

Psalms

Sessions 1-28 (3 is missing)

By Dr. Bruce Waltke

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Psalms

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Session 1: Introduction and Survey of Approaches By Dr. Bruce Waltke

This is Dr. Bruce Waltke in his teaching on the book of Psalms. This is session number one: Introduction, Survey of Approaches.

A. Opening Prayer [00:15-4:06]

Prayer: Take our shoes off our feet as we step onto most holy ground. We're about to step into your holy word and into the words of your people that celebrated you and prayed to you for over a thousand years, from the time of Moses down and beyond the exile and their words to you, their praise to you, those petitions have become your word to us. We cannot make you talk. Our exegesis is totally inadequate. You must speak to us. We depend upon you. In your great grace, you were pleased to reveal yourself, your heart, your purposes, your character, and what you're up to in history. You gave it to us in the inspired scriptures, totally trustworthy, so that we would have a sure word of prophecy from you. And you completed that circle of revelation by giving us your Spirit who helps to illuminate your word. And we know that without the enlightenment of the Spirit, we are dark within. We cannot see. Thank you that we have the Holy Spirit that opened our eyes and enabled us within Scripture to see the Son in whom you are well pleased. May we delight in him as we read words from your people and ultimately from yourself that speak of him. Our sufficiency father is not of ourselves. We take what you've given us, what tools you've given us, but our real sufficiency is of you. And we praise you for it. Each one will be hearing these lectures differently. Your word is unchanging and has a definite meaning, but it would be heard differently, by different people. The rich will be sobered. The poor will be consoled. The lowly will be comforted and the high will be warned. It meets us all differently. No teacher's sufficient to meet that need, only you can. Father, we do not barge into your presence or into the heart of anyone. Because we're

clothed in your Spirit. May it be your word to us, respond with our shoes off in Christ's name. Amen.

B. Dr. Waltke's Journey into the Psalms

1) Exegesis of Psalms at Dallas Sem. [4:07-6:49]

Alright. It's a delight to be with you and share the book of Psalms. I began to have my first serious interest in the Psalms back in 1958, when I was teaching exegesis at Dallas Theological Seminary, exegesis, meaning two Greek words, ex, out of, agw, lead. So it means "to lead out" of the text what the inspired author intended this text to mean. It's the opposite of eisegesis where we read into the text what we want it to mean. We are submissive to the word. We allow the word to come out of the text to us. So I taught exegesis, helping students to read the text appropriately, but to read a text appropriately, I have to read it holistically. The sum is always greater than the parts and the parts have meaning within a whole. So therefore, to teach any book in truth, you really can't just teach a portion of the book. You have to read the entire book and then you can go back and understand the individual portion. And that's difficult to do, especially in the Old Testament, where you are dealing with 50 some chapters in Genesis and, you know, the Pentateuch dealing with multiple chapters. So I thought, how can I teach exegesis in small portions? So they could see it holistically and then understand the parts. And it came to me the best text for teaching at exegesis was the book of Psalms because they were about anywhere from Psalm 117, you have a three verses up until Psalm 119 and you have to have 8 times 22 = 176 Is it? Do the math. I'm not a mathematician. My checkbook never balances. But in any case, they are different lengths, but the average length would be about 10 verses, I think. So, therefore it was an ideal book for teaching exegesis. And, of course, it's such warm, rich that speaks to our deepest emotions, our anguish, and yet also our joy, exuberant joy. And so it runs the whole gamut, every emotion you may experience is going to be expressed in this book. So it just seemed an ideal book for teaching exegesis.

2) Exposition of Psalms at Dallas Sem. [6:49-8:32]

My next major encounter with the book was in 1968 at Dallas again. At Dallas, they had four weeks a year they would bring in what they thought was an outstanding expositor of a given book. And those were the best two weeks for me every semester, two weeks in the fall, two weeks in this spring. And they were bringing in wonderful, godly men and very competent in exposition. Exposition being the counterpart of exegesis. Exposition is to set forth. So it's one thing to bring out of the text, it's another dimension when you have to put it forth in a palatable manner so people can eat it and enjoy it. So the exegete is like the farmer who has to bring the wheat in out of the field, but the expositor has to grind it and make it into bread and make it attractive and so that you want to eat it. So that's the difference between exegesis and exposition. And anyway, in 1968, they asked me to do the exposition, which is a whole other dimension, but I thoroughly enjoyed it. And as a result of that now I had to read everything on Psalms.

