before me, he

anoints my head with oil." So here you have the banquet of the royal host and you have this shepherd and sheep imagery. So, there's a disconnect between the imagery in Psalm 23.

There's a fellow that was my mentor for my doctorate named Dr. Don Fowler and Dr. Don Fowler studied the shepherd metaphor. And what he found out in the ancient Near East is that when it mentions shepherds, a lot of times when it's saying shepherd, it really means King because the kings viewed themselves as a shepherd over the people, the people being the sheep.

Now, if you look back at Psalms 23 you end up with this. The Lord is my shepherd, i.e., King. He makes me lie down and by the still waters and green pastures, and then as the Royal host, he prepares the banquet before me. That's the role of a King. So, if you take the Lord is my shepherd seeing that through the metaphor of shepherd to back to kingship. Then the Psalm unites and there's no disconnect between the two images. The King is prominent throughout Psalm 23 "the Lord is my shepherd, my King, and he makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me by the still waters And yeah though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death." Those things as a sheep, he is the King who guides his people. But then also he's the royal host. So this is the Kingship metaphor that unites Psalm 23 and solves this disconnect between the imagery and the first part of Psalm 23 and the second part. I think that what Dr. Don Fowler has done is brilliant in making that Psalm make more sense and seeing the unity, the literary cohesion of that Psalm.

King as Protector [17:26-18:34]

So that's some major metaphor that we talked about in terms of the king and that's what I'd like to do is develop this thing of the king who protects and defeats the enemy. Who does the king protect? The king protects the vulnerable. So he has known as protector, that's one of the jobs of the king. Here we get in Psalm 68 verses four and five it says this, "Sing to God. Sing praises to his name. Extol him who rides the clouds. His name is the Lord. Rejoice before him." And then notice what it says. God is a what?

"Father to the fatherless." Who is the fatherless? The fatherless is the orphan. "He is a father to the fatherless, a defender of widows. God is in his holy dwelling." So, you see this where God is enthroned. Who does he help? He helps the fatherless. He helps the widow, the orphan, those kind of people that are on the outside of society. So, he protects the vulnerable.

The Human King as Protector, Ps. 72 [18:35-20:04]

Chapter 72 verse four. Now this one's interesting because this is not talking about God. This is in Psalm 72 this is talking about Solomon and Solomon as king is taking over the kingship. David is feeble in Psalm 71. Psalm 72 Salomon takes over and Shlomo or Solomon says this, "he will defend the afflicted." This is the role of a king, a normal king, a human king, but see that the divine kingship is built off the metaphor of the human king. So what does the human king, what is the human king do? "He will defend the afflicted among the people and save the children of the needy. He will crush the oppressor." That was the role then of the king was to protect the children of the needy. Psalm 72 verses 12 or 14 again, Solomon or Shlomo, writes in his Psalm 72 "for he will deliver the needy who cry out, the afflicted who have no one to help. He will take pity on the weak and the needy and save the needy from death. He will rescue them from oppression and violence, for precious is their blood in his sight." So here you have the human king looking and saying, and being an advocate for the needy, rescuing them, saving them, protecting them, delivering them from the hands of those who would oppress them and create violence upon them because they are helpless in their situation to defend themselves.

Now part of this then is the defeating of the enemy. And so in Psalm 70, it's not only that he protects the vulnerable, but he also defeats the enemy. So that's a role of the King. Psalm 70 verses a one and two, "May those who seek my life be put to shame and confusion. May all who desire my ruin be turned back in disgrace. May those who say to me, aha, aha, turn back because of their shame." So, one of the roles is the defeating of the enemy. In Psalm 60, verse 12, you have the same kind of idea. "With God we will

gain the victory," the victory over the enemy, the foe, the avenger. "We will defeat the enemy and he will trample down our enemies." "He will trample down our enemies." So, the victory is won and given to these poor helpless people. God gets the victory for them by defeating the enemies who have opposed them and oppressed them and done violence or harm on them. So, the king protects and defeats.

The King and Salvation, Rescue and Deliverance [21:17-22:24]

Now I want to develop further this notion of deliverance, justice, rescues and salvation and then this call for rescue then resulting in praise. So, the poor and the needy are delivered, but then there's this movement to praise. So, we'll just look at some verses. Psalm 69 verse 14 and also verse 18 says, "rescue me from the mire, do not let me sink. Deliver me from those who hate me, from the deep waters." And so, you see the waters of chaos coming against him and he's saying, God, deliver me out of these deep waters. Deliver me. Don't let me sink into the mire. Does anybody remember Jeremiah? Very interesting connection here between Psalm 69 and Jeremiah. Jeremiah being put in that septic tank or cistern for several days as he sinks into the mire pleading for God to deliver him. So there are interesting connections here with the book of Jeremiah. I wonder sometimes about the hand of Jeremiah in the book of Psalms as one of the later editors.

The King and Zion [22:24-25:46]

But anyway, if you go on to Psalm 68 back up Psalm 69 backup one to 68. In 68.16 and then 19 and 20, it says this, "Why gaze and envy O rugged mountains, at the mountain where God chooses to reign?" So, God has pictured as being King, reign on a mountain. "Where God himself will dwell forever." So, God's dwelling as a King on this mountain. "Praise be to the Lord, to God our savior, who daily bears our burdens. Our God is a God who saves." So, one of his major jobs is God is one who saves. "From the sovereign Lord comes escape from death." In other words, God rescues people from death. And so, this is Psalm 68. You go down a few more verses in Psalm 68, Psalm 68.24 to 26 you see "Your procession", so in Psalm 68 God delivers them. And now in

just a few verses later, like five verses later, it says, "Your procession has come into view." So, the people are having a procession where the community has gathered together, walking up. "Your procession has come into view, O God, the procession of my God and King." Notice the grouping there, "the procession of my God and King into the sanctuary." So, this is kind of like the Psalms of Ascent later that there's a procession up the hill to the sanctuary where God, my King, not my priest here, there's a priesthood of God too. I don't mean to put that anyways down or anything but here the focus is on they're coming up to the sanctuary where God, their King, resides. "In front, are the singers and after them, the musicians, with them or the maidens playing tambourines." And so, you actually get a procession and it describes the going from singers to musicians to maidens playing the tambourines. "Praise God in the great congregation, praise the Lord in the assembly of Israel." So, this portrays Israel gathering together and then there's a procession up as a group up to the sanctuary of God who's viewed as their King and they sing music and the singers are there and the musicians are there and the tambourine players are there. And then, so there's this procession.

Then down in a Psalm 54, verses six and seven, we have this thing where "you delivered me from all my troubles" and then that leads them, because you deliver me from my troubles, I will praise you kind of a notion. So, there is this connection between God's deliverance as King, the King delivers them and then leading to praising the King. And so in Psalm 54 verses six and seven, it says, "I will sacrifice a freewill offering to you. I will praise your name. O Lord, for it is good, for he has delivered me from all my troubles." Why do you praise him? "He has delivered me from all my troubles, and my eyes have looked in triumph on my foes." You've got the enemies being portrayed there as part of the background for the notion of praise. Now the king delivers, rescues and saves and from that, the Psalmist, who has been saved, then responds in praise.

King at Zion [25:47-31:32]

Our next one is then what about the King from Zion and the universal rule of God? And so what you have is here is that the king from Zion, there's the universal rule. It goes

from Zion to a universal rule, and this is kind of as a forerunner to Jesus. Do you remember Jesus's comment to the woman at the well saying, you guys say you worship on Mount Gerzim, we worship on Jerusalem. And Jesus says, coming in the future, those that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. In other words, it won't be this mountain or that mountain. There'll be a universal rule of God over all the earth. So Psalms does not demean Zion, by the way. Zion is the dwelling place of God, the city of God. So, it doesn't demean that at all. But the Psalmist, as Jesus did, shows this expansion from Zion to the whole world. So, the king's place, enthroned on his holy mountain Zion. I want to work with this first, prove this, and then we'll move to this universal rule.

So how has God pictured as ruling from Zion his capital, his king, his city. The city is then where the major focus. He says in Psalm chapter 43 verse three, he says this, "Send forth your light and your truth. Let them guide me. Let them bring me to your holy mountain." So, God has this special mountain, this holy mountain, "to the place where you dwell." So, God has portrayed, yes, God is everywhere. God is omnipresent. He's everywhere and that kind of thing. But there's a specialness to Jerusalem, to Zion. And he says, "bring me to your special place, to your holy mountain." Psalm 43 verse three jumping down to 46 verses four and five and then verse 11. So, this is Psalm 46.4 and 5 it says, "There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God." Notice how the city is called. The city is not very often designated this way, but it's called "the city of God." It's God's city. "The holy place where the Most High dwells." That's Jerusalem / Zion. "God is within her. She will not fail. God will help her at the break of day." And then down to verse 11, chapter 46.11, it says, "the Lord almighty is with us. The God of Jacob is our fortress." Interesting. And then "Selah" this kind of meditative pause.

Psalm 48 you go down here to Psalm 48 has Zion again. Psalm 48 if you ever go to Jerusalem, Psalm 48 is one you should read while you're up on the walls of Jerusalem. I realize those walls are built by Suleiman and others much later but anyway. Zion, the city of God, Psalm 48. Let me just read some verses out of this, where Zion and the city of the great King are referred to in Psalm 48. "Great is the Lord and most worthy of

praise, in the city of our God." Where is that? That is Zion. "In the city of our God, his holy mountain. It is beautiful in its loftiness, the joy of the whole earth, like the utmost heights of Mount Zaphon is Mount Zion, the city of the great King." "The city of the great King," "the city of God," do you see how those things are paralleled here? Very interesting. The metaphor of the King coming through again, "the city of our God," "the city of the great King." "God is in her citadels. He has shown himself to be her fortress."

What's interesting with this next one, and this one actually caught me off guard a little bit. When I say Psalm 51 to almost anybody who's real familiar with the Psalter, they're going to say Psalm 51 is David after his sin with Bathsheba confessing his sins. This is a penitential Psalm where David confesses his sin, you know, "Create a me a pure heart O God," "do not let your Holy Spirit be taken from me." And he prays out, "forgive me for my transgressions, my sins," and think this is the penitential Psalm where David repents over his sin with Bathsheba. And so it's taken as a penitential Psalm. However, what interests me was that in Psalm 51 you see that it's right after Psalm 48 so these are all connected. At the end of Psalm 51 David jumps out of the penitential role. It's really interesting what he says. Psalm 51 verse 18 says, "In your good pleasure, make Zion prosper." Remember, remember David and his sin, that census against the people, Bathsheba and things like that. He says, "make Zion prosper. Build up the walls of Jerusalem," "build up the walls of Jerusalem." Sounds a little bit like Nehemiah a little bit "build up the walls of Jerusalem." That's what a King does. He builds the walls, like Hezekiah built the broad wall in Jerusalem. So, you've got "build up, the walls of Jerusalem" that's in the penitential Psalm 51. It ends like this, God basically "may it please you to prosper Zion, to build up the walls of Jerusalem." Again, the focus on Jerusalem, God, our King is in the city of God, in the city of Zion.

When you get down to Psalm 53.6, you get a similar thing. It says, "O that salvation for Israel would come out of Zion," Zion, the place where God dwells. "When God restores the fortunes of his people. Let Jacob be glad and Israel be glad."

Universal Rule of God/King [31:33-34:23]

Then down, now I want to shift. Now we've shown basically that all Psalm 48-51 something I could have done Psalm 50. We could have done Psalm 46 and 47 and shown this focus on the city of our God, Zion, his holy mountain, where his sanctuary dwells, where the people go up, the processions go up to the sanctuary where God is there. What I want to do now is say, wait a minute, but this isn't exclusive in one sense, but in another sense it's from Zion that the universal rule of God goes out over all the earth. That's what you see with Jesus. I think later on saying, Jerusalem, yes, but beyond Jerusalem, it's over the whole world.

So, Psalm 57 verse five and verse 11 and this has done in a beautiful song by Matt Hoffland. If you ever get on the program called Get Lost in Jerusalem, where you can actually walk through Jerusalem and you go up to the top of the Mount of Olives. At the top of the Mount of olives, if you get up there and it's in the snow, hit the button to play the song and Matt Hoffland will sing this beautiful psalm that goes like this. Psalm 57 verses 5 and 11 this is a refrain. It is said twice in the psalm. It's a refrain, says it in verse five and then six verses later it says it again. It says this, "Be exalted, O God, above the heavens. Let your glory be over all the earth." "Let your glory be over all the earth," the universal rule and glory of God. Then down in verse 11 it says, "be exalted, O God, above the heavens. Let your glory be overall the earth." Again, repeating the same kind of idea.

If you go down to Psalm 72 we get the same kind of thing. And this is interesting because Psalm 72 this is at the end of Book II. So, this is kind of winding down Book II chapter 72 with Solomon. The last, "the prayers of David are ended" here. And this is where Book II is going to end and Book III is going to start with 73 it says, "praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, who alone does marvelous deeds. Praise be to his glorious name forever. May the whole earth be filled with his glory." "May the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen and Amen." And when you get that double Amen, because you guys have been to the first session, you realize the double amen tells you, Whoa, this

is the end of the book. This is how Book II ends with "praise be to his glorious name forever. May the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen and Amen." And amen! So that's a great thing the rule of God starting in Zion and going out over all the earth, the universal reign of the King.

The King's Qualities [34:23-39:31]

Now what are some of the king's qualities? And we'll just move through these as we're kind of winding the king down. What kinds of qualities does the king have personally and what kind of things does the Psalmist praise God for? In Psalm 48, let's just start with Psalm 48 there, 48 verses 9 and 10. We see, and I'm going to put the Hebrew words up, but the English words are just as good. So, it says this in 48.9 and 10. It says, "within your temple. O God, we meditate on your unfailing love." "Your unfailing love" is the word "hesed." That word is worth a whole study and Nelson Glueck and many others have written on this word, "Hesed," unfailing love. Sometimes I've called it "stubborn love." Love that doesn't quit. Others call it the covenantal love that they make a covenant and God keeps his word as part of his unfailing love. Let me just finish this verse. It says, "we meditate on your hesed, on your unfailing love. Like your name, O God, your praise is reached to the ends of the earth. Your right hand is filled with zedek. Zedek is righteousness. "Your right hand is filled with righteousness." So, righteousness is the role of God as a judge who judges the people righteously, fairly. You don't have to worry about the DOJ doing all these tricky things. Righteousness and justice prevail. And so, God is a God of righteousness. He rules with righteousness and unfailing love. He's true to his covenant what he said he would be.

So, the King, his role, in the heavens in Psalm 50 verse six, it says, "the heavens proclaim God's zedek," his righteousness, "the heavens proclaim his righteousness for God himself is judge." Now, before we go saying, "well, judge isn't king, Hildebrandt, you've got these metaphors mixed up." And yes, indeed, but the King, what was one of the roles of Solomon, when Solomon in 1 Kings 3 took over, Solomon says, God, I'm just a young punk kid. I don't know how to rule these people by making judgement, fair

judgements, on my people. So, Solomon says, God, give me a discerning, give me a listening heart, so that I can judge these people fairly. And by the way, it's very interesting there. In chapter three of 1 Kings, Solomon asks for a discerning heart to judge the people. And what's the first thing he does? While all the other Kings, including Samuel, the first thing they do is go out and win a military victory. For Solomon, there's no military victory for Solomon. It's a victory of justice where these two women come. One woman rolled over on her baby and killed it, and now they're fighting over which baby is going to get it. Solomon says, give me a sword. I'll cut the baby in two. Solomon then says the mother then of course says, let the other woman have the baby. Then Solomon figures out who the mother is showing his justice and his mishpat. So part of the role of the king was to be like a Supreme court, to be a judge, a fair judge, one that judged with righteousness. And so that role fits with the King.

And then speaking about mishpat down in 72, one and two, it says, "Endow the king with your justice [misphat] O God, the royal son with your righteousness [your zedek]. And so, you've got zedek [righteousness] and mishpat [justice] and he's praying "and he will judge your people in righteousness, your afflicted ones with justice." In other words, in Israel money and justice were not to be connected. The afflicted ones, the poor, the oppressed they got justice when they came before the king because the king was to judge righteously. He was to judge with justice.

And then one last one here, Psalm 57 verse three talks this way. It says, "he sends from heaven, he saves me, rebuking those who hotly pursue me. Selah"-- the enemy. God sends his what? His love and faithfulness. His love is the word "hesed" again, his unfailing love, his stubborn love, his love that won't quit, his covenantal love. He sends his love and his faithfulness [emet]. And these are two beautiful words. Basically emet is translated true or truth. So, his love and truth. Does anybody remember that in the New Testament? Jesus says he comes with "grace and truth," grace and truth. And so this may be a John referenced back to this hesed and emet. Dr. Hunt, who's a wizard and a genius in the book of John makes that connection between hesed and emet, which is strong in

the Old Testament. Well, it's strong right here. We just read the verse from there that hesed and emet connected, to Jesus saying the grace and truth in John 1 there.

Kingship Metaphor Network [39:32-44:31]

Now what you have happening then is you have this king metaphor. And the King metaphor is God is sovereign. He is the King. He judges righteously. He protects his people. He rescues them, he delivers them. He's known for his own righteousness, for his justice, for his hesed love, for his truth. But what you have now is a lot of times when you have metaphors, big metaphors like this, you have spinoff metaphors. So, what happens is you have a whole collocation or connection of other metaphors that come out of and come with this kingship metaphor. So, I want to look next at what I've called this kingship metaphor network. And this network then will provide us a kind of a context for the king metaphor and how it spins off into other metaphors and spawns, how should I say, you have the big metaphor and it spawns these other metaphors that come out are referring to God.

So God as a ----, and then we look at Psalm 62 verses two and then six and seven. He says, "he alone is my rock and my salvation." So, God is called a rock. "He is my rock and my salvation." A rock is a place of refuge and safety. A place you can hide behind the rock. So "he is my rock and my salvation." Do you remember the song of Moses, by the way, back in, I think it's Deuteronomy 32 with Moses praying God is a rock. And so, here you see it in the context of the Psalms. "He alone is my rock and my salvation. He is my fortress. I will never be shaken." That's Psalm 62 verse two verse. Drop down to verse six and seven. "He alone is my rock and my salvation. He is my fortress. I will never be shaken." It's a refrain. He said it in verse two. It says the same thing down in verse six. "My salvation and my honor depend on God. He is my mighty rock, my refuge." "He is my mighty rock, my refuge" a place that I can find help in the rock. It makes you think of Herod's Masada where he went to the rock of Masada so no one could attack him. So, the rock is a metaphor for God.

Here's another one. This God is called a rock I think it spins off this kingship

metaphor with the notion of protection. Strong tower, Psalm 61 verse three says, "for you have been my refuge, a strong tower against the foe." So here you've got the enemy and then the strong tower is a place you can run for protection against the attacks of the enemy or the foe. That is Psalm 61 verse three. And then later the notion of refuge in Psalm 71 verse one it says, "in you, O Lord, I have taken refuge. Let me never be put to shame, rescue and deliver me in your righteousness." This notion of rescue and deliverance that the king's rescuing, delivering in his righteousness, "turn your ear to me and save me." So, the notion of being saved, delivered from the hands of the enemy and that God is our refuge. God is our refuge and strength. That's not in Book II but another place in the Psalms.

So, refuge, fortress, we've mentioned fortress already several times, but in Psalm 59.9 and then 16 and 17, it says, "all my strength I watched for you, O God, are my fortress." "You, O God, are my fortress." Then down in verse 16 he says, "but I will sing of your strength in the morning. I will sing of your love, for you are my fortress, my refuge in times of trouble." Beautiful verse. You are my fortress, the refuge. How many of us need refuge, a place of refuge from our anxieties and life beating down on us. And it says, "you are my fortress, my refuge in times of trouble. All my strength, I sing praise to you. You O God are my fortress, my loving God." And so, this notion of God protecting us, that he is like a fortress. The kings built fortresses to protect their people. So, what I'm suggesting here is that these are spinoff metaphors for the king's role of protecting the afflicted and the poor and the needy. That God is a rock. He's a strong tower. He's a refuge. He's a fortress. And that comes from spin-offs kind of things that the king does in terms of his protection of his people.