And so I began to be aware that, fundamentally scholars would come at the book in different directions. And so the lectures were basically different approaches to the Psalms and are still going to be even today that's basically how we're going to come to the Psalms. We're going to be looking at different approaches to the Psalms.

3) Translating Psalms for the NIV and writing commentary [8:32-11:34]

So then also I worked on the committee responsible for the New International Version. And so therefore, because I work on the Psalms almost, I was always constantly being put in this Psalms when it was time for the translation of the Psalms. So it was kind of a little bit of my forte, other men, much more competent than I. I learned one thing about the NIV, you'll learn a lot from it. It's like a great seminar and you learn from one another. So it's a unique opportunity for the translator. And then I periodically taught the Psalms in different contexts.

And now I'm writing a commentary on the Psalms and I have the great privilege of working with Professor Houston. Professor Houston was a lecturer in history at Oxford university. And so we have worked together. I told him I wanted to write a commentary

on the Psalms. He said, well, you need the historical, whole historical interpretation, what the church has said about it. Well, I'm not a church historian. So I said to him, well, I'm not competent to do church history. And so I said, would you collaborate with me? You write church history and tell us what the history of interpretation is. So a book on The Psalms as Christian Worship, is a combination. He gives the voice of the church up until the enlightenment and I give the voice of the Psalmist. So we have the voice of text and then we have the voice of the history of how churches have understood the Psalms. So it's been a wonderful comradery to work together with him. I've learned volumes. And to me, the middle ages and all that back there was just not my forte at all and not now either, but I have a better awareness thanks to my good friend, Professor Houston.

We put out another book, The Psalms as Christian Lament. And now we're working together on a third book, the Psalms as Christian Wisdom and Praise. So that's where we're presently working. Right now, I'm working with a great honor for the Biblical Training. And I'm very thankful to Bill for giving me this privilege for teaching and extending the ministry. It's just a delight to collaborate with my good friend Bill Mounce. So I'm very delighted to be a part of this process. You should have in hand, your notes, as I said, and we're on the very first page. I think, no it's actually page two. And we have there the syllabus. I begin with a bit about the course description.

C. Psalms as Most Popular among the Christian Community [11:34-16:26]

Basically, I'm beginning by saying that of all the books of the Old Testament, the Psalms is the most popular with the Christian community. The law is most popular with the Jewish community. But the book of Psalms is the most popular with the Christian community. And you could see that by the way publishers will publish when they publish just the New Testament very often, they will include within it, the books of Psalms and Proverbs. It's very normal in publishing and publishers don't publish unless there's an audience to read them. So therefore I think I'm on fairly solid ground to make a judgment. That is that it is probably the most popular book within the Christian community. It gives expression to every emotion from wrenching anguish, protests

against God, they are very honest where is God's justice when there's suffering unjustly, when the wicked seemed to have the upper hand. They don't hide, they don't conceal that problem with which we all wrestle. They give expression to their pain. They talk about the absence of God in distress, where are you God? And even Christ on the cross gives expression to it. "My God, my God, why did you abandoned me?" He went through that same sensation. He was tempted in every point as we are. And if you are tempted on occasion and you say, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" Know that our Lord has experienced that same experience without sin. And so it expresses all these emotions that we have.

And not only because it's published, but also I would say it's the most often quoted book in the New Testament. It's quoted maybe over about 250 times. There can be some debate about it, where you have allusions. What amazes me is that the biblical writers were not formally educated. They were not scribes, and yet they had such a control of Scripture that they were able to use it so adeptly sometimes very exegetical in what it meant, but often very creatively and using it for new situations. That these fishermen had this kind of knowledge that just astounded the scribes and the lawyers and the educated and the rabbinical circles asked, "Where did these men get this knowledge from?" And of course it goes back to the Holy spirit, but the Holy spirit uses what was already there. I think they must have memorized the Scriptures. So they were just simple lay people without a formal education that spent their lives in the Psalms piously. Therefore they can breathe the Psalms when they pray, when they sing. Like in the book of Revelation, when John hears the angel singing, he really is hearing the book of Psalms, very similar. Mary's Magnificat, for example, and they just pick it up. Paul will say in Romans eight, "we are counted as sheep for the slaughter." Where did that come from? Psalm 44. They can just pick out, it's just part at warp and woof of their, it was just part of their fabric that these Psalms were part of.