Psalmist's Thirst for God [44:35-48:51]

Now we are switching topics, that's the king. The king then is in Zion. He rescues, he delivers, he saves his people from the enemy. He then is a rock, he's a tower, he's a righteous God. He's a holy God. He's a just God. He sees, he has mercy in his loving kindness, in his truth, his righteousness and justice. Now we're going to swing over and

catch the Psalmist. How is the Psalmist portrayed? So, I'm going to suggest that the Psalmist or suppliant, will come as one who's needy to God. He will come asking, petitioning God for help and so he's a suppliant. Here's actually how this thing starts. The Psalmist is shown as thirsting after God. And I love this. If anybody knows, A.W. Tozer wrote a book called *The Pursuit of God*. It is worth reading, very small book, A. W. Tozer, *The Pursuit of God*. The picture on the front of the book is of a deer at the streams of water and this comes out of this thirsting for God. The Psalmist is one who thirsts for God. And this is how Book II opens. Book II opens, this is Psalm 42. This is how the book starts and how does it start? Notice how I'm putting precedence on how book starts and how book ends. Those are very important, whereas when you come to the beginning of something, in many books, you have basically a beginning, a middle and an end. So, what you need to do is look at the beginning and end because that tells you where it's starting from, where it's going in the middle of describing that. So, the beginning and end of books are really important in this beginning, middle, and end kind of a linear structure. So, here's how Book II starts out "As a deer pants for streams of water. So my soul pants for you. O God, my soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go meet with God?" Do you remember the taunt in that same Psalm, the enemies in Psalm 42 and 43 taunt him saying, "Where is your God? Where is your God?" And yet he says, "I thirst for God. When can I go meet with God?" Beautiful, beautiful imagery in light of the taunts of the enemy. What was interesting to me is that while you have in chapter 42 this opening "as a deer pants for water. So, my soul pants for you. O God," thirsty for God. It's very interesting Psalm 63.1 this is in the middle and it starts off Psalm 63 and here's how it sounds. So, see if it sounds familiar. "O God, you are my God. Earnestly, I seek you, my soul thirsts for you. My body longs for you in a dry and weary land, where there is no water." So again, you've got this notion of this being in a dry desert climate and somebody knowing thirst really deeply and saying, "God, I thirst for you." So, the book opens that way. Psalm 63 right dead in the middle of book, boom, you've got this thirsting for God again. So, here's where we mentioned too, haunted by the enemy's

ridicule and taunting. "Where is your God?" Psalm 42 verses 3 and 10 and he's comforted by the refrains of God's presence. Here's a couple where he says in Psalm 46 verses 7 and 11 "The Lord almighty is with us." This is the great Emmanuel principle, God with us. "God almighty is with us. The God of Jacob is our fortress." Remember that imagery, "Selah." Then verse 11, Psalm 46.11 "the Lord almighty is with us. The God of Jacob is our fortress." And you see in Psalm 46 this beautiful refrain said twice in verse 7 and of 11 "the Lord almighty is with us, the God of Jacob is our fortress. Selah" a meditative pause. Think about that. So, these are beautiful Psalms. This is how the Psalmist starts out. The Psalmist has a thirst, a passion for God, and he wants to go be with God.

Psalmist Entering God's Presence [48:51-49:23]

This then links his thirst for wanting to go and be in God's presence links to Jerusalem, the temple and Zion motif that we've looked at already. Psalms basically 47, 48 particularly 48 and then 50 and 51 and many other places in the Psalms where there's this movement towards Zion, the city of God, and wanting to be in God's presence there. So, this Suppliant wants to be in God's presence, his fortress to be with God and to be protected by him.

Psalmist's Feelings [49:23-55:21]

Now the Psalmist has a range of feelings. So, I want to run through some of the feelings that the Psalmist says and just kind of run through a series of these range of feelings that the Psalmist has as he has to face the enemy. What is his response and what is his response to God? And so here we have in Psalm 42 verse 10 it says, "my bones suffer mortal agony as my foes taunt me. Saying all day long, where is your God?" He's already saying, I want to go be with God. I remember in the past but I'm not there now and I want to go back and be with God. I'm up in the waters of Merom up in the Dan area below Mount Hermon and I'm way up there and I want to go to Jerusalem. I want to be in Zion where God is. And the enemy is taunting him, "Where is your God? Where's your God?" And then Psalmist responds in 42.5 and 11 and 43 this is repeated three times, this

refrain. Psalm 42.5, Psalm 42.11 and Psalm 43.5 binding these two Psalms together. He says, "Why are you downcast, O my soul?" The Psalmist asks himself, "why are you downcast, my soul?" By the way, it's interesting. a lot of Christians have a real hard time with this. You know, everything is "rejoice in the Lord always and again, I say rejoice." We've got to be happy, happy, happy all the time. Here, the Psalmist is saying, "why are you downcast, my soul? Why are you so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him." Do you see how this downcast mood of his soul moves him ultimately to say, "I will yet praise him."

There's coming a time where he's saying hope in that, remember when you used to praise God, remember, go back. "For I will yet praise him"--the future. The future has hope. There's hope in the future. "Where I will yet praise him, my savior and my god." And this refrain binds these two Psalms together "for I will yet praise him, my savior and my God."

Going down to some other Psalms here. Let me hit 44 and just let me do this 44 one here. 44.9 it says, "but now you" [talking to God, he says,] but now you have rejected and humbled us. You no longer go out with our armies." So here the Psalmist is feeling humbled and rejected by God, and he expresses that to God. He says, I feel rejected by you. God. Psalm 44 verse 24. 44 is a communal lament. Psalm 42 and 3 are an individual lament. And then Psalm 44, the next Psalm, is a communal lament with the we / us / our kind of thing. "Why do you hide your face and forget our misery and oppression?" So again, he's coming at God and asking God some very hard questions. "Why do you hide your face? In other words, he's wanting to move into God's presence. But it seems like God is hiding. "Why have you forgotten our misery and oppression?" Down in 54 this is 55 actually, 55.4 we see the sadness and anguish. He says here, "my heart is in anguish within me. The terrors of death, assail me." So, he's got anguish, he's facing death. He doesn't know how it's going to come out, and yet he's facing death and so there's anguish involved with that. "Fear and trembling have beset me," verse five. "Horror has overwhelmed me." So, you have horror, fear, and trembling. This isn't just a nice, we

don't clean up this fear. This is the guy, he's trembling, he's fearful of what is beset on him. So, the Psalmist is manifesting these deepest feelings that he has. And then over in 44.19 he says this, "but you," referring to God, "have crushed us and made us a haunt for jackals and covered us over with deep darkness." God, you have crushed us. So here you get the other side of things.

Then down in verse 24 he says, "why do you hide your face and forget our misery and oppression?" Verse 25 he says, "we are brought down to the dust. Our bodies cling to the ground." And again, there is a death kind of thing. God having forgotten them. Now in 44.25 he says, "we are brought down to dust. Our bodies cling to the ground." He's facing death. So, it's in these times to lament in fear and trembling.

One of the ones that was stunning to me with this Psalmist and him manifesting his feelings was Psalm 55 verses 12 to 14. And this is where he describes what I would call betrayal. And if anybody has had a really good friend and you have felt the betrayal of a really good friend, this Psalm is just puts it into words so well. He says, "if an enemy, if an enemy, were insulting me, I could endure it. If a foe were raising himself against me, I could hide from him." But it wasn't the foe, it wasn't the enemy. "But it is you, a man like myself, my companion, and my closest friend, with whom I once enjoyed sweet fellowship as we walked with the throng up at the house of God." He remembers worshiping God with this best friend. And now the best friend has betrayed him. He says, that's worse than the enemy. He said, the enemy, I can hide from him and I can get away from him, the foe cannot harm me. But my best friend, the one that I used to go up to and worship with, now is the betrayal of the best friend.

And so, the Psalmist feels things very deeply. And that's why I think people love the book of Psalms because the Psalmist is this honest about his feelings, about how he feels about the enemy, how he feels about God, feeling abandon, rejected even by God. It makes very, very strong statements. And so that's one of the beauties of Psalms.

Psalmist's Hopes, joy and Praise of God [55:21-58:30]

Now that's the feelings of the Psalmist, but is that where the Psalmist stays

necessarily? And so what you have is the supplant. Yes, he feels the rejection of God, the absence of God, the betrayal of a friend, yet the Psalmist is, and then I want to take the flip side of that, with all these negative feelings. I love it because the Psalmist doesn't coat over life. He doesn't coat over life and just make everything happy, happy, happy, and just say, follow God and your life will go well. The Psalmist doesn't do that. He experiences life with all its devastations, disappointments, betrayals, rejections, feelings of abandonment. He feels all those things, but yet he comes back to hope and he says, okay, here's Psalm 42 verses 5, 11 and 43:5 "Why are you downcast on my soul? Why are you so disturbed within me?" He acknowledges his state. He doesn't try to gloss it over. He embraces it and he says, "put your hope in God," What's the hope? "I will yet praise him, my savior and my God." Psalm 42 verse four, "these things I remember," and this is where the Psalmist is reflective and he reflects back on things and it gives them hope. "These things I remember as I pour out my soul, how I used to go with the multitude leading the procession to the house of God with shouts of joy and thanksgiving among the festive throngs. Within your temple, O God, we meditate on your unfailing love." Beautiful passage there.

Now joyful. Psalm 43 verse four he says, "then I will go to the altar of God," again notice the presence. He's feeling abandoned by God. Where is your God? And the enemy taunts him. And now he says, "I will go to the altar of God, to God my joy and delight. I will praise you with the harp. O God, my God." Very beautiful statement there. Yes, his soul is downcast, but yet he looks with hope going to the altar and praising God and making music and singing praise to God.

Then down to chapter 47 verse six it says this, "Sing praises to God. Sing praises. Sing praises to our King. Sing praises." So, it's just like sing praises, sing praises to God. Sing praises to our King. Sing praises to God. So, he embraces the praise of God, which arises then out of these negative feelings of rejection, abandonment, and those types of things. He rises to hope and this hope leads him back to God in the temple, in the

sanctuary and Zion. And then he just delights in singing praises to God and singing praises to the King. So, praise is connected here.

Psalmist and the Enemy [58:30-1:03:17]

Now this is where the Psalmist and the enemy, I just want to show basically this connection between the Psalmist and the enemy and that connection. And then we'll look at the enemy and then we'll kind of draw it all together. From the enemy, then the Psalmist is needy. And so, the enemy taunts. And actually, I'm going to move through these more quickly so I'm not going to read that. It was just referred to the actually the things here.

So, first, the enemy does what? He taunts him in 42.10 and over in 43 "where is your God?" And he taunts him with that question. The enemy taunts. The enemy says in 44 verses 11 and 22, he says, "God, the enemy, they're devouring us like sheep. God. They're devouring us like sheep. Help us! They're taking us as sheep to the slaughter. Help us, O God." And then, "We are disgraced and shamed." Again in Psalm 44, these are lament Psalms. Actually 42 is an individual Lament. 44 is a community lament with the we/us/our. They're disgraced, the enemy disgraces and tries to shame them. "I live in disgrace, my face covered with shame."--covered with shame. And, by the way, that's a shame/honor culture too, very different than America. We don't value shame and honor that much although we do in our own way. But he says here that the enemy has disgraced and shamed him. He was attacked by his foes. Arrogant foes, he says are attacking me, Psalm 54, verse three. He's being attacked by these people. He's betrayed by his closest friends on 55, 12 to 14 that we just read. He's feeling betrayal. He is scorned. And in 69, let me just read this because these are pretty significant, it says, "for the zeal of your house consumes me." He desires to go to the house of God, to Zion, "the insults of those who insult you fall on me. When I weep and fast, I must endure scorn. When I put on sackcloth, people make sport of me." In other words, when I'm grieving and I put on burlap, they mock me, they make sport of me. "Those who sit at the gate mock me. I am the song of drunkards."

And down just a few verses in verse 13 through 22. "But I," this is Psalm 69 verses 13 to 22 "But I pray to you, O Lord, in the time of your favor, in your great love, O God, answer me with your sure salvation, rescue me from the mire. Do not let me sink down. Deliver me from those who hate me from the deep waters." And you can see Jeremiah there in the deep mire. "Do not let the floodwaters engulf me, or the depths swallow me up or the pit close its mouth over me. Answer me O God, out of the goodness of your love, in your great mercy, turn to me. Do not hide your face from your servant. Answer me quickly for I am in trouble. Come near and rescue me. Redeem me because of my foes. You know that I am scorned, disgraced and shamed. All my enemies are before you. Scorn has broken my heart and has left me helpless. I look for sympathy but there is none, for comforters but I found none." Now check this verse out. Let me just read that again and then we'll come into this next verse. "I look for sympathy but there was none, for comforters but there was none. They put gall in my food. They give me vinegar for my thirst." Who does that remind you of? "They put gall in my food. They put vinegar for my thirst." The thirst that he has for God that we looked at in 42 and Psalm 63 and now he says instead of his thirst being quenched by God, they give him gall in his food and vinegar for his thirst. Sounds an awful lot like Jesus on the cross, doesn't it? "May the table set before them become a snare and may it become retribution and a trap."

And then lastly, just finishing up this being insulted, his response, "I am in pain and distress. May your salvation, O God, protect me, I" and then what is this? He's got all these really negative things happening and he says, "I will praise God's name in song. I will glorify him with thanksgiving." That's true praise. That's true praise.

Animal Metaphors of the Enemy [1:03:17-1:05:25]

So now we're switching from the Psalmist to the enemies. Who are these guys? These enemies that keep coming up in the book of Psalms. And as we move through, they are portrayed, the enemies themselves are portrayed with these images or these metaphors. So I want to look at metaphors for the enemies. God is portrayed as a rock, as

a fortress, as a refuge, and as a King ultimately. The enemies are portrayed as ravenous beasts and lions. Psalm 57.4, says, "I am in the midst of lions. I lie among ravenous beasts, men whose teeth are spears and arrows whose tongues are sharpest swords." Verse six, of Psalm 58, 58 verse six, which is the next one listed. It says, "break the teeth in their mouth. O God. Tear out, O Lord, the fangs of the lions," the lions being the enemy. And then down in Psalm 58 verses three and four, it says, "even from birth, the wicked go astray from the womb they are wayward and speak lies. Their venom is like the venom of snakes." So now they're ravenous beasts, they're like lions that seek to devour the Psalmist as a sheep to the slaughter before these lions. And now it's portrayed as the venom, like the venom of a serpent, the poison "like that of a cobra that has stopped its ears," and so the cobra that bites and kills.

And then the last image that's used for this is this one of prowling dogs. So these are the three main images, the lions, the venomous snakes and prowling dogs. Again, dogs in those cultures. People in our culture, they value dogs as almost like friends more than they do value their friends. In those cultures, dogs are wild dogs and kind of like what you have in Afghanistan and Iraq today. "They return at evening, snarling like dogs, they prowl about the city, they return at evening snarling like dogs and prowl about the city."

Characteristics of the Enemy [1:05:25-1:08:15]

Psalm chapter 59 verses 6 and 14. Now, what are the characteristics of the enemies? And I just want to hit these quickly. The characteristics of the enemy are this. They are people who trust in their wealth. And we'll just go, I won't read these verses here because it'll extend it too long, but they trust in wealth, they don't trust in God. The Psalmist trusts in God, they trust in their wealth. The wicked are described. Actually, Psalm 50 has about four verses where it describes the enemy in detail. Let me just read through this because this is a good summary of the wicked and the enemy and it says, "but to the wicked, God says, what right have you to recite my laws or take my covenant on your lips?" Why? What are they like? "You hate my instruction. God says, you cast

my words behind you." How do they take the scriptures of God? They cast them behind them. They disregard them. "When you see a thief, you join in with him. You throw in your lot with adulterers, you use your mouth for evil and harness your tongue to deceit." So there is deceitfulness of the tongue. "You speak continually against your brother and slander your own mother's son." So slanderous deceit comes out of their mouth and they join in with thieves and adulterers. They're slanderers. "They boast of evil" kind of coming back here, but this was Psalm 50 then drawn from Psalm 50 verses 16 they boast about evil. The more evil they can do, the better they like it. "You boast of evil, you mighty man. Why do you boast all day long, you who are disgraceful in the eyes of God? Your tongue plots destruction. It is like a sharpened razor." There's another metaphor. Their tongue is like a razor that slices people. "You who practice deceit. You love evil. You love evil rather than good." Does anybody remember Paul in Romans flips that, you're supposed to love that which is good and hate that which is evil? Here you've got the enemy doing exactly the opposite. "You love evil rather than good, falsehood rather than speaking the truth. Here now is the man who did not make God his stronghold, but trusted in his great wealth and grew strong by destroying others." Here is the description of the enemy, practicing deceit, loving evil rather than good and destroying others.

So these are the qualities then, these are the qualities of these enemies. They destroy, they practice deceit, they love evil rather than good. They grow strong by destroying others. They've got deceit and slander in their mouth. So, these are the kind of the bad boys of the Psalms.

Actions of the Enemy [1:08:15-1:09:52]

Now, the actions that they take, and again, we're just going to go through this, it's getting too long here. They devour people like bread. So that's one of the reactions is devouring other people. They are ruthless killers. They actually go out and try to destroy. They destroy others and kill people and we've listed those kinds of things there. They conspire and this is a big thing that they do. They conspire and try to set up a snare to trap the Psalmist. They attack the Psalmist, they conspire against them with swords and

arrows and that kind of thing. They spread a net to trap their feet. In this idea of setting up a snare, kind of like you're going to snare a bird or you're going to catch an animal. They set up and they plot and they set up a net to snare the feet of the Psalmist and the righteous. The enemy has cast scorn, shame and taunt on others as we've seen above. So, the shaming and taunting of others and things like that. In short, there is an identification of the wicked, the evildoers and the enemy that these are three composite. The wicked, the evildoers and the enemies are basically one. They're drawn together in disgrace and shame on the righteous is what they seek to cast shame and disgrace on onto the righteous. These largely Psalm 64 verses one to six is descriptive of this. And so is Psalm 69 verses 7 through 12 and then 19 through 21. So, these are great passages showing the devastation of the enemies.

Summary Conclusion of the Three Characters of Book II [1:09:54-1:14:53]

Now want to kind of draw it all together and draw to a close. Largely what we had and what we've seen is there are three characters in the Psalter. First the metaphor of the king, divine and human, human King in 45 and Psalm 72, but divine as God is our king, the city of our king and that kind of thing praise the king, our God. And then you have the Psalmist or suppliant who is in need, praying to God and you know the enemy. What happens is the enemy attacks, plots against, seeks to devour the Psalmist. The Psalmist then is in need and the Psalmist then laments and petitions, cries out to God and says, "God, help me, save me, rescue me, deliver me." And then God saves as king. God as King, saves, delivers, rescues, protects and he renders justice for the Psalmist. God delivers like that and in so doing, he fights against defeats, punishments and renders justice against the enemy.

So, these three are the context, this is the characterological context in which the praise of God is offered. As the Psalmist now having been delivered offers praise to God. So, this is a really a great thing and we'll draw to a close with our last slide. It is in the context of the psalmist's deliverance from the enemy the divine King receives the vow to praise. In other words, the Psalmist makes a vow to praise providing a cause for praise

which is then declared by the Psalmist as they rehearsed the mighty acts of God done from Zion on their behalf. And I just want to verse 16 of chapter 66 here. It says this, Psalm 66.16 "Come and listen all who fear the Lord. Let me tell you what he has done for me." "Let me tell you what he has done for me." That's the basis of praise. The basis of praise is a person who has experienced the rescue, the deliverance, the salvation of God.

Same type of thing here and let me move just as in the past, the deliverance from Egypt was the basis for praise. Psalm 66 five and six says, we praise God for deliverance from Egypt. The Exodus, deliverance from Egypt, becomes the basis of the praise and God's creation formerly brought forth praise as the heavens give praise to God. Now the Psalmist himself in verse 16 thanks God for God's deliverance. You have delivered me and therefore he offers up a psalm of praise to God on that basis.

Let me just read this with, we'll close with this. Psalm 65 verses nine through 14, "He [God] has preserved our lives and kept our feet from slipping. For you God tested us. You refined us like silver. You brought us into prison and laid burdens on our back. You let men ride over our heads. We went through the fire and water, but you brought us to a place of abundance. I will come to your temple and bring burnt offerings and fulfill my vows to you. Vows, my lips promised, my mouth spoke, when I was in trouble." So when he's in trouble, he makes a vow to praise God. That's the connection back to the praise of God and these types of things.

Then this may we burst forth with praise that the divine King's deliverance as well as our own tales of salvation and rescue. May we experience God so deeply that having experienced his deliverance and salvation of our lives that we tell our story and our story leads us to praise God for the divine works, as he did for the Israelites in the Exodus of Egypt, as he did in the creation of the world, so now God has acted on our behalf and we then praise him for that.

So, this shows these three characters and how they're put together to the praise of God. Next time, what I'd like to do is focus in on the laments and show that the laments are the basis for praise of God in Book II of the Psalter. Thank you for joining us and we

look forward to our third presentation on the laments and praise next time. Thank you.

This is Dr. Ted Hildebrandt in his teaching on The Praise of God in Book II of the Psalter. This is session number two, three characters of the Psalms: King, Psalmist, and Enemy.

Praise of God in Book II (Ps. 42-72) of the Psalter

Session 3: Lament and Imprecation as the Basis of Praise

By Ted Hildebrandt

This is Dr. Ted Hildebrandt in his teaching on The Praise of God in the Second Book of the Psalter. This is session number three on: Lament and Imprecation as the Basis of Praise.

Review and Introduction [0:06-3:00]

Welcome to our third presentation of The Praise of God in Book II of the Psalter. Today we're going to go over three things and these are three major ideas that come out of Book II in relationship to praise. First of all, we're going to talk about the ritualistic background of the book of Psalms. Psalms is centered on the temple and ritual was very important for those people back then and for us today. So, we'll talk about the ritualistic background of the Book II in terms of praise. Then we'll go into two that are very difficult topics. One is lament. I'm going to try to establish lament as the basis for praise. Then secondly, we're going to work on imprecation as the basis for praise and that is where the rubber meets the road. That's a difficult connection to make. What happened is as I read Book II over and over and over again, I kept noticing how frequently the imprecations played the background to praise. So those will be the three things we're going to tackle today in our third presentation. Thank you for joining us.

Now, last time we talked about the three main characters of the book of Psalms. And so we had the King, we had the Psalmist and we had the Enemy. These were our three main characters. Then what we noticed was that the enemy plotted to harm, devour and snare, dig pits and had a mouth that devours like lions and serpents and wild animals, wild dogs. The enemies attack the Suppliant or the Psalmist. The Psalmist then pleads to the King and he laments and cries out to the King, pleads and petitions and sacrifices. Then the King responds to the Psalmist with deliverance, salvation, rescue, and

protection. We said there were metaphors like fortress and rock and security, those types of things. And then ultimately the King renders justice. Now the King also, and this is what we'll be focusing on today, the King also, while he saves and delivers the Psalmist, he also fights against defeats, punishes, renders justice against the enemy. And that's where the imprecations, the judgements, will come in. We'll look at that today as a basis for praise. Then the Psalmist will praise God on the basis of that. So, our three characters, fit into our discussions today.

The Cultic Context of Praise [3:00-4:51]

Now I want to begin with this ritualistic context of praise. The book of Psalms is written in a what old Testament scholars call the cultic background. This means ritual. The temple is the focus or loci of the expressions of the Psalms where you have like in something like Proverbs, the King and his court with his sages as the center. You have the historical books and they go into the annals of the Kings and backgrounds to Moses and that kind of thing. But with Psalms, the temple is really the focus and the rituals that go on in that kind of environment. So, what we're going to look at today, and I just want to look at Book II and we'll go through some of these things about how the ritual makes its way into the text of Book II of the Psalter.

So I'll just read some passages out of, for example, the opening pair in Psalms chapters 42 and 43. In 42.3 and four it says, "My tears have become my food day and night. While men say of me all day long, 'where is your God?'" And so he is being taunted, and the way that the enemy taunts him is "where is your God?" And that is the taunt then that ripples through Book II of the Psalter. "These things I remember as I pour out my soul, how I used to go with the multitude leading the procession to the house of God." So, do you see that it is with the procession, he consoles himself. The enemy asks "where is your God?" And he says, I remember when I went with the multitude with the procession to the house of God. That is the temple. "With shouts of joy and thanksgiving among the festive throng."

Psalms 42-43 and the Cultic Context of Praise [4:52-5:56]

Then just down a few verses in chapter 43 verses three and four. You remember chapters 42 and 43 are a Psalm pair, similar to Psalm 1 and 2, similar to Psalm 9 and 10. Psalm 42 and three, and so it's 43.3 and four. It says, "send forth your light and your truth. Let them guide me. Let them bring me to your holy mountain [the holy mountain, Mount Zion where the temple is] to the place where you dwell. Then I will go about your altar, the altar of God." "Then I will go about the altar of God," so you see then it's a temple context with the altar in front of the temple. He says, "then I will go to the altar to God, my joy and delight. I will praise you with the harp. O God, my God." So the praise with the harp is taking place in the context of the temple, the mountain of God, and the altar here from chapter 42 and 43 as this Book opens.

Cultic context of Praise in Ps. 68 [5:58-8:17]

Now when we go to the next one, the next one talks probably more in detail than any other one in the Book II about this procession leading to the sanctuary. There will be other psalms where, they call them Psalms of Ascent, people go up to Jerusalem. But here in chapter 68 let me read some verses here that talk about and then it concludes with Baruk Elohim, "Blessed be God." Psalm 68 verses 24 through 27 it says, "Your procession has come into view, O God, the procession of my God and King." Notice the linking of God and King there. He's a major character, major metaphor in the book of Psalms is God is King. So "O God, the procession of my God and King into the sanctuary. In front are the singers and after them the musicians." So, it's actually giving us how this procession took place out front of the singers, followed by the musicians with the instruments. "With them are the maidens playing the tambourines, praise God in the great congregation." And so you see that this is all taking place in the temple. The procession is going singers, musicians, young girls playing the tambourine and they go up in the congregation to praise God. "Praise the Lord. In the assembly of Israel. There is the little tribe of Benjamin leading them." And so, it goes through the tribes and it shows how the tribes then follow these singers, musicians and tambourine players and they go

up to the temple and little tribal Benjamin is leading them. And then in verse 35, it goes, 68.35, "You are awesome, O God, in your sanctuary," The place where it took place, "The God of Israel gives power and strength to his people. Praise be to God [or Baruk Elohim] Praise be to God." So that's the procession and it describes in detail how the procession of the singers and musicians as well as the tribes go up to the sanctuary.

Cultic Context of Praise in Psalms 50-51 [8:17-11:08]

Now over to chapter 51. Psalm 51 is probably the most famous psalm in book II. 51 is the Penitential Psalm of David after his sin with Bathsheba. I'm saying, Lord, forgive my transgressions, my iniquities and create in me, a clean heart. O God. So in chapter 51 verses 15 to 19 there's praise in the context of sacrifice. And this is a song of praise. Let me just read these verses, Psalm 51.15 through 19, "O Lord, open my lips and my mouth will declare your praise [tehilah]. You do not delight in sacrifice." They're going up in the context of the altar, the temple, the congregation is there. They're leading in the singing, and he says, "but you do not delight in sacrifice." So it's not just a ritualistic thing. The ritual by itself means nothing. But he says, "you do not delight in sacrifice or I would bring it, you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings." Again, the context is the altar where this Psalm, this Penitential Psalm 51 would be sung. "O God, you will not despise, in your good pleasure make Zion prosper." Again, the Jerusalem motif is coming up very big here. "Build up the walls of Jerusalem." Now this is in David's Penitential Psalm, Psalm 51, and we notice that Psalm 46 to 48 was really focused on the city of God, the mountain of God, the temple. And here we see that over in 51 it picks up that strain of Jerusalem, "build up the walls of Jerusalem. Then there will be righteous sacrifices." Apparently sacrifices depends on the character of those that offer the "Righteous sacrifices, whole burnt offerings to delight you. Then bulls will be offered on your altar."

Now, by the way, there's a very interesting connection between Psalm 51 and Psalm 50. In Psalm 50 God says, "Hey, I don't want your sacrifices. I don't need you. Do you think I eat your sacrifices that I need your food. He says, I don't need your food. I

own a cattle. On a thousand hills." Remember that song? "I own the cattle on a thousand hills. The insects I even keep track of, I don't need your food." And it's interesting, so in Psalm 50, you get this kind of like God saying, "Hey, don't think you're doing me any big favor by feeding me with your sacrifices. I don't need this." However, David in Psalm 51 then continues over in this Penitential Psalm and says, "righteous sacrifice." What are the righteous sacrifices of God? "A broken and contrite heart you will not despise." And so that's the part that God is interested in. David brings that up in Psalm 51.

Cultic Context of Praise in Psalm 66 [11:09-13:30]

Now one last one on the ritualistic context or the cultic context, it comes from over in chapter 66 verses 13 through 20 praise in the context of the temple, sacrifice and prayer. And again, this is a Baruk Elohim kind of comment that's made there in 66.13 through 20. It says, "I will come to your temple with burnt offerings and fulfill my vows." Now you see vows are also a cultic ritualistic thing, making a vow. And now he comes to the temple to fulfill his vow to you. "Vows my lips promised in my mouth spoke when I was in trouble." We're going to see later on, we're going to call this a vow to praise. In other words, the Psalmist, he's in trouble. He cries out to God, his King, and he says, "God save me." And he makes a vow that if you save me, I will praise you. So you have this vow to praise here. "Vows my lips promised and my mouth spoke when I was in trouble. I will sacrifice fat animals to you and the offering of rams. I will offer bulls and goats." And you see all the sacrificial kind of language here. "Selah." -- a meditative pause. "Come and listen all you who fear the Lord. Let me tell you what he has done for me." Now he's fulfilling his vow, telling others when he was in trouble, he vowed, and now he's fulfilling it. "I cried out to him with my mouth. His praise was on my tongue. If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened." So here you see there's a characterological or a virtuous, a virtue prerequisite to God hearing his prayer. "But God has surely listened and heard my voice in prayer. Praise be to God [Baruk Elohim], who has not rejected my prayer or withheld his love from me." And so again, very much in a context of ritualistic kind of context focusing on the sacrifices, the

praise of God, and him coming to fulfill his vow. Kind of similar to what Paul did when he took the Nazarite vow in the book of Acts and then comes to Jerusalem. A Nazarite would have to shave his head and burn his hair on the altar. It would be where the vow was completed. As we see over a Numbers also with the Nazarite vow in Numbers 5 and 6 there.

Psalms Genres [13:31-15:24]

Now we are switching and this is going to be a big one: Lament as the basis for praise. So, this is going to be one of our major topics then. Lament as a basis of praise and then we'll do imprecation as the basis for praise.

Now, first of all, let's begin by just getting Herman Gunkel who went through and brilliantly and in great detail, broke the Psalms up into what are called different genres. One of those genres was called the Psalms of Lament. Others people don't like the term "lament", which is unfortunate for them I think, call them Psalms of Petition. And so there's a kind of a terminological discussion there. Now there's Psalms of Lament of the individual, Psalm 42 and 43, this opening pair that was, an individual lament, Psalm 51, Psalm 54 to 57, 59, 61, 64, 69 through 71. So, you see there's quite a few psalms in Book II that are individual Psalms of Lament. The community Lament is when it switches from the individual, which is an I / me / my kind of thing, individual singular, community switches to we / our / us kind of thing. In Psalm 44 and in Psalm 60, you have community Laments. These are usually identified by the pronouns going to the plural, we / us and our.

And then finally you have the hymns, you have hymns in 47 and then especially 65 to 68 are the great hymns in the second Book of the Psalter. The hymns are praises to God straight up. So, when anybody normally studies the praise of God and Book II you're going to run right straight to 65 to 66, 67 and 68 and get those psalms of praise.

Classic Psalms of Lament (Ps. 13, 88, 22) [15:25-23:21]

However, as I went through and kept reading Book II of the Psalter over and over

again, I began noticing that much of the praise, Yes, it's in the hymns, but there was a ton of praise in these Psalms of Lament. And so I started seeing a connection between these Psalms of Lament.

And what I'd like to do next is just go through, this classic Psalm of Lament. I realize it's in Book I of the Psalter, chapters 1 to 41 is Book I. Many of the laments are found in that first book. Also, in Book II, as we showed before, there are a ton of these lament Psalms. Now what happens is as you move from Book I and Book II. There are many laments. When you get to Book V at the end of the Psalter, you'll find that that's where the praises are. Psalm 145 to 150 praise God, praise God over and over, hallelujah kind of thing. Praise the Lord. Now what's interesting is that even in Book II you have, it starts with laments and then goes to praise at the end of Book II. So there seems to be this lament to praise movement, lament in the earlier Psalms and the ending 60, 65 to 68, with the hymns of praise.

So what I want to do is just read a classic, this is a short, classic, Psalm of Lament, and just show you this shift. And this is what I'm trying to, this is the big point. I'm trying to show that there's a shift that happens in Lament Psalms. The shift goes from lament then it all of a sudden in the psalm, apparently for no reason, but there is a reason, I think, God delivered the person, there's a shift to praise. So, there's a shift from lament to praise in many of these Lament Psalms. So, in Psalm 13, this is a classic, by the way, we've got a student here, Wes Roberts, who did a brilliant visualization of Psalm 13. It's up on YouTube if you're interested. Wes Roberts gives a portrayal of Psalm 13. It's very good, classical lament.

Here's how it starts out. I always tell people, can you picture yourself being in a church and the elder of your church stands up and he's going to pray a psalm to God and he stands up in your church, the elder, and he starts out his prayer like this? The Psalms are prayers after all, many of them. "How long, O Lord, will you forget me forever." And you could just hear the hush running through the church. "How long, O Lord, will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me?" And you can see people

raising their hands, "God hasn't forgotten you. God knows everything. God remembers you." And you can see people jumping in to break this up because we can't take laments. But he says, "How long will you hide your face from me? How long must I wrestle with my thoughts, and every day have sorrow in my heart? How long will my enemy triumph over me?" So, you see the Psalmist being attacked by the enemy again. "How long will the enemy triumph over me?" This is the lament and he's asking God, "How long? How long? Look on me and answer me, O my God. Give light to my eyes or I will sleep in death. My enemy will say, 'I have overcome him' and my foes will rejoice when I fall."

Boom, shift happens. Here it happens. "But I trust in your unfailing love. My heart rejoices in your salvation. I will sing to the Lord for he has been good to me." And so, the psalm ends. There's a break as he laments. He's not afraid of being honest with God. "How long, O Lord, will you forget me?" And that's how he feels. And then all of a sudden, boom, he switches to this praise at the end in Psalm 13. This is characteristic of a lot of the laments.

Now, I must say not all the laments end like that. We always like to end on this happy note, right? -- a happy note of praise. Some of the Psalms and that's why I love the Psalms they are so realistic. It comes down and the guy is lamenting, lamenting, it's getting dark and all of a sudden, he ends and the end of the Psalm kind of down. He doesn't come up for air. So, Psalm 88 is a classic on that. Be careful then, you know, everybody says, well, the Lament Psalms always end on praise. That's not always true. By the way, that's true with life too. While life can have the turn and can have the change to praise, sometimes it just goes down. And that's the beauty of the Psalms. They portray life as it really is. Psalm 88 does not come up for air. "Why, O Lord," Psalm 88, "do you reject me and hide your face from me? From my youth I have been afflicted and close to death. I have suffered your terrors and am in despair. Your wrath has swept over me. Your terrors have destroyed me. All day long they surround me like a flood. They have completely engulfed me. You have taken my companions and loved ones from me. Darkness is my closest friend." Period. End of discussion. Darkness he does not come up

for it. We say, "well wait a minute, you've got to come up for praise. No, "darkness is my closest friend," period. End of it.

Some people have tried to get out of the pessimism, which I don't agree with this pessimism, of Psalm 88 by trying it, tie it into Psalm 89 but I think that violates the integrity of Psalm 88. And, by the way, Psalm 88 and 89 are not a pair. You have Psalm pairs, clear pairs in chapters one and two are clear pair. Chapter 42 and 43 as we have shown with a repeated refrain is a clear pair. Psalm 9 and 10 is a clear pair where there's an acrostic and this acrostic runs from chapter 9 to chapter 10 linking them together. Psalms 89 and 88 are not a pair like that.

So I think what you have here is similar to what you have at the end of book of Mark 16 at the end, verse eight at the end of Mark 16.8 it ends with the resurrection of Jesus and the women come and what they're in fear and trembling period. And it ends there. And that's why the monks I think said that's a really bad ending to a gospel. You've got Jesus rose from the dead, it's got to be positive. So all of a sudden you get the long ending of the book of Mark. But I think the short ending of the book of Mark and you'll notice in the NIV and others mark that off. The women are with fear and trembling and then, boom, the gospel ends. And I think it's poignant. It gets you to think about things. It gets you to think about life and how these women were terrified. And I think you have to ask and trace that notion of fear and trembling back through the book of Mark and get to see some very interesting things there.

So these are laments and we've talked some about laments. Now let's focus, by the way I should say too, I forgot the great lament that everybody in this room or listening to this will know is Psalm 22. It goes by the way, this is a Psalm of David. Now when I say it, you're not going to think, David, you're going to think somebody else. I want you to think, David. "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from my groanings?" And he goes on and on. Psalm 22 as soon as I say, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" You say, "Whoa, whose mouth is that on?" That's David writing, a thousand years before Jesus. Jesus would take that Psalm on his lips when he

was on the cross. So that's the importance of lament. It's not just a minor thing. Jesus, in one of the most critical times of his life, picks up the lament and allows the lament to express his relationship to his father, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

Lament as the Basis of Praise in Book II [23:22-25:53]

Now let's jump over and let's make this connection between lament and praise. I'm going to jump into Book II now because that's our focus of attention here. And let me just say, I think the laments have been underplayed in the church. We are in a church context where everybody loves to think if you follow Jesus, you live your life right, that everything will go well for you in life. Psalms of Lament, Jesus on the cross, tell us that that's not always true. So, the prosperity gospel is a myth. I think what's happening to our culture is we love the notion of prosperity rather than the very harsh statements of Jesus, give it all away, if you want to be my follower. Those are very hard statements and the laments also come in the mouth of Jesus. They're underplayed in our culture because we like it happy. It's kind of like proverbs says in other cultures and even in the Bible. If you're a happy person and you have a lot of wealth, you have a thousand friends. But if you're poor and sad, a person who weeps, weeps alone, the person that rejoices has a hundred friends. What I'm saying is I think we need to, Jesus says, I believe as Paul, says, "weep with those who weep and you rejoice with those that rejoice."

Over to the gospel here and let me just pick up one thing on the bottom of this last slide here. I want to highlight this importance of lament as a basis of praise. And I want to say that lament plays the rich hues of praise arising out of the cry for the King's deliverance. So even on the screen, as we've struggled with this screen when you have a dark background, the white stands out better. And if you have a tan background here, the letters would not bounce out. So, lament is going to give us that dark background from which praise will stand forth. And so, I think the rich hues of lament play the background for praise. So, we want to connect it up.

And basically, the point here too is that what I'm wanting to suggest is that praise is basically reality anchored. In other words, this isn't just praising God. "We praise God

for who you are, not for what you've done." And the Psalmist says, "No, I praise you for what you've done." And so, the praise is anchored in reality. And so that's the ups and downs in life and that it doesn't just make everything happy as we shall see.

Five Examples of Lament as the Basis of Praise: 1) Ps. 42/43 [25:53-27:30]

So lament is the basis of a praise. Five examples and I want to just work through five examples. There are many, many more, but let me just work through these five. First of all, chapter 42 and 43 you see me keep coming back to these chapters. Chapter 42 verse three says this, "my tears have been my food day and night, while men say to me all day long, 'where is your God?'" Chapter 42 verse 10, "My bones suffer mortal agony as my foes taunt me, saying to me all day long, 'where is your God?'" Same question repeated twice in this Psalm pair. The refrain of this psalm then breaks out. It says, "Why are you downcast my soul? Why are you downcast O my soul? Why are you so disturbed within me?" And then he makes the break. The shift occurs. "Put your hope in God. I will yet praise him." How does he break out of this downcast soul? He breaks out when he thinks, "I will yet praise him, my savior," the one who's going to give me deliverance, "my savior and my God." Now that's one case then where you had this, where is your God? And my soul is downcast and boom, he breaks out of it.