I think that's true of most of the people listening to these lectures that they've been in the Psalms for years. Almost everybody knows Psalm 23, right? That's one of the most

famous texts in the world. It's no longer than your little finger on a page, but it transforms a whole life. It's amazing. Such a little text could do so. It's that powerful. Some people say that one picture is worth a thousand words. I will say six verses the Psalm 23 is better than a whole gallery of pictures, for what it can do for us. It's very powerful. I honestly believe Jesus memorized the Psalms. I've known people who have memorized the Psalms.

D. Christian Churches' Mastery of Psalms [16:26-19:34]

As I put it in the notes, I just gave one quote from Alan Cooper the latest book that I've read on the Psalms, is the Oxford Handbook of the Psalms. It's got some good essays. It's got a lot of what I don't think are very helpful essays. It costs about a hundred dollars. So I don't know that it's okay, I'm not here to critique it. But anyway, Alan Cooper and I quote it there for you. And he says that, this is in the first paragraph, "Early Christian schools, especially in monastic schools, introduced young initiates to the study of Scripture through the Psalms and selected New Testament texts. Once admitted to the monastery the neophyte had to commit Psalms to memory and recite them while performing his daily chores." So they committed it to memory and then throughout the day, as they worked, they would recite the Psalms. And that would just become part of their character. In the early church, to be a Bishop, you had to memorize the entire book of Psalms. So that you could examine the priest to make sure he knew the book of Psalms. So they actually memorized the book. I've been teaching for years, I haven't done that. But it gives you some idea of the importance of this book within the history of the Christian Church.

So it's the first book ever printed on the Gutenberg printing press. One of the first books that are always translated. So it is, I think I'm fair in saying it's the most popular book within the Christian community and we are privileged to be studying it. And we're part of a 2000 year history. So we're not de novo. We are part of a community, a history of study, and we're participating in the same spiritual food that has nourished the church for 2000 years. This has been the spiritual food that has made the church, what the church

should be. And were we more imbibed in it, our preaching would be more biblical and less therapeutic. I see a lot of preaching today being therapeutic and psychological, and it aims to make people happy, but it doesn't make people holy. And if we had more of the Bible in exposition, we would have a holy church and not, I think a little bit too lackadaisical church, more disciplined in our approach.

E. Complexity of the Psalms [19:34-23:36]

Then the second paragraph I'm talking about the complexity, however of all the books of the Old Testament, I would suggest it's the most difficult because it's written over almost a thousand years. The oldest Psalm is Psalm 90, which is by Moses, the man of God. So that goes back somewhere around 1300 BC. Some Psalms come from after the exile, in fact, Psalm 137 speaks about when they were in Babylon and their tormentors said, "Sing us one of the songs of Zion." We're going to see that that's a distinct kind of psalm. There were about five or so psalms that are psalms of Zion. They say, "Sing us one of those psalms, the songs of Zion. Well, they would celebrate how great Zion is. There they are exiles and their temple is in ruin, their king has his crown rolling in the dust. They're just mocking these people who profess to worship God. So it extends all the way.

In fact, the evidence from Qumran suggests and this is a bit debatable that it reached its final form fixed with no rival ways of grouping at about the time of the beginning of the Christian era, before that, about the time of Jesus. Now that's the largest, that's a great extension. I think myself it was fixed before that but that would be the terminus from anybody's viewpoint. But my point is this was over a long period of time.

And there's all kinds of material in it. There's protest you have the imprecatory psalms that you pray, "Blessed is the person who takes the Babylonian babies and bashes them upon the rocks." That's difficult stuff in the Christian community. How do you understand that? it's very complex with all their emotion. How do you understand the real honest expression, "My God, my God. why have you forsaken me?" That doesn't fit Christian theology very well, that I'm always with you, I will never forsake you. And yet

they're saying you have forsaken me. So it's a very complex book. It's not easy, therefore.