2) Psalm 57 [27:31-30:38]

Over in chapter 57, we have our second one. We bounce over here just to see this for a bit. And this is Psalm 57 another psalm that we're going to bring out this lament and see this shift here. Now let me just read these verses from Psalm 57 verse two. "I cry out to God, most high, to God who fulfills his purpose for me. He sends from heaven and saves me, rebuking those who hotly pursue me." So, you see this hot pursuit, you see the enemies coming after him. "God sends his love and his faithfulness. I am in the midst of lions." He said, now remember how that lions were one of the metaphors use for the enemy. "I lie among ravenous beasts, men whose teeth are spears and arrows, whose tongues are sharp as swords"-- so instruments of destruction and harm. "They spread a

net for my feet. I was bowed down in distress. They dug a pit in my path, but they have fallen into it themselves." So, they dig a pit as a snare for them and they fall into themselves.

Now down in verse nine and following then, you get this shift happening. So he says, you've got these ravenous beasts coming after me there, their tongues are sharp as swords and they're really coming after me. And then all of a sudden in chapter 57 verse nine you get this shift occurring, And, he says, "I will praise you, O Lord, among the nations, I will sing of you among the peoples, for great is your love, reaching to the heavens, your faithfulness reaches to the skies. Be exalted, O God, above the heavens. Let your glory be over all the earth." This aspect of Psalm 57 verses 9 to 11 was featured in a song by a guy named Matt Hoffland, Matt Hoffland, it's on YouTube, but I just looked it up before we came in as called "Great is Your Love," if you want to search for "Great is Your Love" by Matt Hoffland. It's on YouTube. Matt was one of my former students. He works up at Camp Forest Springs up in Wisconsin. He is a tremendous musician, a beautiful song, he sings based on this passage. "Be exalted, O God, above the heavens. Let your glory be over all the earth." Where did that come from? It came from these ravenous beasts ready to devour the Psalmist. And then he turns, and this shift toward praise happens and then he goes off on this great praise to God. "I will praise you O Lord among the nations." Again, breaking out of that Jerusalem context. Remember we had Jerusalem, do you have just 46 to 48, 51 et cetera. And now all of a sudden you see it from Jerusalem breaking out into all the nations. So, this is Psalm 57 beautiful shifting from this lament to praise once again.

3) Psalm 59 [30:38-32:59]

Now we're going to jump over to Psalm 59 for a third one. And this one says, Psalm 59 starts out with the lament. And it's says, "See how they lie in, wait for me. Fierce men conspire against me for no offense or sin of mine, O Lord. I have done no wrong yet they are ready to attack me. Arise to help me. Look at my plight. I have done no wrong, yet they are ready to attack me." So he's got these, they're ready to attack and

he cries out to God. "They return in the evening like snarling dogs and prowl about the city." So you have this kind of ravenous animal kind of metaphor. Do you remember the dogs going licking up the blood of Jezebel and devouring her that was really bad thing. "See what they spew from their mouth. They spew out swords from their lips." Again, lips and swords being connected, damage that they're doing through their speaking. "And they say, 'who can hear us?'" They think they will get away with it. Nobody knows about this. Who can hear us? "They return in the evening snarling like dogs and prowl about the city." Verse 14 and then what happens? Again, the snarling dogs attacking and ready to consume him.

And then all of a sudden verse 16 or 59.16, boom, you get this shift. And the shift here it is, "but I will sing of your strength in the morning." Notice they're prowling around at night. He "will sing of your strength in the morning. I will sing of your love, for you are my fortress, my refuge in times of trouble." Again, the king metaphor, breaking down into the rock metaphor, fortress metaphor, the Citadel tower, kind of strong tower kind of metaphor. "You are my strength, I sing praise to you; O God. O God, you are my fortress, my loving God." So that's again the connection between lament and the shift over to praise.

4) Psalm 69 [32:59-37:52]

Now couple more, that was number three. Number four is going to be Psalm 69. 69 is a long Psalm of Lament. And we're going to see the same -- lament giving way to praise. So Psalm 69, reading through these, "Save me, O God, for the waters have come up to my neck." You can think of Jeremiah. Remember Jeremiah was put in that septic tank for several days. He almost died in there. And so this cry out from the waters coming up to my neck. "I sink in the miry depths where there is no foothold. I have come into deep waters and floods engulf me. I am worn out calling for help. My throat is parched. My eyes fail looking for my God. Those who hate me without reason outnumber the hairs of my head. Many are my enemies without cause. They seek to destroy me. I am forced to restore what I did not steal."

And then he comes in verse six and says this: "May those who hope in you not be disgraced because of me, O Lord, the Lord almighty. May, those who seek you not be put to shame because of me. O God of Israel. For I endure scorn" and now he goes back to describing the lamentful situation he is in. "I endure scorn for your sake and shame covers my face." Again, it's in a shame and honor culture, big thing. He's imbibing the shame that's coming upon him. "I am a stranger to my brothers and an alien to my own mother's sons." The shame is so deep that even his family relations break down. "For the zeal of your house consumes me." Sound familiar to anybody? "The zeal of your house consumes me." Hmm. I wonder who that was talking about? David. Yes. Jesus laid that out when he cleanses the temple. "The zeal of your house consumes me, and the insults of those who insult you fall on me. When I weep and fast, I must endure scorn when I put on sackcloth [or burlap] people make sport of me. Those who sit at the gate [place of honor, where the elders are,] those who sit at the gate mock me, and I am a song of drunkards." [Ps 69:9-12] Verse 19 "then you know how I am scorned, disgraced, and shamed. All my enemies are before you [God], scorn has broken my heart and left me helpless. I looked for sympathy, but there was none, comforters, but I found none." Check this out. Okay, let me just read that again. This is beautiful. "I looked for sympathy, but there was none, for comforters but found none. They put gall in my food and gave me vinegar for my thirst." Sound familiar? -- cross of Jesus Christ. "They gave me gall. They gave me vinegar for my thirst." There was no one to comfort as the disciples had run away. Now this is David. We were talking, these are the Psalms and Jesus kind of, how should I say, incarnating the Psalms and these laments. So Jesus verbalized the laments. He incarnated the laments. And by the way, if we are followers of Jesus, we're told to take up our what? Take up our, O our prosperity. No, no. Take up our cross and follow him. This is a description that happened to David, happened to Jesus. It echoes through Scripture. And by the way, if we're true followers of Christ, it's going to echo through our lives as well.

Psalm 69 is that where he leaves things? No, there's a shift that occurs and here it

occurs. Psalm 69 verses 29 and 30 "I am in pain and distress. May your salvation, O God, protect me." And then he makes it. Boom. "I will praise God's name in song and glorify him with thanksgiving." Beautiful! At the end, he actually personifies creation, he says, "let heaven and earth praise him." Remember Jesus said, if you don't do the praise, the rocks will cry out. And here the Psalmist says, "Let heaven and earth, praise him. The seas and all that move in them, for God will save Zion" and there we go with Zion again. This is Psalm 69 now coming back to Zion. "For God will save Zion and rebuild the cities of Judah. Then people will settle there and possess it." So that Psalm 69, beautiful, you hear the messianic overtones of this, with Jesus and the cross.

5) Psalm 66 [37:52-41:06]

And then our last one, was actually going back a couple psalms to Psalm 66. And this is Psalm 66. The reason why I picked this one, there's so many of these where you get this kind of lament to praise shift is basically because it has the Exodus motif in there. And the Exodus from Egypt and the movement for praise and then the individual tale of deliverance and praise as well. And so, this is a really good Psalm that way. So let me just read through some verses here.

First let me start out with what would be called the Exodus motif. Eventually, I'm hoping the spring we're able to take a tape. Dr. David Emanuel from Nyack College who does a great job with the Exodus motif in the Psalms. He wrote his dissertation in Israel, on this notion of the Exodus motif in Psalms. If anybody has read also the book of Matthew, Jesus is portrayed as the new Moses and kind of the new Exodus. So, the Exodus motif is repeated all through Scripture. The Exodus was the great redemptive act of the Old Testament as Jesus is the great redemptive act, freeing us from the slavery of sin in the New Testament. The Exodus freed the Israelites from their slavery in Egypt is the great redemptive act in the Old Testament.

So here it is in Psalm 66 verses five through nine. "Come and see what God has done, how awesome his works in man's behalf. He turned the sea into dry land" and there you have it the Exodus coming across the Red Sea or the Reed Sea. "They pass through

the waters on foot. Come and let us rejoice in him." Do you remember after they crossed the Red Sea, what was the first thing? Do you remember the Song of the Sea that Miriam sang just the after that? And so, it's interesting that after you have this great deliverance out of Egypt, there's a song that comes in Exodus 15 with a kind of interesting connection there. "He turned the sea into dry land. They crossed the waters on foot. Come let us rejoice in him. He rules forever by his power. His eyes watch the nations. Let not the rebellious rise up against him." And he goes, "praise our God. O peoples, let the sound of his praise be heard. He has preserved our lives and kept our feet from slipping." That's the way it was with ancient Israel that came across. Praise God. He kept their feet from slipping, delivered us from Egypt and those kinds of things.

Now switch, let's go to the individual. Psalm 66 then moves from this praise from the deliverance from Egypt over into the praise of the individual. He says, "come and listen, all you who fear God. Let me tell you what he has done for me." Now, it's just not the national deliverance of God and the great redemptive act, but what he's done for me, "I cried out to him with my mouth. His praise was on my tongue. If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened. But God has surely listened and heard my voice in prayer. Praise be to God who has not rejected my prayer or withheld his love for me." Again, beautiful, again, shifting, saying, praise God, I was in real trouble. God helped me and praise God.

Lament as the Basis of Praise Conclusion [41:07-41:49]

So basically with these five, I've just tried to make the connection. It's all through the Psalms of lament where the Psalmist is realistic. Praise is anchored in reality. As Christians, we don't try to deny reality and deny the hurts and sufferings of life. Instead, we embrace them. We embrace them and bring them and watch for God's deliverance. When we see God's deliverance it gives us a great reason for praising God. So, lament is the basis for praise. Now that's one level, this lament connected to praise and this shift that occurs in many of the Psalms.

Imprecation as the Basis of Praise [41:50-46:14]

I want to tackle something now that's even more difficult and that is imprecation. What is imprecation? Imprecation is when the Psalmist, or actually you get it in some of the other places in scripture too, where the Psalm is curses a person. In other words, I wish bad happened to you say, wait a minute, wait a minute and people have had great ethical problems with these imprecations. We are not going to discuss the ethical implications of these imprecations today. It would take I mean, there are whole dissertations and actually I've got dissertations up online.

I'll give you reference to that. So, what are the imprecatory Psalms? These are a collection of psalms, here's a list of imprecatory Psalms. These are Psalms that are known to have these "let them dash your babies upon a rock, let them smash you in the jaw, let you fade away like a slug on a rock with no water." So, Psalm 5, 10, 17, 35, 58. Now, by the way, 58 is in our text, the Second Book of the Psalter. Psalm 59, so 58, 59 are imprecatory Psalms. I want to look at those. Psalm 69 and 70 are also in our collection. So these four, 58, 59, 69 and 70, these are four imprecatory Psalms in the Second Book of the Psalter. And Psalm 79, 83 by the way, this one's famous, Psalm 109, a big famous and imprecatory Psalm. Psalm 137 also kind of a post exilic. You destroyed Jerusalem and now you're going to be, we hope, you're destroyed like that. So, Psalm 109, 137. If I had to pick two, those two are probably the most famous of them. Now for us, it'll be Psalm 58, 59, 69 and 70. These are the famous ones are calling for the destruction of the enemy.

Now I just want to make a comment. So those are called imprecatory Psalms. And so, I'm thinking, okay, 58, 59, 69, 70, those are the four that I've got to deal with. No, what I found going through the Psalms, anybody who's done much reading in the Psalms says that there are a ton of imprecatory statements all through the Psalms. But yet they don't classify these as imprecatory Psalms They're short statements basically condemning and calling for judgment down on the enemy, but they are not classified as such. So, what I want to do is I'm going to go through many of the imprecatory statements that are not

found in imprecatory Psalms.

So, I want to make a distinction between the problem with some of the genre analysis. And by the way, I'm very grateful for what Gunkel and others have done in terms of the genre of identifying the Lament Psalms, Hymns, Individual and Communal Psalms of Lament and other didactic Psalms of Wisdom and things. That classification is very handy, very helpful classification. However, you've got to be very careful, lest the genre classification blind your eyes to say here are the imprecatory Psalms 58, 59, 69, 70. I'm saying no, they're all over the place. So you've got more explaining to do so to speak than just those four Psalms. You can't just isolate those four Psalms and then as some people, people don't like dealing with the imprecations, they'll do all sorts of things to diminish them, to skip over them, to call them, even some people call them "Devilish," Jesus says what? Love your enemy." You pray for, not against, your enemy. And so, all these really pious people then come off with this thing about the imprecations. By the way, are imprecations part of the word of God. Yes, they are. So, I think we need to try to understand them rather than to dismiss them. Let me say that again. It's very important. I think we need to try to understand them rather than to dismiss them. You've got to be careful. People pick and choose out of Scripture what they like and what they don't like. So, what you have is we the happy parts of Scripture and this is some of the tough stuff. And so, we want to, we won't go through the toughness of the whole thing. I'll put you onto some resources that do, but be careful with this and how they're being interpreted.

Already but not yet Model [46:14-47:17]

What I want to do here is to present kind of a model and as I was thinking about this, I came up with a model for understanding. I want to use the model that the "already / but not yet" model that George Eldon Ladd developed for the New Testament for the kingdom of God. I want to apply that "already / but not yet" to the imprecation issue. So, you have the already that is the past, these are imprecations that have already happened. Curses that God has actually judged somebody that has already happened and those things are described in the Psalms. Then you also have the future, the "not yet." These are

yet to come. This is the future judgment. And then you have the present where he says, "may he," in other words, may God come down and bash these guys in the teeth and that kind of thing. May he destroy these people. So that'd be the present. So, I want to put this model up and I think it's helpful to seeing the imprecation in a bigger context.

1) Already Done It [47:18-48:34]

So here's first of all, God is King. God is King and as king, he's a judge. Solomon, you remember, in 1 Kings 3 his mention of judging righteously. Do you remember Moses judging the people of Israel and getting upset because there's too much for him in Numbers 11 there. So, basically, God is King, he's a judge. And his job as God and King is to deliver to rescue the Psalmist. But part of that rescuing the Psalmist will be to deliver him and to destroy the enemy, the wicked. So that the job of the king is both to deliver and rescue, but also to destroy and render justice on the wicked and the enemy. So what you have in the Psalms is it talks about what God has already done. When did God destroy the wicked? Well, the plagues in Egypt and the going through the Red Sea, the conquest by which the Amorites were destroyed in the land of Palestine, personal deliverance where the Psalmist himself acknowledges God has delivered me and destroyed the enemy. Lament going to praise this shift that happens, that we've looked at that also takes place that God has already delivered him. Now that's the already.

2) Not Yet [48:34-56:58]

What about the not yet? In the book of Psalms, it describes the future. It doesn't describe it as the "the day of the Lord," as you get in say the book of Joel or something like that. But the day of the Lord like types of things are described. God says, "I will destroy the enemy." The destruction of the wicked is something that God has said he would do in the future. He will, not yet, he will deliver the righteous -- How long? I think remember how we get that statement? "How long, O Lord, will you forget me?" That "how long" statement is dealing with it. God will destroy the enemies in the future. And so, the Psalmist then is caught between the then and the now and the future. And so, he

asks how long before this happens? And then the vow to praise says, "Hey God, if this happens, future praise, future praise, I promise, I promise, I vow to praise you in the future."

So what we have in the imprecations then are "may he," and this is the hope of the Psalmist. The Psalmist then offers imprecations that he will be delivered and the enemy will be destroyed and that justice will happen. Lex talionis, that justice will happen as you have done to others, now it will be done for you. As you came after to destroy me. Now you will be destroyed. Do you remember Pharaoh with the first born of Egypt, he was going to destroy the sons of Israel. And it turns out that his own son then ends up dying in this. The vindication, God's glory and the promise, and praise comes out of these imprecations. So, what I'm going to try to suggest is that imprecation is the basis for the promise to praise. Imprecation is connected to praise. So, it's not just all about vengeance and that kind of thing.

Now I'm going to just put this in a little bit of a context then and then we'll jump into it in this book of Psalms here. We wrestle with the comments of Jesus, love your enemy. Pray for those that spitefully use you. I'm not going to solve that problem, but I think we need to go back and try to re-understand Jesus' comments because Jesus spoke very strongly to his own enemies, by the way. "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites if the miracles had been done in you have but done in Sodom and Gomorrah they would remain until this day." "And it'd be better for you if you'd never been born," Jesus said. So be careful when you get this lovely dovey Jesus. Love your enemies and all this kind of stuff. Jesus said some really harsh statement for his enemies. Okay? So be careful. And so what I'm saying is I think that that passage in Matthew 5.44 needs to be, you don't take one verse and map it on the whole Bible like that. The Bible is much more diverse than that. You've got to understand things in their broader context. So, I want to put that context of imprecation then in a praise context.

By the way, now if you say all imprecation is devilish, as some people have said, it being wicked to pray for your destruction of your enemy, what do you do then with

what John Day has pointed out in Revelation chapter six verse nine? The fifth seal judgment, the souls under the altar in heaven. Now this is in heaven. We'd say the souls, the martyrs, that are in heaven. They're not going to be, you can't say, well, the Psalmist was just messed up. That's what a lot of people say, "the Psalmist, O yeah, the Psalmist is good, but he also as a human being, so he's got all these problems and imprecations are one of those problems." No, no. These guys are in heaven. They're under the altar of God and then what are they praying under the altar of God. Let me read this to you. This is Revelation chapter six verse nine. Now what you say is the book of Revelation nobody understands it. No, no. This is very clear what they're praying. Heaven's open, it's the fifth seal. Remember the seven seals, seven trumpets and seven bowls of the book of Revelation. So the next seal, the scroll is being opened and as it's open, each seal that sealed it shut are being broken as the scroll is open. This is seal number five it says, "when he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God." Talk about enemies, the enemies had actually gotten these guys, they had been slain because of the word of God.

By the way, we're not, I must say this, this is 2018 and I have had to watch Christian brothers lined up along the Mediterranean Sea by a guy from the Islamic State, dare I say the name of it, and they chopped the heads off of 21 of our brothers and sisters in Christ while their blood was going into the Mediterranean Sea. How often have we had to watch that kind of thing where believers are slain and what does the world say? It goes on television for about two minutes and then it just goes by us and it's just like nothing happened. Go to Mosul. Mosul in Iraq is where an ancient Nineveh was up the Tigris River. I watched one of the last ladies to leave Mosul. There was I think, I believe, there were a hundred thousand Christians there and she was the last one to leave. She was a cripple woman and she left Mosul. A hundred thousand Christians displaced from Mosul. Where is the world? Are they saying anything? Today there are Christians being slaughtered in Syria and again this genocide of Christians in Syria and again what does the world say? The world says, "Oh no," and that we just overlook that, because of who's

doing it, and we don't want to be considered a phobe of whatever. I'm sorry for going off on this, but our brothers and sisters are dying when it says, "the souls of those who have been slain." We live in the generation where more Christians have died than any other generation, and that needs to be said.

Now those who are slain in Revelation, what do they say? "O God, just love them. Father, forgive them, they don't know what they do." Yea, maybe that's part of it. Yeah. Are we complex beings? Do we have multiple feelings? So, part of us, yes, "Father, forgive them," but what did these people actually say? By the way, this is in the book of Revelation. It's clear "those who have been slain because of the word of God and the testimony they maintained. They called out in a loud voice. How long?" Sound familiar? "How long, sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?" Pretty strong statement. Again, do we skip that one? We skip that one, because it doesn't fit our lovey-dovey kind of Christianity. That's what the souls in heaven pray. Are they sinful for praying that? I'm sorry they're in heaven. You've got to look more to your own sin than to them. Okay. So anyways, I'm just bringing up some of these issues just to show the complexity of the situation. It's not a simple solution, but be aware of the person that's got a simple solution for this, including myself. This is a complex issue here and we wrestle with complex things. You know what I'm saying? That life is not just singular, that we always respond in one way to a situation.

Now, let me put these, and I put these up here so you guys could actually get them. John Day has done a lot of work on this. He's got a book called, *Crying for Justice* and his dissertation was also on this notion of the imprecation. He's also published an article in *Bibliotheca Sacra*, Dallas Seminary volume 159 in 2002. And both of these, the dissertation and his article, are up on my website. And you actually can buy this as a published book. Chalmer Martin wrote, "The Imprecation in the Psalms" in the *Princeton Theological Review* that's also presently freely available on my website. The one at Gordon college and you can get it there. It was done in 1903. So, the copyright's gone in the pages here. This was considered a classic, [now on biblicalelearning.org] The

Imprecations in the Psalms. Probably the best one, that I like best, is not free and the book is worth the buy. It's by this Eric Zenger and it's A God of Vengeance?

Understanding the Psalms of Divine Wrath [1995]. This is probably the best book in my opinion, the best book out on it. I'm not sure of the date of it, but it's fairly recent. I would consider this the best book on that. So those three resources, two of them free up online now.

Already [56:58-1:01:48]

Let me start off with the model. The model, first of all was that God is King and he has caused judgment already in Egypt and he already has caused that. So I want to start with the already, then we'll move to the not yet to the future. What he will do, and then we'll come back to the imprecations. So, first of all, let me start out. Psalm 44 verses two and three And this is, he has already destroyed the enemy in the past. He has already destroyed the enemy in the past. The conquest of Joshua was referenced in Psalm 44 verses two and three, "With your hand, you drove out the nations, you planted our fathers, and you crushed the peoples and made our fathers flourish. It was not by their sword that they won the land, nor did their arm bring them victory. It was your right hand, your arm, and the light of your face for you loved them." Now why did God do that? Was it vengeance? No, God was doing that because he loved his people and he delivered them and gave them a land that he had promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. So the conquest is referred to.

Psalm 53 talks about a pedagogical function of the past judgments, the pedagogical function. And so, what he says is, again, I'm trying to show that this is not, God when he works with the wicked, when God works with the righteous, does he have many purposes? Has he had many purposes in your life at various, times of your life God has worked with you one way or another? Does a good parent always react the same way to their kid? No, a parent is not a robot. Actually, we got smart robots now, so maybe that's a bad illustration, but he's not a robot. A parent doesn't do the same thing every time.

My brother and I were just talking about that when I was young, I threw a stone through a neighbor's house on purpose because I was wagered that I couldn't hit the third floor window and knock it out. I thought my dad was going to kill me. Literally, literally I was scared to death. My father got home, my father was a very strict disciplinarian and when he got home I was shocked. I was expecting that it was going to be really bad. And he, rather than making it bad, there was a gentleness about him. So what I'm saying is that a good parent knows when to react in different ways to their own children. So God reacts to us in multiple ways and he also reacts to the enemies in different ways as well.

So here we are in Psalm 53, Book II of the Psalter, verses four and five. "Will the evildoers never learn, those who devour my people as men eat bread, and who do not call on God, there they were overwhelmed with dread where there was nothing to dread. God scattered the bones of those who attacked you." "God scattered the bones of those who attacked you," "You put them to shame for God despised them, God despised them." Does God despise people? Apparently, so the enemies. God scattered, their bones, and destroyed them. So in the past, God has done this, he has destroyed people, he's scattered their bones, he's despised them and that kind of thing. So there's a pedagogical function here. It's not just pure vengeance it is basically saying the wicked people should look at that and they should learn. They should look and learn from that. And so there's a pedagogical function, not just, the imprecations are not just all vengeance. There are many purposes behind these things and I think that it needs to be brought out more.

Here's one over in chapter 57. So, we've gone to 53, 57 and this is *lex talionis* in nature. *Lex talionis* means the law of retaliation, an eye for an eye, tooth for tooth. Now for us, we would say eye for eye, tooth for tooth sounds like, terrible judgment. But what it's saying is the crime should fit the punishment. There should be equity, there should be equity between the crime and the punishment. There should be equity, there shouldn't be an overreaction. And in our case, in much of the country, it shouldn't be an under-reaction. So *lex talionis*, as you have done, so it will be done to you. Psalm 57, verse six, "they spread a net for my feet. I was bowed down and distressed. They dug a pit in my

path." What's the negative thing that happened here? "But they dug a pit for me to fall into, but they have fallen into it themselves." What they went to do to others, now has happened to them. So that's lex talionis. There is a justice motive here. There's justice motive--as you have done, so it will be done to you.

Not Yet (Future Judgment) [1:01:48-1:05:08]

Now let's switch topics and let's move over to what he already has done. This has already happened. Now what does he say will happen? What has not yet happened to destruction of the enemy in the future? The not yet side of things. Psalm 50 verse four describes almost like a day of the Lord kind of thing. "He summons the heavens above, and the earth that he may judge his people." "He summons the heavens and earth that he may judge his people." God himself is warning of an imprecatory judgment. A judgment of a curse coming down in his own people. "Consider this you who forget God." Now this is the next one that we want to bring up. This one is very interesting because you have here God himself offering up an imprecatory curse kind of thing on people warning them ahead of time. You better get your act together here. And so here you've got God himself. So, you can't just say, "Oh, this is the Psalmist and the Psalmist is all this vengeful, vengeful, wicked person who doesn't love his enemy. And this is the Old Testament, so it doesn't count any way." No, no, no. This is God speaking, and this is in Psalm chapter 50 verse 22 where God himself speaks of an imprecatory future judgment. Here's what God says, "Consider this, you who forget God, or I will tear you in pieces with no one to rescue you." No one can rescue you. God is the rescuer. "I will tear you in pieces." That's a very straight, strong statement that's coming from God in quotes from God. "I will tear you in pieces." So, you can't just dismiss the imprecatory Psalms. No, no, you can't just do that.

Chapter 52 verse five and this is the Psalm against Doeg the Edomite who killed the priests of Nob who gave David solace and gave David the sword of Goliath and food. Psalm 52 "Surely God will bring you [Doeg, or the wicked. He stands in for the wicked] down to everlasting ruin. He will snatch you up and tear you from your tent. He will

uproot you from the land of the living." There are pretty strong statements. God's going to snatch you up and take you down. That's bad.

Another one for the future. Psalm 53 verse 23 we'll move through these quickly, "But you God will bring down the wicked" part of the function of God. "You will bring down the wicked into the pit of decay. The blood thirsty and deceitful will not live out half their days. But as for me, I trust in you, but as for me, I trust in you." God's going to bring down the wicked. He will bring down the wicked, but as for me right now, I trust in you. Beautiful statements Psalm 55 verse 23.

Now that's what God will do in the future. There's coming a future judgment. God has warned about it and that they've set it up. Saying to the wicked bad things are going to happen. There's going to be some curses come down on these people in the future. Bad things are going to happen and so the future.

Present Imprecations [1:05:08-1:09:29]

Now what about the present with the Psalmist engaging and this is now moving to the "may he," this is the imprecation. I'm going to be drawing the connection between imprecation as a basis for praise here.

Now the Psalmist is going to enter. Yes, God did those things that damage the wicked and the past and yes, he warns about future judgment, but now the Psalmist who is in the midst of his own peril and now the Psalmist himself and we'll just work through some of these and we'll try to do it quickly. I'll just read through some of these. Psalm 52 verses five and six, Psalm 52 verses five and six, "Surely God, you will bring down to everlasting ruin, he will snatch you up and tear you from your tent. He will uproot you from the land of the living." "He will uproot you from the land of the living" it means your dead. "Selah." Meditative pause. "He will snatch you up and tear you from your tent. He will uproot you from the land of the living. Selah" kind of a refrain there. Now, down same Psalm 52, verses eight and nine. So, he says, God's going to take you up. I'm going to tear you up and that's Psalm 52 verses five and six. Couple of verses down, he says this, "But I" in contrast to them and what happened to them, "I am like an olive tree

flourishing in the house of God. I trust in God's unfailing love forever and ever. I will praise you forever for what you have done. In your name I will hope, for your name is good. I will praise you in the presence of your saints." And so, while yes, the wicked, bad things happen, I will trust in you and I will praise you. The connection of imprecation and praise put back to back.

Here's another one, Psalm 54 verses four through seven. Psalm 54 verses four through seven. "Surely God is my help. The Lord is the one who sustains me. Let evil recoil on those who slander me." "Let evil recoil come back on those who slander me in your faithfulness, destroy them. I will sacrifice a freewill offering to you." And then he says, "I will praise your name, O Lord, for it is good, for he has delivered me from all my troubles, and my eyes have looked in triumph on my foes." Yes, the foes were defeated. There is a victory here. It's the victory of God. It's not always for vengeance, but he praises God for the victory that his eyes have gotten to witness where the wicked are destroyed and he is sacrificing to God in praise.

Psalm 56 verse nine, is a similar type thing. "Then my enemies will turn back when I call for help." So the enemies are after him. They're going to turn back when he calls for help. "By this, I will know that God is for me." In other words, the enemies are coming after me to destroy me, they turn back and when they turn back, he says, there's a pedagogical function here. "Then I know that God is for me," that God is on my side. So, in other words, the imprecations are not always when God destroys the wicked or the Psalmist asks him, there's not always vengeance there. He's saying, I will learn something that God is on my side. So, there's a pedagogical motivation, a pedagogical function.

And then 57 let me see here. If we get 57 we've skipped that. Yeah. Let me just read 57 verses five and six and verse 11. "They spread a net for my feet. I was bowed down and distressed. They dug a pit in my path, but they have fallen into it themselves." And then, by the way, what's the Psalm? Okay, they dug a pit. They fell into the pit themselves. What is the Psalmist's response to them falling into the pit that they used to trap him, to snare him? "Be exalted, O God, above the heavens. Let your glory be over all

the earth." Psalm 57 that was the one we just said, you know, Matt Hoffland sings with God in his glory being all through the earth with the destruction of the wicked.

1) Imprecation: Psalm 58 [1:09:29-1:11:26]

Now Psalm 58 do you notice this is the first time we've actually dealt with an imprecatory Psalm. All those other imprecations were not in quote, Imprecatory Psalms. Now we're in an Imprecatory Psalm. And let's see what happens and what I'm going to suggest here is that vengeance is not it, but there's a pedagogical function going on here. In other words, there are many functions going on with these. So, this is Psalm chapter 58 verses six through nine. It says, "Break the teeth in their mouths." pretty strong statement. "Break the teeth in their mouths, O God. Tear out, O God, the fangs of the lions." So, the focus on the teeth is as a lion comes and devours. "Break their teeth, let them vanish like water that flows away. When they draw the bow, let their arrows be blunted. Like a slug melting away as it moves along, like a stillborn child may they not see the sun." Those are really strong statements. "Before your pots can feel the heat of thorns, whether they be green or dry, the wicked will be swept away. Then men will say," Okay, as a result of the breaking of the teeth, the slug, a stillborn child, it says, "Then men will say, 'surely the righteous still are rewarded. Surely there is a God who judges the earth.'" So, there's a response to imprecation when these curses are implemented. Remember the covenantal curses in Deuteronomy and Leviticus. Deuteronomy 28, Leviticus 26, 25 around there, where God comes in the context of the covenant, it ends with the blessings and cursings. Now the cursings are actually happening on an individual basis here and the Psalmist and these people say, when that happens, people say there's a God and he judges the earth. So that's an imprecatory Psalm.

2) Imprecation Psalm 59 & 63 [1:11:26-1:13:35]

Psalm 59, our second imprecatory Psalm, we've had 58 and 59 two imprecatory Psalms. 59 says, "But do not kill them. O Lord, our shield, or my people will forget." Why God do I not want to see the destruction of my enemy? Because if you destroy

them, people will forget. Hmm, What's happening in America? People are destroyed, people forget. "In your might make them wander about and bring them down. Consume them in wrath, consume them till they are no more. Then it will be known to the ends of the earth that God rules over Jacob. O my strength. I sing praise to you." The judgments come and the judgment falls, the Psalmist then turns and that becomes the basis of praise. "My strength, I sing praise to you. O God, O God, you are my fortress, my loving God." Beautiful switch there kind of happening with the imprecations similar to what we've seen with the laments. Psalm 62 verse 12 God's unfailing love, "and that you, O Lord are loving. Surely you will reward each person according to what he is done." So this brings up the notion of equity and fairness. There's going to be a judgment against the wicked and the enemy, but the fairness and stuff happens there.

Psalm 63 verses 9 and 10, "They who seek my life will be destroyed. They will go down to the depths of the earth. They will be given over to the sword and become food for jackals." Very strong statement there in 63.9 and 10. If you get down to 64 and let me just bring this up, I'm in Psalm 64 "but God will shoot them with arrows. Suddenly they will be struck down. He will turn their tongues against them and bring them to ruin. All who see them will shake their heads in scorn."

Imprecations in Psalm 68 & 64 [1:13:35-1:15:27]

Now 68 becomes another imprecatory Psalm here and I want to just raise this and we're going to see again, imprecation leading to praise. We'll see the connection between the imprecation. I was just showing in those last couple of ones that those were outside, they were imprecations outside imprecatory Psalms. So, I'm suggesting is the notion of imprecation is throughout the Psalms, not just in the imprecatory Psalms, but 68 is an imprecatory Psalm. So, here's what it says, "As smoke is blown away by the wind, may you blow them away. As wax melts before the fire. May the wicked perish before God, but may the righteous be glad and rejoice before God. May they be happy and joyful. Sing to God, sing praise to his name. Extol him who rides the clouds. His name is Yahweh and rejoice before him." So, you've got the destruction of the wicked and then

immediately turning to praise of the one who rides the clouds. A beautiful, imprecation to praise move that we've seen similar to the lament.

Now we're not done yet. Getting almost close to the end of this. Psalm 64, seven through nine, we get the same imprecation to praise shift. It says, "but God will shoot them with arrows. Suddenly they will be struck down. He will turn their own tongues against them and bring them to ruin. All who see them will shake their heads and scorn." Now check this out. "All mankind will fear, they will proclaim the works of God and ponder what he has done." When they see the destruction of the wicked then the righteous then proclaim the works of God and ponder what he has done.

3) Imprecation: Psalm 69 [1:15:27-1:16:14]

69 is an imprecatory Psalm again, back to that Psalm 69. "Charged them with crime upon crime," kind of a judicial context. "Do not let them share in your salvation." [69:27] Very strong statement. "May they be blotted out of the book of life." Very strong statement. The book of life, you remember Genesis and Revelation, the book of life "and not be listed with the righteous. I am in pain and distress. May your salvation, O God protect me." And then what's the response? "I will praise God's name and song and glorify him with thanksgiving." And so, you get again this imprecation and then it's followed immediately by this statement of praise of God's name.

4) Imprecation: Psalm 70 & 71 [1:16:14-1:20:28]

Now working to the end, we're almost to the end of Book II. Chapter 70 the imprecatory Psalm, 70 is also an imprecatory Psalm. 69 and 70, 58, 59 the four imprecatory Psalms in Book II. "May those who seek my life be put to shame and confusion. May all who desire my ruin be turned back and disgrace. May those who say to me, 'aha, aha' turn back because of their shame, but may all who seek you." So the big contrast there, they go against those who are trying to shame me, "But may all who seek you rejoice and be glad. May those who love your salvation always say, 'let God be exalted,'" "let God be exalted" again in imprecatory statements followed immediately by

statements of praise.

Now Psalm 71 is not an imprecatory Psalm, but yet, here's what it says. Psalm 71 verses 10 through 15 and then 23 to 24, "for my enemies speak against me. Those who wait to kill me conspire together. They say, 'God has forsaken him.'" Do you remember the early chapter? This is chapter 71 just about to finish the book. Remember how the book opened in 42 and 43 "where is your God?" Here we are in chapter 71 and they're saying "for God has forsaken him," "pursue him and seize him for no one will rescue him. Be not far from me. O God. Come quickly. O my God, to help me. May my accusers perish in shame. May those who want to harm me be covered with scorn in disgrace. But as for me, I will always have hope. I will praise you more and more." Again, shift, despise, scorn upon the enemies. I, on the other hand, God, will praise you more and more. "My mouth will tell of your righteousness, of your salvation all day long, though I know not its measure... My lips will shout for joy when I sing praise to you I whom you have redeemed. My tongue will tell of your righteous acts all day long. For those who wanted to harm me had been put to shame and confusion." And that actually is saying that imprecation is part of praise. He's now praising God in the imprecation there, let me read that again. "For those who wanted to harm me have been put to shame and confusion," [71:24] that's part of his praise to God. Psalm 71, his vow to praise in the future. Psalm 71, that's something we just covered.

Now, we have not talked about two Psalms in Book II and I don't want to talk about them long cause it's going to long. But chapter 45, was about the human king and the wedding of the human king as he weds his bride. Beautiful Psalm 45, is the king's wedding with his bride. Psalm 72, is connected with Psalm 71. Psalm 71 the Psalmist says, "God help me, I'm so old and don't abandon me when I'm old and weak." And then Psalm 72 is Solomon, the young vibrant king takes over. So, Psalm 71, the weak king of fading off and Psalm 72, the strong king of arising, Solomon. It's almost like 1 Kings chapters one with David's going off the scene and Bathsheba and Nathan coming into him and Solomon taking over in two and three, 1 Kings chapter two and three. And then

Solomon being granted wisdom by God in chapter three of 1 Kings. So, Psalm 72 is Solomon's. And notice one of the requirements of the human king, now we're not talking about the divine king God judging the wicked. We're talking about the human king. In Psalm 72 verse four it says, "he [the human king] will defend the afflicted among the people and save the children of the needy. He will crush the oppressor." What is one of the jobs of a human king "to crush the oppressor." That's imprecation, that's kind of a cursish kind of thing happening there.

Summary and Conclusion [1:20:28-1:24:37]

Now I want to suggest then that I've shown outside the imprecatory Psalms imprecatory statements that yielded over to praise or that shifted over to praise. And we've shown imprecation and then praise, imprecation and praise. We've also looked at the four imprecatory Psalms 58, 59, 69 and 70 and shown that those also had that same move imprecation against the wicked, the destruction of the wicked causes the righteous to praise. Now Zenger in his book, *A God of Vengeance* makes this statement, and I'm going to read it, this short paragraph, as I think he's really nailed it. "The Psalms of enmity," he says, "offer us neither a dogmatic doctrine of God nor a summary of biblical ethics." And that's been the focus of much of this discussion and imprecation. He says, no. "These are poetic prayers that hold up a mirror to perpetrators of violence and they are prayers that can help the victims of violence by placing on their lips a cry for justice and for the God of vengeance to hold fast to their human dignity and to endure nonviolently in prayerful protest against violence that is repugnant to God despite their fear in the face of their enemies and images of enmity. The transfer of vengeance to God that is indicated in the Psalms implies renouncing one's own revenge." I don't take vengeance out on the people, the enemies that are coming after me. I do not go after them. I commit that to God in prayer. I sing a psalm of imprecation and God then does it for various reasons pedagogical reasons, for teaching reasons, for justice reasons, for vengeance reasons, many reasons. And I commit that and therefore the victim of the violence is freed from having to do vengeance on another. He commits that vengeance to

God. He commits that justice. And so basically the imprecatory Psalms, are a cry for justice, are a cry for justice from those who are oppressed, calling the king to help them in that needy situation. And that causes them to do what? The helpless, people who are violated, then praise God. So that's that. Now the enemy damages the Psalmist, the Psalmist calls out to God for deliverance and the king delivers and then the Psalmist then returns praise to God.

Now in summary, let me just kind of work through this. The three things we've gone over. We've done over the rituals and basically shown that the Psalms come in this ritualistic temple, altar, procession kind of context. We've also noticed the importance of lament as the basis of praise. And basically what we did there was we said that the praise is reality anchored. In other words, this isn't just happy, Oh we praise God. It's anchored in the laments. We also then showed that imprecation is the basis of praise and even some of the imprecations turn out to be praise themselves. God's deliverance and destruction of violence in the establishment of justice leads to the cry for praise, to praise God.

What we'll do next time is look at praise itself in terms of the vow, to praise, the call to praise, the cause to praise, the place of praise, how to praise, and then the modern implications of worship. So next time we're going to focus just on that aspect of praise and bring that out as we did lament and imprecation today. Thank you for staying with us. I hope this has been helpful. And again, we praise God for his word and the hope of justice in this world. Thank you.

This is Dr. Ted Hildebrandt in his teaching on the Praise of God in the Second Book of the Psalter. This is session number three on Lament and Imprecation as the basis of praise. [1:24:58]

Praise of God in Book II (Ps. 42-72) of the Psalter

Session 4: The Call to Praise, the Cause for Praise, How to Praise, the Content of

Praise and the Place of Praise

By Ted Hildebrandt

This is Dr. Ted Hildebrandt in his teaching on The Praise of God in Book II of the Psalter. This is session number four on: the Call to Praise, the Cause for Praise, How to Praise, the Content of Praise and the Place of Praise.