You're in a seminary now, and so you have to deal with hard academic questions. This is not a church. I have to address the real issues of this book. Did David really author the Psalms? In my community you could scarcely be hired in a reputable university if you said, David wrote this psalm. There's a definite prejudice. I mean, if you have a conservative view point toward Scripture, there's no openness. So I'm speaking to an academic community as well as to the church, but you have to handle the hard questions that are being raised and that our seminarians are being taught. I think it's one of the reasons that the pulpit is not more vital because you come out of the seminary, you can't go through a coal mine in a white suit and come out without black on you. And I think it's very hard to go through most of our seminaries and universities without being blackened, to some extent. Maybe I've been blackened and to some extent. Thank God for the blood of the lamb that makes us white as snow. But it's a difficult book in many ways. So we have to ask the hard questions.

E. Speaking about God Authentically from/in the Psalms [23:36-28:03]

Another difficulty I have with the book with teaching it, is that when you talk about God, there's something inauthentic. It seems to me, it's very difficult for me to talk about God, he's my Lord. The only appropriate way of speaking of God, is in "you, O Lord," second person, not third person. Because when I talk about God, I tend to distance God from us. You tend to put yourself almost above, I'm talking about God, that's an awesome concept. How do you do that? It bothers me. And yet, as in theology, you have to do that. So I always feel a little bit inauthentic. I wish I could speak and write the way Augustine did in the Confessions. He never talked about God. It was always, "You, O Lord." He always talked to God in the second person. He's unique. So my genre is academic and it tends toward the scientific. So we must be aware of that problem so that we're always coming back to the, "You, O God" to a personal relationship.

One time I taught the book of Psalms at Victoria University in BC, with secular students. And I began by saying, I know we're all used to the scientific approach. That

you look at an object, you hypothesize about it and you test it out. But it's an object out here that you talk about, scientifically explore and try to validate your hypothesis. I said, if we do that with the book of Psalms, we will destroy the very purpose of the book because we will have made it so we cannot hear God. What we did was I asked a student to come up to the front of the room, standing in the corner. And the rule of the game was that you cannot talk to the student and he cannot talk to you. You're not even sure he's a person. So now all we can do is talk about the student, observe what we see. And so they began that way. And then after a few minutes, they began to realize they'd put themselves into the position where they could never know that person because they came in at it the wrong way. I can't come to know you by talking about you. I have to listen to you. I have to come with spirit to you. And I have to come with some sympathy. If I don't come with sympathy, then I'm going to misread whatever you say.

I find that sometimes where people don't like my position, what I thought was totally innocent. They bastardize it and make it opposite of what I intended it to be. Sort of like the movie, the Blind Side, remember where they were this family in Mississippi took in this black student and they meant kindness. It was truly a Christian act. And then the social case worker came along and said, they're just using you and poisoned his mind. They only entertain you so that you will be a great star on the Mississippi football team. They're not really interested in you. They're interested in the team, judging their motives and poisoned that young man's mind. It took a while. And at the end of the movie, this black student, terrific person, he identified with the family and he said, that's my family. It's a great movie. But my point is, if you start questioning the motives of David and he's just using God, he's an upstart, usurper to the throne. You're going to totally misread him.

And many academics read him that way. They come with a hermeneutics of suspicion to quote from Paul Ricoeur that you have to approach the text with some suspicion. So that's kind of some of the stuff I'm talking about a lot more than them having the notes here, but that's what we've got there. Now, if you have any questions,

write them down and then we're going to have a break and we'll entertain questions at that point.

G. Doctrine of God and the Psalms: Knowing God and Knowing Ourselves
[28:03-31:06]

The second part of the syllabus, I talk about what are the objectives of the course. And you can kind of hear some of the objectives of the course. Paul says, you know, famous for 2 Timothy 3.16, that "All Scripture is inspired of God." And then he tells us what his purpose is, "All, Scripture is inspired of God and is profitable for doctrine [truth] doctrine. And that would be truth. It's profitable to know who God is, doctrine that's for the servant of God. It's profitable that you know who you are as a servant of God. So it's a knowledge of yourself. It's a knowledge of God. And also those two are as Calvin well understood. The double knowledge that as you know yourself, you know God, as you know God, you know yourself. The more you know God, the better know yourself, the better to know yourself and how sinful you are, the better you understand the holiness of God. Well, at any rate, it's for doctrine. And the Psalms for doctrine and it has a lot to say about God a lot. And what's interesting, what you have here is you don't have the doctrine of God from an apostle, you don't have a doctrine of God from a prophet or a Moses. You have the doctrine of God as the people of God understood him in the book of Psalms. This is where the church is, if you please, where the people of God are and what they understood about God. And it's right within their whole fabric of thinking. So the point of it is to know God, to know who we are.