Review and Introduction [0:06-3:27]

Welcome to our fourth presentation on The Praise of God in Book II of the Psalter chapters 42 through 72 in the book of Psalms. In the past we've had three lectures. One started out with a canonical context. Just looking at Book II as a whole and seeing that many of the Psalms of the Book II are psalms of lament. Many of them are what's called the Second Davidic Collection. The First Davidic Collection being in Book I, chapters 1 to 41 and this being the Second Collection. We've also seen that this is called the Elohist Psalter because a lot of times the name Elohim for God was favored over the name Yahweh, which we compared Psalm 14 to Psalm 53, which are almost repetition with that variation toward the Elohist Psalms. We saw the Sons of Korah and how some of the Psalms then linked together through various catchwords and intertextual relationships that are there. This was brought out largely, there was a fellow in the 1980s named Gerald Wilson who started this inter-textual relationship between the Psalms. It was brilliant and it has affected Psalm study for the last 40 years.

Then we went on to the three characters of the Psalms and we did the King, the Psalmist, who is attacked by the Enemy and who pleads to the king. The king then delivers the Psalmist and does destruction on the enemy.

And then last time in our session three, we developed the notion of the ritualistic nature of praise that it takes place in the context of the temple, sacrifices and those types

of things and processions. And then we worked down through lament as the basis for praise because many of the psalms in our Book II of the Psalter are laments and that lament is the basis for praise. And then we tried something, it was a little bit, more tricky, imprecation as the basis for praise. And we went over that last time.

Now this'll be our fourth session. And today in our fourth session, you can see the topic that we're going to talk about is the actual praise itself in Book II. So, we're going to talk about first what's called: the call to praise. Then we're going to see that right after a call to praise that often a cause for praise is given. Then we're going to look at how to praise with which instruments with what parts of our body. And then the content of praise will be examined. And then lastly, the place of praise. We'll conclude with that and then we'll take a look at the implications of praise for our modern culture. So, we'll look at those implications at the end, kind of drawing all four presentations together. Thank you so much for being with us. And let's tackle the call to praise.

Call to Praise, Commitment to Praise, Vow to Praise [3:27-10:52]

The call to praise basically is when psalm often initially starts out with an imperative. And so it'll be like "sing to the Lord" or "shout to the Lord" or there'll be this imperative what will be kind of a command to say, "join us in praising God." There's this call to praise using an imperatival type of or command type experience. I want to just look at one and I'll just read through. And a lot of what we're going to be doing today is just illustrating the call to praise, the cause of the praise, how to praise and where to praise. We'll just illustrate that with texts drawn from Book II of the Psalter.

So, call to praise, chapter 47 verse one, it goes like this. "Clap your hands all you nations, shout to God with cries of joy." So, you see the two imperatives there are "clap your hands" so that clapping hands was part of the worship process. "Clap your hands all you nations, shout to God with cries of joy." And so, there's this clapping and shouting and those two things in this call to praise that starts Psalm 47 verse one. A lot of times these calls to praise will open the Psalms. I think the Psalm, old 100 as they call it. "Make a joyful noise to the Lord." And this call the praise from Psalm 100 but we see that in

Psalm 47.1 as well.

A second example is taken in Psalm 66.1 and it says, "Shout with joy to God all the earth." So again, this notion of shout [ranan], "shout to the Lord." So that's a second example.

Now here, this next one we've got is coming from chapter 67 verses three to five. And why I like this call to praise is it kind of says, may the people praise here and then in verse five it ends, may the people praise as well. And so, it's an inclusio, it's a book-ended thing. He starts with "may the people praise" he ends with this call to praise and it's kind of a nice thing there. It says in Psalm 67 verses three to five. "May the people praise you, O God, may all the peoples praise you. May the nations be glad and sing for joy, for you rule the peoples justly and guide the nations of the earth. Selah -- meditative pause. And then verse five, "May the peoples praise you, O God, may the peoples praise you." And so you've got this kind of "may the peoples praise" beginning and end of this group of verses here with this call to praise here.

Now sometimes there's the Psalmist gives us a self-description of his praise. And so in Psalm 71 verse six, he says this, "I will come and proclaim your mighty acts, O sovereign Lord, I will proclaim your righteousness yours alone." Now notice this one isn't "shout to the Lord," like "you shout to the Lord" or "you clap your hands." This one is self-reflective and it's self-descriptive. "I will come and proclaim your mighty acts, O sovereign Lord," "I will" and I want to say this is a variation of this call to praise where the Psalmist himself invokes himself. "I will praise," I want to call that a commitment to praise. And so he makes a commitment that "I will praise you." And so this is a little different than a call the praise, but in the same kind of a same general semantic area there. "I will come and proclaim" is a commitment to praise.

And then in our next verse and this commitment to praise, I will do this. It is connected with what's called a vow to praise. A lot of times what happens is, and I think anybody that's known the Lord for a long time and in difficult situations, you vow to praise. In other words, I had a friend who was in Vietnam, he was on a hill and

everybody was getting shot and killed and he put his head down in the mud and he said, "God, if you get me out of here, I will serve you for the rest of my life." So, this kind of a thing where a person that's in trouble often makes a vow to God that I will do thus and such if you will spare me. I also have been in that kind of context, particularly with my son who was a Marine when he was in Afghanistan and Iraq, but particularly Afghanistan when he was outside the wire for 28 days straight. And I would pray to God just to vow to praise him if my son returned alive and indeed, he did.

So, this vow to praise comes from chapter 61 verses five through eight, Psalm 61 verses five through eight. It says, "You have heard my vows. O God, you have given me the heritage of those who fear your name. Increase the days of the king's life, his years for many generations. May he be enthroned in God's presence forever. Appoint your love and faithfulness to protect him. Then I will sing praise to your name." In other words, if you give this king and you bless this king in this way, "then I will sing praise to your name and fulfill my vows day after day." And so, it's this vow to praise, which is very similar to that commitment to praise. We said, I will do this in the future, God, if you do that. And so that vow to praise is seen clearly in chapter 61 in reference to the king.

And then the praise at the end of Book II we said almost all the books, there are five books in the Psalms, five books in the Pentateuch or the Torah, five books that the Psalms is broken up to, 1 to 41 and we're looking at 42 to 72 and then 73 to 89, 90 et cetera, et cetera, down to the end. We said that the book of Psalms moves from more lament in the beginning to praise in the end and indeed individual psalms have that same movement. At the end of each of these books chapters 1 to 41 at the end, and then chapters 42 to 72 at the end, you get this praise, or hallelujah, followed by a double Amen. Amen. Amen and Amen, a double Amen. Some of them actually have the double praise, so it's a double hallelujah, followed by a double amen. And so here in our book in Psalm 72 Solomon ends this is Psalm 72 verses 18 through 20, "Praise be to the Lord God, the God of Israel, who alone does marvelous deeds. Praise" [again, duplicating double praise here] Praise be to his glorious name forever. May the whole earth be filled with his glory.

Amen and Amen." That's the end of Book II. And then he concludes, "this concludes the prayers of David, the son of Jesse." And so, this is Book II being drawn to a close here, with a double praise, and then a double amen at the end. So, these are the calls to praise. These are the calls to praise.

Cause to Praise [10:52-13:35]

Now we want to look at next is the cause to praise. And while we're just introducing this cause to praise, what is the word that, there's a little connector word. And as you do work in some of the languages, you realize it's not the big words necessarily, but oftentimes it's these little connecting words, prepositions and conjunctions that give you what's going on in the narrative when it's taking place and how it's happening. And so in this cause to praise, we started out with what's called a ki clause. So, it starts out with "for" [cause to praise] which is going to tell why you're praising God. It's going to say "for" or "because." It will be translated that way. This is the word ki. Ki is the word that's used for "for, because." It can be translated either way ki "because," and then it'll give you a cause to praise, a rationale. And so, this is called the cause to praise. Oftentimes the cause to praise goes with the call to praise. So, you have a call to praise, "shout to God" and then why? "Because," and then it explains why. So, we want to read through just some of these to pull the cause to praise and just illustrate this with this ki clause. Ki meaning "for" or "because."

So in chapter 47 verses one and two, which we just read by the way, it says, "Clap your hands all you nations, shout to God with cries of joy." There's your call to praise, two imperatives, shout and clap your hands. And then the next verse says, for/ki "for the Lord most high," why do we praise him? Because "he is awesome, a great King." Notice that King metaphor coming through again, "a great King over all the earth." That's the cause to praise. He's awesome. He's the great King over all the earth. And so that's an example in chapter 47 verses one and two.

Psalms 57 verses nine and ten, he says this, in a kind of a commitment to praise, "I will praise you. O Lord, among the nations. I will sing of you among the peoples." This

commitment to praise and how does he follow up the commitment to praise. I will do this. Why? For, [ki] for great is your love reaching to the heavens. Your faithfulness reaches to the skies." And then he gives a cause to praise "for great is your love." And again, remember we mentioned Matt Hoffland's song on YouTube "For great is your love" and the beautiful rendition of Psalm 57 into music.

Excursus on Hebrew Poetry [13:36-17:00]

Now another one for example, but this one is a little tricky. See sometimes the Hebrew and when they write poetry, you've got to understand there's a huge difference between narrative and poetry. Even when you look at the Bible, when you open up your Bible and you put your finger down in say Genesis, you get your Bible scans, the text and the columns, and the columns are in paragraphs and you look and they're all paragraphs down, one paragraph all at another. And they're all, how should I say, justified on both sides. So in other words, your narrative columns are square. And this column comes down there. Square, the beginning word in the end word. This begins the line, this ends the line and then it goes, just go down and the paragraphs. In poetry, poetry is geared not around paragraphs but around single lines, a line of poetry. And so and that's the difference. And if you look in your Bible, you take Genesis and open up, you'll see them in columns because that's narrative in paragraphs. If you jump over to Psalms or some of the prophets and other places, Proverbs, Job and you put down in the poetry, you'll see each line, it's broken into lines. And that breaking into the line is a really, really important factor. Poetry comes to us in single lines that are added together into making, from the line to the strophe. Strophe is like a poetic paragraph.

Actually, a lot of times when the lines come, the lines come in and what they call bi-colon, and sorry for getting off on the poetry, but there's two lines usually a lot of times in the Hebrew poetry. There are two lines that either say the same thing, kind of synonymous parallelism. It says this, what's more this. Or it'll say this and no way this. And there'll be opposite and they'll call those antithetic parallelisms. So there is synonymous parallelism when they say "this, what's more this" going in the same

direction. And then when they switched back the bi-colon, "this, but not this." The righteous, this happens, but the wicked, this happens. So, the righteous and the wicked will be contrasted in these antithetical parallelisms which are largely prominent in Proverbs. And then you have some that don't do the lines, do not connect semantically and those are called synthetic parallelism. So, it's ABC and then it's DEF rather than ABC / ABC where there's repetition.

So, what we have here then is poetry like things short because you've got to capture it. It's almost like the Twitter. Do you guys do Twitter? Where, I'm sorry for using that metaphor, but it just popped into my head, but it just, you know what I'm saying? You've got to write something in so many characters. And so, what happens in the poetry is that each line has to be almost a certain length. And the lines line up. If you've written much poetry, you know that the lines kind of line up, not every time exactly. So, what happens is in poetry you have to be very brief with your words. Each word is chosen for its sound or its sense and each word is really important in a poem. Whereas in the narrative it is more like this lecture where you ramble and you go on. But poetry very, very well crafted and each word, sound and sense play a meaning and therefore they don't have extraneous words around. It's very truncated, very abbreviated. That's the word I want abbreviated, very abbreviated.

Cause for Praise [17:00-21:51]

And so, for example, in the cause to praise usually you have this word ki "for, because," and then it tells you the reason but sometimes because of the poetry they drop the word "for" and sometimes they also drop the verbs. They call it verb gapping and use the verb from the first line gets gapped out in the second line. They don't even restate the verb because they assume that you know to bring it down. But anyways, in chapter 66 verses eight through nine it says, "Praise our God, O peoples, let the sound of his praise be heard." And then the NIV skips the word "for." But I think it belongs here "for he has preserved our lives and kept our feet from slipping." Why do you praise him? Why should the sound of the people of his praise be heard? Because "he has preserved our

lives and kept our feet from slipping." So that ki there is not mentioned. In other words, it's missing, the ki there, but it seems to be implied in the narrative, this is the cause to praise. So not all causes to praise will have this ki that triggers it. Sometimes they'll drop it just for brevity sake and other reasons maybe sound.

Now chapter 66 verse 12 it says, "You let men ride over our heads. We are through fire and water, but you brought us to a place of abundance." And so here he's doing a cause for praise by using description. He's telling what happened. You let men ride over our heads. We were beaten down. We went through fire and water, sounds a little bit like James Taylor, we're fire and water. But "you brought us to a place of abundance" and then you get this deliverance. They rode over our heads, but you delivered us. And so that's giving a reason for praise, a cause for praise, again, without the ki per se.

And then this one happens quite a bit and I just want to feature this. God has listened to one's prayer and when God listens to one's prayer, the response is to praise God. And this is a beautiful thing. God has heard our prayer, praise God. And so this happens to down in chapter 66 verses 19 through 20. You can see a lot of these are coming from Psalm 66 Psalm Hymn. There is more praise toward the end of Book II. So, we're doing a lot with 66 through 69, 70, because that's where the hymns are. Starts out our Book II with a lot of laments, and ends with these praises to God. But in chapter 66 verses 19 and 20, it says, "but God has surely listened and heard my voice in prayer, praise be to God who has not rejected my prayer or withheld his love from me." So, a beautiful statement, they're praising God for hearing "my prayer." By hearing it means hearing and responding and to his prayer. And so, prayer gets involved as a person prays, prays, not praise, but pray like pray, prays and then then they praise God. Play on words, sound there. Sorry about that.

And then the last one is and this is an interesting idea and as I examine more of these calls to praise, causes to praise, call to praise. "Shout to the Lord, for he is good," that kind of thing. I found in several of these. This blending of the cause to praise with

the actual praise itself. So that this cause for praise turns out to be praise itself. It's not just giving you the reason, it's telling you praise and giving you the reason. It's part praise itself. So, there's a blending of these two categories of call to praise and cause to praise. Sometimes they get blended into one. He says this in Psalm 63.3, Psalm 63.3, "because your love is better than life, because your love is better than life." He's saying, God, you love me. That's part of his praise to God. "My lips will glorify you" cause to praise. "I will praise you as long as I live and in your name I will lift up my hands" a commitment to praise. "I will lift up my hands." I will praise you. Why? "Because your love is better than life." And again stating, "your love is better than life" is actually praising God in itself, in the cause to praise. So, you've got to be careful when you make these cognitive distinctions between call the praise and cause the praise. Sometimes they get blended together beautifully and the cause to praise actually is praise itself. And so that's kind of a neat thing when these things blend.

How to Praise [21:52-24:17]

Now, next, what I'd like to do is switch topics from, we've looked at the call to praise then the cause to praise with "for" or "because," and the call to praise being with the imperative, "Shout to the Lord." Now what I'd like to look at, how do people actually praise? How is the praise done? And so the how of praise. To do this, I want to start out looking at what I call the underpinnings, the underpinnings of praise. We're going to come back to this at the end of this presentation. The underpinning, the underpinning of pray seems to be the delight in God. The person delights in God, there's an exuberance in that. I like that word, exuberance because I think it captures it. There's an exuberance for God and that exuberance breaks forward in praise of God. That can be seen in Psalm 42,4. It says, "These things I remember as I pour out my soul, how I used to go with the multitude leading the procession to the house of God with shouts of joy and thanksgiving." Joy and thanksgiving, there's the delight in God. He's joyful, he's happy. You can remember David as he brings the Ark to Jerusalem, dancing before the Lord with all his might and just down with the people, celebrating in the assembly and the

congregation and praising God with all his might and just everything he has within him. There's an exuberance. This exuberance then can only be expressed in praising God. This exuberance in God results in the praise of God.

Psalm 43.4, Psalm 42 and 43 we showed were a pair. It says, "then I will go to the altar of God, to God my joy and delight." You get this notion of a person's joy and delight in God. And that's really what it's all about. In our culture, I'm afraid sometimes we miss the joy and the delight, we're analyzing this or that and we lack this. It's just this exuberant joy and delight in God. And he says, "my joy and delight, I will praise you with harp. O God, my God." So the exuberance results in then welling up in a person's heart where they praise God. They've just got to speak it out because they're so grateful. Thanksgiving is kind of the basis of this thing. They're so thankful and joyful in God and they just break out with this praise.

Moral Prerequisites of Praise [24:17-27:06]

Now secondly, now this one takes it in a different direction, there are moral prerequisites to the praise of God. There are moral prerequisites to the praise of God. And I just want to read some of these verses because some of these verses are pretty expressive here in terms of this. So I'll start with Psalm 50 verses 16 and 17 it says, "but to the wicked God says, 'What right do you have to recite my laws?'" So, God objects. Normally God is, O yeah, I love my people to recite my law and to meditate on my law day and night. God likes that and things. But when he says, but when the wicked recite my law he says, "but to the wicked God says, 'What right do you have to recite my laws or take my covenant on your lips?'" And that because they are wicked taking God's covenant on the lips is a violation and God is insulted by that. "You hate my instruction and cast my words behind you." So, there are moral prerequisites. You just can't be a wicked person and say, I'm going to praise God and everything's cool. No, God says there are moral prerequisites.

Chapter 66, back to Psalm 66 verses 17 through 18 he says, "I cried out to him with my mouth. His praise was on my tongue." And then he says this, "if I had cherished

sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened." In other words, part of the praises that he wants to shout to the Lord. We've prayed to God and we've asked God for help. And so there's been a kind of human to divine request to help or deliverance or rescue and so there's been that prayer. And now praise also, "shout to the Lord" is so that he can hear our praise in a response to a thankful response to what he's done. But he says, "if I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would have not have heard," would not have listened. So the praise falls on deaf ears because we don't have the moral requirements to even make the praise. So righteousness is needed and wickedness disqualifies. And so let me just look at another verse down here and I'll just do this before we move on to body parts. It says, "the righteous will rejoice in the Lord and take refuge in him." "The righteous will rejoice and take refuge in God, and all the upright in heart, the upright in heart, will glorify him, glorify in him." And so, you see again the righteous, the upright in heart, they're the ones that glorify God. So, there are these moral prerequisites to praise. There's a passionate delight in God, but there's also a moral, prerequisite to praise as well.

How to Praise: Body Parts [27:07-33:20]

Now we're going to descend into kind of some of the particulars here. And these are just more almost mechanical things. How do you praise God? And I want to look at the body first and how does the body, our body or human body, praise God. So when I look at body parts, I am going to look at body parts because as I went through all these Psalms of praise, it kept mentioning particular body parts and their participation in praise. So our body parts, first of all, let me start out this way with Psalm 71 verses 23 and 24. The Psalmist is old and he's feeling like God don't abandon me in my old age, Psalm 71. And then Psalm 72 will be Solomon who's the great King kind of in response to this fading away character in Psalm 71. The strength in Psalm 72 is similar to 1 Kings, chapters one and two where David is a weak and things moving on to Solomon and chapter three with the strength there, a similar type move. Psalm 71 verses 23 through 24 check the body parts out here. "My lips will shout for joy when I sing praise to you." So, the lips are involved. "My lips will shout for joy when I sing praise to you, I who have

been redeemed. My tongue will tell of your righteous acts all day long. For those who wanted to harm me have been put to shame and confusion." Remember the enemy, the person that's wanting to harm him, they've been putting him to shame and confusion. Something bad happened to them. "My tongue will tell of your righteous acts." In other words, God, you did justice for me. You put away the wicked person and therefore you delivered me and rescued me. And therefore "my tongue will tell of your righteous acts." So my lips and my tongue are involved in this, with those body parts.

Now, not only that, in Psalm 51.15 David's great penitential Psalm after his sin with Bathsheba, he says, "O Lord, open my lips." Notice the lips involved again. "and my mouth" this time not tongue, but mouth. And you can see that these are, how should I say? They're focusing in on body parts and they're almost what they call the synecdoches or metonymies that are giving a person's body part that actually expresses it. What they're doing is talking about their whole selves, but they're using just a synecdoche like "all hands on deck." When you say "all hands on deck," you don't mean for everybody to put their hands on deck. You mean all hands on deck, all individuals who are working on the boat or whatever to be on deck. He says, "O Lord, open my lips and my mouth will declare your praise." It's him that's declaring the praise, but it's using the mouth and the lips there.