One of the things that really will come through of who we are, is that we are in contradiction to the wicked. It's a black and white between those who depend upon God and those who depend upon themselves. And we will see that. We are defined by our dependence, our meekness, our child likeness, our dependence. No, I don't know the average person thinks of him or herself that way as a totally dependent person, but that's what will come through in the book. So it's profitable to understand ourselves. Therefore, when you understand truth, then that rebukes you because we all fall so far short of what

reality is. We all live in irreality, we're all a bit insane, some more than others, because we're not living in truth. The reality of God, when you're not living in the reality of God, you are somewhat insane. You're looking at the world through wrong eyes.

H. Not a Theology of Psalms but Different Approaches to Psalms [31:06-32:39]

Well, at any rate, so then, but it doesn't leave us there but corrects us and instructs us that we might produce all righteousness and we'll become the salt and light of the earth. So that is the function of Scripture and it's partly, certainly the function of the Psalms. Now it may surprise you, that is not the real objective of my course to teach theology. That would be a different course. And I've taught biblical theology of different books, but I'm not doing that. I'm not giving teaching biblical theology of the book of Psalms. I'm doing something different, something more preliminary to that, so that you can become the theologian. And what I'm trying to do is to give you glasses, to read the Psalm, authentically. So you can understand the Psalms better and therefore your theology is more authentic, more solid. So you have to have something more fundamental. The method must precede. To get right results you have to have the right method. And that's what we're going to be trying out different approaches to the Psalms that have been used over the years. And when I taught the course in 1968, that's what came through to me. As I read the literature, people were coming at it in different ways and some of it good, some of it bad. And I was gleaning what I thought was good. So we're going to be looking at that in the course.

I. Knowing How a Text Means: The Rhetorical Approach [32:39-36:36]

There's a wonderful saying that by Adele Berlin at the University of Maryland, and she said, "You don't know what a text means until you know how it means." And we're going to be learning "how it means." One of the approaches is called the rhetorical approach, poetics, but this is very dramatic. This would be outside the Psalms. If you would turn in your notes to a 303 of your 352 pages. So as I recall, it was on page 303. I'll get there. I won't get there ahead of you fortunately. Let's see, page two here. Yeah.

On page 303 under the rhetorical approach, I'm trying to share a part of that approach is to understand how the literature is structured. The biblical writers did not structure their material in the same way we normally do today. We normally structure on a very linear path that this B follows A and on down the line. Much of biblical literature follows a different structure. It goes A, B, C, D, maybe, and then it escalates it. And then you go back A', B', C', D'. That's a very common pattern. Unless you have that lens, that that's what they're doing, you can't figure out what's going on. And we just said that, but they've said it more intensely. It's just the way they do. That's called that's called alternating parallelism.

There's another kind, you know, another kind and that is called chiasm, but now that's really an in thing these days. Chiasm is from the Greek letter Chi. It has a cross to it. And a chiasm is on your concepts of words go the A word or the A thought and then it's followed by a B word or B thought, and then C and D. And then it goes to an X. And then you go back and you get a D'. They go back to this thought just before the X, D'. And then you'd go back to C' that matches C and you'd go back to B that matches B' and so forth. And that's very common. We're just learning that it's through all the ancient Near Eastern literatures. And it's the vogue thing in academia today.

A third pattern is not the chiasm, but what I call concentric. It's sometimes not separated, but I think it should be. And that's where you go, ABC / C'B'A'. There's no X. So you can think of it in terms of water. If you want to understand, concentric of way, I would use the terms. It's sometimes used this way. It's my way of putting it really. You could think of it as a tide, tide in, tide out ABC, C'B'A'. You could think of chiasm parallelism as throwing a rock into a pond. You throw the rocket into the pond and all the waves ripple out. The wave at the left end of your lake matches the wave at the right end of the lake. And they all ripple out. And then you've got the rock in the middle, that's the X.