Now here's another one that's kind of interesting. "Clap your hands." So, we've read this already in Psalm 47.1 "Clap your hands, all you nations, shout to God with cries of joy." So, you've got the clapping of hands and the shouting. I mean that's, that's pretty ruckus for praise. And one of the writers that I was reading was mentioned the fact that the praise is pretty noisy. Praise is pretty noisy. You're clapping your hands; you're shouting to God. And again, when I went to a very, a kind of strict church growing up where everything was silent and all I did when I was a little kid is you've got to be quiet in church. You've got to be quiet in church. And so, then you waited until you could get away from your parents so you could squirm around in your seat and make a little noise. But here you see that this clapping your hands and shouting to God, it's the noisy affair.

Praise is actually noisy. It's invigorating.

It's almost like, I hate to say this, this is a terrible metaphor. I don't like it, but my wife and I went to there's this school where these people are crazy. Now these people are legitimately crazy. I better not say this on tape. But anyway, I went to an Ohio State game. Okay. My grandson Ben was involved in some of the lacrosse there and my grandson at this Ohio State game. These people are out of their minds. These people, they stood through the whole game shouting for Ohio State to win. The people next to us couldn't see anything, they kept telling these people sit down and sit down. They couldn't sit down. They're out there shouting for their team to win and through the whole game. We did the whole game standing up because they wouldn't sit. You could not shut them up. You could not set them down. They were just so exuberant for Ohio State. These people are crazy. What I'm saying is maybe we should be crazy for God like that. Yeah. That would really be.... anyway, okay. Sorry for that metaphor, but it just, you know what I'm saying it's the exuberance that comes out in the shouting and clapping and things. So, he says, "clap your hands and shout to God with cries of joy."

I'm down in 63, Psalm 63 verses four and five. "I will praise you as long as I live and in your name I will lift up my hands." And so, it's this lifting up of hands toward God in praise. "My soul will be satisfied as with the richest foods, with singing lips, my mouth will praise you." And so, this uplifted hands and the singing and the praising of God.

When I think of up lifted hands, I think of a fellow that works at Gordon college where I work. He's the controller here and he's about ready to retire I think, which means he's probably going to go do something else, but his name is Mike Ahearn. And I admire that man and I've watched him in church services and I sit across from him at this Park Street Church. When he goes to praise, whenever he prays, it's just zoom, his hands go up. And I just, and I watch Mike across the sanctuary, his hands go up. It lifts my spirit to think about, we're praying to God almighty. And, anyway, so the praying with lifted hands, a beautiful symbol. Do you remember Moses winning the victory with his lifted hand over the Amalekites. So, this is how to praise, these types of things.

Instruments of Praise [33:20-51:18]

Now we've looked at the mouth, the lips, the tongue, the hands, the clapping, the shouting. Now what I want to look at is the instruments of praise. Yes, they've got instruments of praise. I'm going beyond just the body parts. Now we're going to talk about two things. And I don't want to get into details. There are two types of harps. I'm not into the harp thing, but anyways, I'm going to harp on it now. Nebel, Nebel is one type of harp and kinnor is the other. Now kinnor, we know from the Kinneret, as a Sea of Galilee. So the Sea of Galilee is like a harp. And so they actually called it kind of the harp sea, Kinnor. And what happens is, let me just stay with the nebel, that the harp. They're translated two different ways. Now you can be careful, don't let everybody translate them "harp" and "harp" because they're two different types of instruments. So, the one that's the harp, that's the bigger one. And it's let me just, put this up here. A picture saves a thousand words. And so here you see the harp and do you see that there's one arm, there's a single arm. This is a harp. They're usually harps or the Nebel, The nebel is bigger, than the kinnor. The kinnor is smaller. Both of these, by the way, these are not standing harps like you see a harpist today with this huge instrument that weighs several hundred pounds. These things were carried by people. And we've got pictures in the ancient Near Eastern world, from Assyria and other places where these are carried and we can actually see them in people's hands. But this one's larger. Many times people think that there are more strings down this single arm to the sounding box down here. So, do you see how the sounding box kind of comes in at an angle? This is a harp it's larger, a bigger but it's still carriable, but it has more strings and a single arm with a big sounding box down here. And this is on, 12 strings. They're both played while they're walking and things. Let me just read a verse that that brings this up Psalm, there it is, Psalm 71 verses 22 through 24 says this, "I will praise you with a harp [with the nebel] "I will praise you with a harp for your faithfulness, O my God. I will sing praise to you with the lyre. [That's the kinnor]. O Holy one of Israel." So, you see that these are two synonymous parallelisms "I will praise you with the harp." What's more, "I will praise you with the

lyre." And so, they both go in the same direction and that's Hebrew poetry. They come in bi-colon, two lines that kind of repeat one says, one says ABC and the other one says, what's more A' plus B' plus C'. So "I will praise you with the nebel [the harp] for your faithfulness, O my God. I will praise you with the lyre [the kinnor] O Holy One of Israel." Let me just read on because it fits what we were doing before. "My lips will shout for joy, when I sing praise to you. I whom you have redeemed. My tongue will tell of your righteous acts all day long, for those who wanted to harm me have been put to shame and confusion."

Now the kinnor, the nebel you can see one arm. Do you see the kinnor is more like, and this is more for probably poor people. The shepherd boy David, for example, would play a kinnor. Do you see that? There are two arms here. There are two arms. It comes across the sounding board, almost like a guitar kind of thing, but two arms. Then do you see this bar up here. So, it's got two arms with a bar across. That's a kinnor. And if you look at this a little bit, it's supposed to look like the sea of Galilee a little bit -- the kinnor. So, this is more popular. Obviously, this one's more expensive and would be more, for rituals and kings. This would be more shepherd boy carrying it. You can see how you could carry it and you can almost throw it in your backpack. And this is a kinnor. And so that's also referred to there. So those two are parallel of the harp and the kinnor. Both are carriable one arm and two arm, fewer strings on that one.

Now let me go to the next instrument that's used. Next instrument it says in chapter 47, verse five, Psalm 47.5 says, "God has ascended, with shouts of joy." Can you believe it? It's almost like heaven. Is there going to be shouting in heaven? "God has ascended amidst shouts of joy, the Lord amidst sounding of trumpets."-- the sounding of trumpets. When I was young, my brother and I used to play trumpets. We were the Hildebrandt duo, kind of a duet. And we played our trumpets. Those were brass trumpets. That's not what this is talking about. This is called a shofar and actually I should have had, Marco who is the one who was taping this for you and I'm very grateful for his taping, he actually owns one of these shofars. They are beautiful. I actually, I should have

had him bring it in. I didn't think about it until right now but it's a ram's horn. It's a ram's horn. The ones that I was looking to buy when we're in Israel, my wife and I were, how should I say, poverty stricken at the time. And there was one for about 125 bucks and it was about that long. And the bigger ones, the more they kind of go off like that and they have these twists in them and the more twists, I mean I look, some of them are really nice for like \$250, but we didn't have two quarters to our name back then in those days. But anyway, it's beautiful there. Shofar, it's a ram's horn and they play this, the sound and it comes off and it's called the trumpet.

A lot of times when they play these trumpets, it's like a sound for gathering people and they play the trumpet. When I was young, I played my trumpet, I worked for Child Evangelism Fellowship. Child Evangelize Fellowship, works with little kids. Mrs. Steinbring, this is in Niagara Falls, and she was an elderly woman who would go around with the Child Evangelism Fellowship with all these kids. So what I would do, do you remember those little, they used to have these trucks that would have these ding, ding, ding dong songs and that meant the ice cream truck was coming by and all the kids in neighborhood would run out to buy ice cream. They probably are illegal now. But anyway, this is when I was a kid, they had these trucks that would go around making this sound. So what I did is I would go out with my trumpet and I would play the sound and the trumpet in this, O man, what was it called? It was a ghetto and in LaSalle Niagara Falls and basically all these kids from public housing would come running out. They'd hear the trumpet and then Mrs. Steinbring would do a presentation for the Child Evangelism Fellowship. And so anyway, trumpets kind of the gathering together, the sounding of the trumpet. The warning for war, a lot of times they were used for warning for war, almost like a siren would be. I don't like some of the metaphors of that or overtones of that. But anyways, the sounding of the trumpet, the gathering of the people in the congregation, the shouting with the trumpets, the shofar, the ram's horn.

Then the last one here is the timbrels or the tambourines. So they're out there with the tambourines and it says, "in front are the singers," this is describing the procession in

Psalm 68, verse 25, it says, "in front of the singers after them, the musicians with them are the maidens playing the tambourines." And so, you get this kind of tambourine thing going, with the trumpets, with the lyres, with the harp and with the trumpets, the shofar. These are the instruments of praise. In other words, they took the musical instruments that they had and they used those instruments to praise God. It seems to me we have modern instruments, guitars and other things and we should use those instruments to praise God, using all sorts of different types of instruments.

Notice the singing goes with this all. I haven't really developed the notion of singing. I just thought of that I really should develop and how many times it mentions we sing a song to the Lord and so it's with music. Music is able to touch our soul in a way that other things can't. I'll just say this, my mother-in-law's got Alzheimer's or adult dementia and she's had it for about 15 years. She doesn't recognize anybody in the family. She hasn't recognized my wife, who's her daughter probably, I don't even want to say, it's been a long time. However, you play the song, "How Great Thou Art." Does anybody remember Billy Graham, "How Great Thou Art" you play that song or you play "Amazing Grace" and grandma who cannot remember anybody in her family, even her own husband who's now passed, she cannot remember anybody you play, "How Great Thou Art" she can clap and she's into it. You play "Amazing Grace" and she's into it, and sometimes even with tears coming down her face and it's just, it's beautiful. Song is able to get into our soul so deep that even dementia can't rid ourselves of it. And it's so deep, you know what I'm saying? It's so deep and I've seen this. Yeah, it's like we said, when people play songs, it touches their souls, especially when they approach death. If you're ever around people that are on the verge of death and they know they're going to die, a lot of times they will ask and I have a friend who sings and he sang to his father and he would bring the hymn book and he would sing to his father over the telephone as his father was approaching death [S.H.] And so music, singing songs of praise. I have not developed that particularly, but it should be. It's pretty obvious.

Here's song and shout, I guess we have done at least that here. And we're going to

praise again, and we're just going to mention song here briefly, and shouting. We've already mentioned the shouting. Let me just read some of these things. And there's a reason why I don't want to bring this one up. Psalm 65 let me go down one. Yeah. Psalm 65 verse 13 it says this, "the meadows are covered with flocks, the valleys are mantled with grain." So, you get the hills. "The meadows are covered with flocks and the valleys are mantled with grain. They shout for joy and sing." Who sings? The Meadows and the valleys. The Meadows and the valleys are personified. Meadows can't sing, they're where the flocks are. The valleys can't sing that's where the grain has grown, but yet they sing. It said, "they shout for joy and sing." Where have we seen that before? Where the very elements of nature, the very elements of nature, are viewed as shouting to God and praise to God. In other words, human beings, we use our mouth, our lips, our tongue, and we shout to God with uplifted hands or clapping of hands. That's what we do as humans. We're animated, but even the inanimate world, the meadows and the valleys are shouting to God, praise God. It kind of reminds me, do you remember Jesus coming in Luke chapter 19 and the people say, do you hear what these little kids are saying? He said, if these people were quiet, even the rocks would cry out. And Jesus said, "even the rocks would cry out." Apparently even nature itself, remember how it says in Romans eight it says, "all of creation is groaning," waiting for the coming day. Even apparently the creation itself expresses itself in praise to God. We as human beings then can join in with this kind of personification of the inanimate objects that all people should be much more articulate in our praise as the valleys and the hills. They have been groaning because of sin. We have had the redemption of Jesus Christ and the freedom, the Exodus, et cetera. We should praise God all the more. So how to praise and the personification that goes with it.

And then there is the festive throng as another how to praise. These things are done in community. So, it says in Psalm 68 verses 24 to 26, "Your procession has come into view, O God, the procession of my God and King into the sanctuary, in front are the singers, after them the musicians and with them are the maidens playing the tambourines.

Praise God in the great congregation, praise the Lord in the assembly of Israel." And so you get this notion of, have you ever been around a stadium where there's a hundred thousand people and they're all screaming for their team? You're outside that and you can hear it for miles actually, and you can hear this rumbling sound. So here you get this idea that they're gathered together in the great congregation and they're shouting to God, praising God and it's boisterous. It goes out and you can hear it in the assembly of Israel, the festive throng coming, the procession coming to the congregation. And so there's this kind of orderly procession by which this happens.

So, the how to praise and then we move on to the great congregation as we were just looking at the great congregation as it comes into the sanctuary. So Psalms 68 verse 26, "Praise God in the great congregation. Praise the Lord in the assembly of Israel." And moving on to the sanctuary, it says, "with whom I once enjoyed sweet fellowship as we walked with the throng at the house of God." So this guy is reflecting on life and he's saying, I remember those processions. I remember going up to the house of God and walking with my friends and praising God as we joined together in that sweet fellowship as we went to the house of God, the house of God being the sanctuary.

How to praise, there's not only the singing and shouting, the playing of instruments and the gathering of the great congregation, but there's also this notion of telling. And that's for people like myself who can't sing very well. So, there's the actual telling or proclaiming of praise. So, this is more articulate kind of thing. In chapter 71 verses 15 through 18 it says, "My mouth will tell of your righteousness of your salvation all day long, though I know not its measure. I will come and proclaim your mighty acts, O sovereign Lord, I will proclaim your righteousness, yours alone." And so, he's saying now my mouth is going to tell. I'm going to tell people what you've done. I'm going to proclaim what you've done, your righteousness yours alone. "Since my youth, O God, you have taught me. And to this day I declare your marvelous deeds." So, what is praise? It's the declaring of God's mighty deeds, of telling of God's mighty work in somebody's life. "Even when I am old and gray." Remember, this is Psalm 71, "even when I am old

and gray, do not forsake me, O God, until I declare your power to the next generation, your might to all who are to come." And so, there's this view as a person gets old that one of the great things about an older person is they've seen these mighty works of God and they tell the next generation of these mighty acts of God that they have seen.

I had a father and my mother told me this story of my father and when they saw the great work of God. He was out and he was a youth group sponsor and they were walking through Buckhorn State Park [Grand Island, NY]. There's a swamp there. The swamp is probably 50 to a hundred acres. It's a huge swamp with all the bull rushes and reeds. And so, my dad would like to take these kids through the swamp. One of the guys was wearing a contact lens. All of a sudden, his contact lens, Nate Lee's contact lens falls out in the swamp. It's like, holy cow. I mean, you know what I'm saying? When things go down in the swamp, you don't want to go down and look at where your feet are. And so it pops out. They look for it; they can't find it. It's starting to get dark. You don't want to be out there in the dark. And so my dad realized it was getting dark and he told Nate by the way, these things were, I don't know what they are now. They're probably cheap now, but they were very expensive back in those days. A couple hundred bucks at least. And so Nate's contact popped out and my dad says, okay, it's getting dark. We have not been able to find it. We need to go home. Nate, you and I will come back tomorrow and find it. They went home. What's the problem when you come up the next day and you walk into the swamp, are you going to be able to, you know what I'm saying? This huge swamp where anyways, my dad prayed and my mother tells the story. My dad prayed. Nate and he came back the next day. My dad prayed after he got done praying, he looked down and there was the crazy, contact lens right there. He just reached over and picked it up. There it was. And you say, Wow, what are the odds of something like that happening. I get lost in that swap, let alone, you know, come back to the exact same spot, which you couldn't find it when you just dropped it. Come back a day later. You walk right up, you pray to God and boom he finds it. Nate Lee is a pastor in Buffalo, New York, now from what I've been told. God's mighty acts, how should I say, older people remember the

story. And so, my father that came to my father, my mother then told me the story of what happened. My father never would, he wouldn't talk about stuff like that. He was, how should I say? He was a very introverted, quiet man. But my mother, she shares the story. So anyway, so proclaim it to the next generation. We're going to come back to that idea.

The Place of Praise [51:18-1:00:32]

Now, the place of praise, and I want to move more quickly through this because we will talk quickly about these ideas--The place of praise. As I was going through looking at praise in the Second Book of the Psalter, it kept coming back to certain places where praise was done. So, I don't want to minimize those as place is important. So, let me just look at some: the house of God, his holy mountain and his altar. These are all coming from chapter 42 and 43 in other words, this is how this book starts out. Notice the topographical or the geographical or place references here it says, 42 "for these things I remember as I pour out my soul, how I used to go with the multitude leading the procession." To where? "to the house of God with shouts of joy and thanksgiving among the festive throng. Chapter 43 it's parallel, Psalm 43 verses three and four, "Sending forth your light and truth. Let them guide me. Let them bring me to your holy mountain, the place where you dwell." Where does God dwell? He dwells on his holy mountain. "Then I will go to the altar of God" on this holy mountain is the altar of God. "I will go to the altar of God, to God my joy and delight. I will praise you with the harp. O God, my God." And we can see all these themes, blending together as he goes to the temple and as he's at the altar and he praises God. "There is joy and the light overflows."

Psalm 68 verses 16 through 20 and then 24 through 26 and 35 I'll just kind of read these together. There's this movement from Sinai, where God dwelt in Sinai. Remember the 10 commandments and Moses. There's this movement from Sinai, the 10 commandments, the great mountain of God in Sinai up to the sanctuary in Jerusalem. And so, this Psalm portrays this movement of God as God himself moves from.... Now where is God? You say God is omnipresent, God is everywhere. And I'm afraid

sometimes when we take the omnipresence of God, we downgrade or diminish the notion that God dwells in a particular place. And what happens is our omniscience kind of swallows everything up rather than discriminating this movement from Sinai up to Jerusalem where the sanctuary is. The Psalmist is really into that. Now again be careful about how you use omniscience to denigrate a specific geographical references. Psalm 68 verse 16 "Why gaze and envy O rugged mountains at the mountain where God chooses to reign [kingship motif], where God himself will dwell forever. The chariots of God are tens of thousands and thousands of thousands. The Lord has come from Sinai into his sanctuary." So there's this movement from Sinai, the mountain of God, over to the sanctuary in Jerusalem. "When you ascended on high, you led captives in your train, [New Testament reference.] You received gifts from men even from the rebellious that you, O Lord God might dwell there. Praise be to the Lord, to God our savior, who daily bears our burdens. Selah." Then down chapter 68 verse 24 just a few verses down, "your procession is coming to view, O God, the procession of my God and King into the sanctuary. In front are the singers after them the musicians and with them the maidens playing the tambourines" that we've read before. "Praise God in the great congregation. Praise the Lord in the assembly of Israel" that gathers at the sanctuary there. Psalm 68 verse 35 just down a few more. "You are awesome, O God, in your sanctuary." Notice how it puts God in the sanctuary. There were special places for God. "In your sanctuary," it's not restrictive, but there are places that are special to him. "In your sanctuary, the God of Israel gives power and strength to his people. Praise be to God." So that's dealing with the sanctuary.

Now I want to get more specific than what sanctuary in a particular mountain there, and you'll notice that Zion is talked about in particular. Psalm chapter 65 verses one and four, Psalm 65 verses one to four, "Praise awaits you, our God, [where?] in Zion" you say, well in heaven, praise awaits. No, "praise awaits you, our God, in Zion, to you our vows will be fulfilled. Blessed are those you choose and bring near to live in your courts. We are filled with good things of your house, of your holy temple" of your house,

of your holy temple, your sanctuary. And where is it located? In Zion, the holy temple in Zion. Next one, sanctuary, Psalm 63 verse two. It says, "I have seen you in the sanctuary and beheld your power and your glory." Where? In the sanctuary.

Place a praise, continuing that theme of the place of praise, you have here the city of God. This is one of the few places in the Bible that refers to Jerusalem as the city of God. And in Psalm 46 verses four to seven. We just read this. "There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy place where the Most High dwells." Where does God dwell? You say, God dwells in heaven or God dwells everywhere. No, this is more specific than that. It says, the city of God, the Holy place, the city of God, Jerusalem. "God is within her, she will not fall; God will help her at the break of day. Nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall; he lifts his voice and the earth melts. The Lord almighty is with us, the God of Jacob is our fortress. Selah." Remember how the kingship metaphor gives way to the fortress and the great strong tower idea.

Another one similar going back to the Zion theme is Psalm 48. Psalm 48, if you ever go to Jerusalem, you want to keep Psalm 48 close to you. Psalm 48, "Great is the Lord and most worthy of praise in the city of our God." Notice that phrase, "city of our God," "his holy mountain. It is beautiful in its loftiness, the joy of the whole earth, like the utmost heights of Zaphon is Mount Zion, the city of the great King." --"the city of the great King." Notice the King metaphor coming through and where does the great King dwell? He dwells on Mount Zion, not on Mount Zaphon. "God is in her citadels. He has shown himself to be her fortress." And so you get the idea of God himself becoming the fortress to protect his people. Psalm 52, actually let me finish the rest of that. I skipped verses 13. I want to go back, 48.12 through 14 and these are beautiful to read. I remember reading these up on top of the walls of Jerusalem itself. It says, "Walk about Zion, go around her, count her towers, consider well her ramparts, view her citadels, that you may tell of them to the next generation. For this God is our God forever and ever; for this God is our God forever and ever; he will be our guide even to the end." And what is it? Walk around the ramparts and tell the next generation about Jerusalem. Tell the next generation

about Jerusalem.

By the way, there's a program that I wrote years ago called "Get Lost in Jerusalem" where you can actually walk the streets of Jerusalem kind of in a virtual world. It's not done as well as things are done now with Google maps that you can actually go into Jerusalem with, but it's still will take you to various places and explain things to you. So, it says, "walk about Zion, go about... count her towers." Then in chapter 50 verse two, it says this, "from Zion, perfect in beauty, God shines forth." And so you get this thing from Zion, perfect in beauty, God shining forth.

Psalm 66 verses 13 and 14 we're back to Psalm 66 if you notice, "I will come to your temple with burnt offerings and fulfill my vows to you -- vows my lips promised and my mouth spoke when I was in trouble," I was in trouble. I made vows to God. Where do I go to fulfill my vows? I go to the temple to fulfill those vows. And then the temple is specifically referenced, and we've talked about Psalm 43.4 and other things. House of God, so this is the place of praise.

From Zion to the Ends of the Earth [1:00:32-1:04:27]

But now what I want to do is make a movement from the temple, the place of praise, the sanctuary and I want to move, to another one. We've talked about the city of God. We've read things on how it's designated as Zion, the city of God, the city of the great King and things. And now what I want to do is, is document, as I was going through, I kept noticing God would dwell on Zion, his holy temple, the city of the great King, Jerusalem. But then what happened was the praise kind of breaks out of Zion and goes to the extent, all the ends of the earth. And so what you noticed is that there's the Zion theme, which then is transcended. Zion becomes like the big bang theory, it becomes the central thing and then it blows up and it goes to the ends of the earth.

Do you remember Jesus' comment to the woman of Samaria that neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem is where you worship God because God seeks worshipers to worship him in spirit and in truth? And it sounds like Jesus is kind of saying, Oh, it doesn't matter -- the place doesn't matter. I don't think that that's what's being said there.

I think what's being said is that this is the time now Jesus is here, so the praise of God goes out from Zion to the ends of the earth. And so that's where we are now in terms of the ends of the earth. And this is foreshadowed, it's said explicitly actually in the Psalms, the universality of praise. So, I want to move beyond Zion. Zion is definitely there. I don't want to diminish that. I want to recognize that, that they had great respect for Zion, the house of God, the temple of God, the sanctuary. But then there's a transcending of that as it goes out universally. So, let's look at some of these universality verses.

Psalm 66 verses one and two says, "Shout for joy to God, all of the earth!" not just Zion, all the earth, not just the congregation of Israel, not just the assembly of Israel, but all the earth. "Sing the glory of his name, make his praise glorious... All the earth bows down to you; they sing praise to you, they sing praises to your name." -- going beyond that.

Now nations again, this is Psalm 67 verses four and five. "May the nations be glad and sing for joy, for you who rule the peoples," plural peoples, not just Israel "justly and guide the nations of the earth. May the peoples, may the peoples," not just Israel. "May the peoples praise you. O God, may all the peoples praise you." So, you get this kind of movement out and what we can see as a church beyond Israel and to the whole world and "may the peoples praise you." Psalm 68 verse 32, "Sing to God" a call to praise. "Sing to God, O kingdoms of the earth, sing praise to the Lord," not just Israel, the kingdoms of the earth. All of them "Sing praise to God, Sing praise to the Lord."

And then the last one, which I love because I love Matt Hoffland's song Psalm 57.5 and verse 11, this is a refrain. A refrain is something where you'll see that it says the same thing twice as beautiful. When you hit a refrain, you know, that's what the guy's talking about, this refrain. So, he says this is the refrain. "Be exalted, O God, above the heavens, let your glory be over all the earth," not just Zion. "Let your glory be over all the earth" and down in verse 11, Psalm 57, 11 same refrain, "Be exalted, O God, above the heavens, let your glory be over all the earth." And so there's a transcending of Zion. We want to give Zion its due, the place of God and the assembly of Israel was marvelous.

It was glorious, it was perfect in beauty. But then there's this moving out to the universality of praise.

Content of Praise [1:04:27-1:06:27]

Now, content, what is the content of praise? We'll move quickly here because we are running out of time. There's a guy named Claus Westermann who has done some very interesting things in terms of this descriptive praise, what he calls descriptive praise. And that means praising God for his actions and who he is. That is for his attributes, his holiness, we're going to see his loving kindness, his mercy and his mighty acts of old, his mighty acts of God. That's called descriptive praise. Westermann also then says there's declarative praise. And this is to declare praise for God, for specific deeds that he has done, specific reports of deliverance. And so, this is more thanksgiving for what God has done for an individual and specific deeds that he has actually done. So, he separates between descriptive praise and declarative praise. So, we want to look at some of these different types of praise and so we'll start out with Psalm 64 verses nine and then 66 verse three. And it says this, "All mankind will fear and will proclaim the works of God and ponder what he has done." So, what is the content of praise? The content of praise is the works of God. The works of God are the content of praise. Verse three of chapter 66, 66.3 "Say to God, how awesome are your deeds." -- the works of God. These people saw the works of God all around them. I think that's one of the problems of secularism is that people look around. God's doing amazing things all around us and people, because we're so secular, we don't think about God in that equation. We see it as just some scientific thing that's happening that's just kind of impersonal. These people saw God's majestic works everywhere. "How awesome are your deeds. So great is your power that your enemies cringe before you."

1. Creation [1:06:27-1:10:01]

Psalm 65 verses six through eight said this, now this is talking about creation. So I want to first say one of the contents of praise is going to be this notion of creation. That's going to be one of them then we'll develop things. Creation, it goes back to creation.

People today, we love to argue over creation. When did creation happen? How did creation happen? The guys in Psalms aren't worried about the when it happened or why it happened or how it happened. They're interested in God's mighty acts in his mighty works in creation. So, they're using creation to praise God. There's a doxological function of creation and what's the important point for the Psalmist is that doxology to praise God for his wonderful creation. And that seems to me to be the focus of Genesis one and two by the way, it's much better than to be arguing all the time over everything, every jot and tittle there. But anyway, Psalm 65 verses six through eight says, "Who formed [God], who formed the mountains by your power, having armed yourself with strength? Who stilled the roaring seas?" Who stills the seas? In the ancient world, the seas were viewed as chaos. The ancient seas were reviewed as chaos. They were the realm of the gods of chaos and darkness. And what happens is it says no, there is one God and he stills the sea. God is able to still the sea, the roaring of their waves, the turmoil of the nations. Who does that? God stills the sea. Now you can see me smiling because who am I talking about? I'm talking about Jesus. Now remember Jesus. Be still and the waves go still. And why does that freak the disciples out? It freaks the disciples because who can still the seas? They know this stuff from the Psalms who is the one who stills the sea? It's Yahweh. It's God who stills the sea. Jesus stills the sea and it's like, Whoa, Jesus, God stills the seas. So, it's beautiful a reference there. "Those living far away fear your wonders, where morning dawns and evening fades You call for songs of joy." The sunrise and the sunset. Sunrise, sunset. Hmm. Sounds like a movie I once went to. Listen to sunrise, sunset. You see the beauty and the magnificence of God and the colorful displays of every morning, the sunsets and sunrises differently. It's just as beautiful.

Now creation. Yes, but then the Psalmist uses creation, God's creation for the doxological praise God. But also, the providential care of creation. So, you see this in Psalm 65 verses nine and ten. He says, not only did you create this, but you care for the land. "You care for the land and water it. You enrich it abundantly. The streams of God are filled with water to provide people with grain, for so you have ordained it, you drench

its furrows and level its ridges. You soften it with showers and bless its crops." So you see these people praising God for the rain. Israel is a rain culture. It's different than the Nile. The Nile is a river culture. And so, Israel had to depend upon God for the rain and God gave the rain and the Israelites said, Hmm, yeah, God, thank you and this is a basis for praise. God's providential care for the land upon which they lived.

2. Exodus [1:10:01-1:13:33]

Now, not only creation and providence, but now more specifically, I'd like to move into specific mighty acts of God that are found in the book of Psalms that are these mighty acts of God, which become the basis for praise. Psalm 66 again, Psalm 66 we're going to look at the Exodus. Now the Exodus, I'm not going to steal anybody's thunder, but there's a fellow named David Emanuel who I'm hoping to capture a later on early spring or early summer, and he is going to develop for us the notion of the praise of God or the Exodus motif in the Psalms. He's going to develop five Psalms, Psalm 78 and four of the other Psalms: Psalm 105, 106, Psalm 135 and 136. He's going to develop five Psalms for us where this Exodus motif is highlighted. The Exodus motif is a great redemptive act in the Old Testament and David has done his dissertation on the Psalms and how you can hear the echoing of the Exodus through the book of Psalms. Beautiful and David will be doing that for us. And so, I'm just going to kind of tease you here about this motif that comes up with this Exodus and how it occurs. Psalm 66 verse six, it says this, "he turned the sea into dry land. They passed through the waters on foot. Come, let us rejoice in him." In other words, because of the Exodus, he split the waters and we came through on foot. Let us rejoice in God because of the great work he did in the Exodus and not just the Exodus.

Here he goes next to the conquest, the conquest in Canaan with Joshua. When Joshua took the people and they took the land. This is Psalm 44 verses two to four, "With your hand you drove out the nations and planted our fathers. You drove out the nations, and planted our fathers. You crushed the people and made our fathers flourish. It was not by their sword that they won the land, nor did their arm bring them the victory. It was

your right hand, your arm, and the light of your face. [Why?] For you loved them. You are my King and my God. [You notice it's the King's victory over the enemy] who decrees victories for Jacob. You are my King and my God who decreased victories for Jacob." The conquest of the land is the idea. The shekinah glory, the shekinah glory moves from Mount Sinai over to Mount Zion. The shift of the shekinah glory of God to Zion, from Mount Sinai to Zion that we've looked at before. "The chariots of God are tens of thousands and thousands of thousands. The Lord has come from Sinai into his sanctuary" [in Jerusalem].

Psalm 68 verses five and six. Now this presents more mighty acts. But look at how it goes down now. What are God's mighty acts? "Because he [as King] is a father to the fatherless, a defender of widows is God in his holy dwelling. God sets the lonely in families. He leads forth the prisoners with singing." Let me go back to that. God sets the lonely in families. We all experience a loneliness in our culture now. Families, the importance of families and then the breakdown of the family has left, people with this deep, deep sense of loneliness, "God sets the lonely in families. He leads forth the prisoners with singing, but the rebellious live in a sun scorched land."

3. Personal Deliverance [1:13:33-1:15:44]

Personal deliverance, not only has God delivered the nation and that kind of thing, but also personal deliverance. Psalm 54.7 he says, "for he has delivered me from all my troubles, and my eyes have looked in triumph on my foes." Psalm 54 verse seven. And then telling what God has done for me as a result of God's deliverance of me in particular. Psalm 66 verse 16 "Come and listen, all you who fear the Lord. Let me tell you what he has done for me. Let me tell you what he has done for me." Psalm 60 verse 16 and then God's the hope for a future deliverance. "But may all who seek you rejoice and be glad may those who love your salvation always say, 'let God be exalted. Let God be exalted.'" And this becomes another theme that I didn't trace through but it's really interesting. Some of the Psalms are actually linked to a kind of a tail to head with this notion of being exalted, O Lord above the nations. And so this is basically the Psalmist

giving praise to God and the content of praise.

Now, this content of praise then goes over to the forgiveness of sin. Psalm 51 verses 14 through 18, "Save me from blood guilt. O God, the God who saves me, my tongue will sing of your righteousness. [You save me. I will sing of your righteousness] O Lord, open my lips and my mouth will declare your praise. You do not delight in sacrifice or I would bring it, you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit and a broken and a contrite heart. O God, you will not despise. In your good pleasure make Zion prosper." This is Psalm 51 David's great penitential Psalm after his sin with Bathsheba. "In your good pleasure make Zion prosper. Build up the walls of Jerusalem." It's kind of interesting in this penitential Psalm, "build up the walls of Jerusalem."

4. God's Attributes [1:15:44-1:17:57]

Then praise of his attributes. We'll just hit these quickly. These actually could be developed in a whole lectures themselves. Psalm 62.12 says this, "and that you, O Lord, are loving, that you, O Lord, are hesed. You are hesed." Covenantal love, stubborn love, unfailing love, covenantal love, a love that doesn't quit. It's this notion of steadfast love. Hesed is the Hebrew word for that. "That with you, O Lord, is hesed, surely you will reward each person according to what he has done." Very interesting comment there. Surely. What is God's love? "You will reward each person according to what he has done." 66.3 "Say to God, 'How awesome are your deeds! So great is your power that your enemies cringe.'" -- praising God for his power, for his might also. Then next I'm just hitting these attributes of God kind of thing. Righteousness. Psalm 71.19 "Your righteousness, reaches to the skies, O God, you have done great things. Who, [I love this] Who, O God, is like you?" That's a question. It's a rhetorical question. It causes us to think. Who is like God? Mikiah who is like Yahweh. There was no one like him. He is a sui generis. He is one of a kind. He is totally unique. There's nothing else in the universe like him. Oh, who's made in his image? That's a thing for praise too. Out of all the universe who is made in his image? Humankind. Amazing, amazing. Now, righteousness,

metaphors are used to talk about God and praise in terms of the content of praise. They talk about God being a refuge, a strong tower, a fortress, and then he gives salvation and those types of things. So, these are wonderful things.

The name of God is to be praised. The name of God is to be praised. The name of God is a metonymy for God himself. The name represents in our culture, sometimes we would say that the name, your name is important. It means something and status.

Implications for Contemporary Worship [1:17:57-1:27:13]

Now I want to conclude this, our fourth talk, with the implications for contemporary worship. I want to just say that first of all, the praise of God is noisy, loud exuberance, exalting God. Not in a narcissistic focus on myself, but a focus upon God. Our culture seems to be moving into this narcissism where we focus on ourselves all the time and only what's good for me matters, and this breaks us out. Where praising God puts us moving outward toward God and considering his greatness. The focus is on the great King who delivers and saves and avenges. So, praise is loud and noisy. We've kind of worked with that.

God's amazing acts of old are told. The current work of God, yes, but telling of the great acts of God of old, of creation, his providential care, the Exodus, the conquest, all these great things the mighty works of God in the past. How does that work when in a culture where we have our young people growing up with biblical illiteracy that they don't know the mighty acts of God. All they know is a few stories about Jesus, maybe in the New Testament, but they don't know the mighty acts of God from the Old Testament. Their praise then lacks historical depth. The praise lacks the roots that are rooted in the great Exodus traditions, in the conquest traditions under Joshua, under the Kings of Saul, David and Solomon, and the many Kings of Israel and the prophets of old. Even the Psalmist is not well known. I mean, how many people really have heard many sermons on the Psalms themselves? So, this illiteracy then truncates our praise of God because we can't praise him for works of old because we've never learned to appreciate those works of old. And so, there's a flatness of our praise. We praise God for what he's done for me

lately, but it lacks the roots of telling the next generation and that continuity down into that.

The praise of God, the place Zion, this praise of God for Zion not diminishing the importance of place in the sanctuary where God dwelt on Zion. But then the moving out to the universality of praising God through all the world. His throne, the connection between his throne and our lives and this movement about going out into all the world. How do we experience the presence of God? This is his world. This is my father's world. How do we experience the presence of God as he was on Mount Zion in glory and power and holiness, how do we experience the presence of God in power and holiness in our life every day? Because God's temple is where now? We are God's temple and God dwells with us, Emmanuel. And therefore this praise thing kind of blows out in beautiful ways and the universality over all the earth.

Now lament we mentioned is a basis for praise. I think this is a counter to what I would call the prosperity, others have called the prosperity gospel. In other words, because in the Psalms, the people cry out to God because they're in trouble and they cry out to God and their praise then it comes to God out of this lament. And sometimes I think that we don't allow people to lament and grieve. Grief is really an important part and we don't allow for grief and lament because we've got to, "rejoice in the Lord always and again, I say rejoice." If you see somebody grieving, just give them slap on the back and say, "Hey, you need to rejoice in God. Rejoice in the Lord always, and again, I say rejoice." Really? Is that what that verse means from over in Philippians? I don't think so. The depths of lament are where the cry of the soul comes up to God and that has become where God gets involved, he delivers us, saves us, and then that's the basis for praise. So lament is the basis for praise. Lament giving us rich hues to our praise that it's not just all this happy, happy praise, but it's we praise God because we come out of the depths. Let me just use that word. We've come out of the depths and therefore we praise God because now out of the darkness we've come into the light and we can see. It's beautiful.

The victory of God over evil, the victory of God over evil, as there is evil. There is

evil in the world and there needs to be victory over the evil. I think I see in a lot of our culture is just this tolerance for evil, that if you just tolerate it, tolerate it, love it, pat it on the head, it'll be okay. Whereas the Bible portrays God as being victorious over evil. That evil is attacking the Psalmist and people need deliverance from that. And so this becomes the basis for praise too, the victory of God over evil and that kind of thing.

Now the hope to praise as I was finishing up this lecture, something clicked and I hadn't seen it before. And I want to say that in Psalms 42 and 43 they begin as a pair and then Psalm 71 just before 72 but at the end of this, you have this hope of praise. This hope of praise really animates and picks up the soul of the Psalmist. And this thing is repeated in Psalm 42 and 43 in this refrain it is repeated three times. So this refrain binds Psalm 42 and 43 together and here it is, Psalm 42 verses 5, 11 and then 43.5 the same refrain is repeated. "Why are you downcast, O my soul. Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God. [How? Why?] Put your hope in God for I will yet praise him." What lifts his soul when he starts thinking, I am going to praise God again. I may be down. My soul is downcast and it's disturbed within me, but I have this hope that I will praise God, "my savior and my God." That's how the book starts. Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him.

How does the book end? Psalm 71 just before some 72 the end there, it says this, Psalm 71 verses five through six and then 14 and 16 it says this, "for you have been my hope, O sovereign Lord, my confidence since my youth, from birth I have relied on you. You brought me forth from my mother's womb, I will ever praise you. But as for me, I will always have hope. I will praise you more and more. My mouth will tell of your righteousness, of your salvation, all day long though I know not its measure." So just a beautiful way that this hope ends there.

Now I'd like to end with this last thing coming back to Psalm 42 and the praise. I want to say underlying this whole praise of God that we've been talking about. I want to come back to the passion that there seems to be in the Psalmist, this passion for God. And this is said in, I think of has anybody read A. W. Tozer? He's got a book, The Pursuit of

God and on the front cover of this book, I'm sure it's been reprinted and I'm sure it's not on the cover probably anymore, is this deer looking for water. And if you've ever seen animals out in the desert, including human beings, they need water. And so here at Psalm 42 this is how Book II starts and then I'm wanting to suggest as these two verses are the basis on which the whole book is built in this kind of praising God, here's where it starts and it starts out with this passion for the Pursuit of God as A. W. Tozer would say, "As a deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, O God. As a deer pants for water so my soul pants [my soul thirsts] for God, for the living God. When can I go meet with my God?"

Thank you for watching this series. I pray that that passion of God may be in your soul and the praise of God may be on your lips.

We just did Book II of the Psalter. Guess what? There are four other books of praise of God throughout the Psalter and through the rest of the Scriptures. Thank you for joining us. And Lord bless you.

This is Dr. Ted Hildebrandt in his teaching on the Praise of God in Book II of the Psalter. This is session number four on: the Call to Praise, the Cause for Praise, How to Praise, the Content of Praise and the Place of Praise. [1:27:13]