J. Example of Alternating Parallelism: Elijah Narrative [36:36-40:46]

For the alternating parallelism, I think of, of waves and the tide. So the wave

comes in and then a bigger wave comes in. That's alternating parallelism. Now that's views of the Psalms and those different kind of structures. We're going to have to point them out as we turn to different kinds of Psalms. But to illustrate it, here's alternating parallelism on, page 303. And I used the parallelism of Elijah's experience at Mount Horeb. Remember he was fleeing from Jezebel. He goes down to Mount Horeb, and he wants, I think, a revelation from God and the difficulties he finds himself in. So he goes back to where Moses got a revelation from God, and he's in the cave there, perhaps the same cave Moses was in when God passed by. So he begins by saying, the story begins on page 303. This is 1 Kings 19. A. the setting at the cave, and B. the word from God came followed by, C. the Lord's question. What are you doing here, Elijah? He now answers. D. I have been very zealous for the Lord, my God. And they want to take my life away. Then the Lord said, E. Now comes the wind. Remember the theophany. Often the wind ripping apart the rocks and the trees and we're told the Lord was not in the wind. Then comes on earthquake that shakes the earth and destroys the terrain. But the Lord was not in the earthquake. Then comes a fire, but the Lord is not in the fire. And then we get a sound and an oxymoron, a sound of sheer silence. It was so silent. You could hear it. I think we've all been in a place so silent you can hear it. So now notice what happens now comes the alternating parallelism. Now we've got A' setting at the cave, and a voice came followed by B' question. What are you doing here Elijah? C'. The answer, I have been very zealous for the Lord of hosts and so forth. And now they try to take my life away Then D'. the Lord said, everything's exactly the same, but now we get the parallel. Instead of the wind, we've got Hazael who brings destruction. Instead of the earthquake, we have Jehu who killed off the whole house of Baal and brought death. And the next one is Elisha who called the bears down. Who called, yeah, the bears down on 42 children, for example. And it makes it clear what he's up to. And he says, Hazael zeal kills, Jehu kills, Elisha kills. What's the parallel. So the parallel to the wind is Hazael. The parallel to the earthquake is Jehu. The parallel to the fire is, Elijah. What's the parallel to the sheer silence, the 7,000 that didn't bow the need to Baal. You couldn't hear them.

Once you understand that, now everybody's wondering what's the sheer silence. And everybody interprets it any which way, but it's not authentic because they don't know how to read the text. "You don't know what a text means until you know how it means." That's a famous saying, and this is extreme when you get into it. But one of the things we're going to touch upon is the rhetorical approach.

K. Example of Chiastic Parallelism: 1 Kings 1-11 Solomon [40:46-46:37]

Let me give you an illustration of a chiastic parallelism from outside the Psalms. We're going to see all this in the Psalms, but here's a chiastic parallelism. This is in the story of the story of Solomon, the order by the biography of Solomon in the first eleven chapters of Kings. This course assumes some fundamental knowledge about the Bible and the book of Psalms does too. The superscripts assume, you know the history. I mean, you shouldn't be in this course. If you don't know anything about the Old Testament. This is a bit more advanced. I mean it's all profitable. It's like Augustine said that the Bible was shallow enough for a child to wade in and a deep enough for an elephant to drown in it.

So anyway, notice this chiastic parallelism. This is in the biography of Solomon in 1 Kings 1 through 11. And what I'll do here is I'll match A and A' immediately. Okay? Here's how it starts in 1 Kings 1 through the 2.12, A: a prophet intervenes in the royal succession. And you have Nathan, who's putting Solomon on the throne instead of Adonijah. Then notice jumping to the next page, A' how it ends when a prophet determines the royal succession that's in chapter 11:26-43. So it begins with a prophet putting into king on the throne. It ends with a prophet taking the king off the throne and putting somebody else on the throne. So I think you can see A and A' match each other.

Notice B Solomon eliminates the threat to his security. And so he'd removes Joab, he removes Adonijah, everyone who was in the coalition and very legitimately because they each condemned themselves. The son of Saul, Shimei, for example, his rule was you had to stay in the city, you couldn't go elsewhere. And then as slave runs away down to Southeast Judah. And he leaves the city, which shows, first of all, he doesn't obey the

king. It shows he's a no good man, because a slave doesn't run away from a good master. He's a cruel man. So it gives you an insight into it. But the point is he removes all the threats and the end of chapter two, and so his throne was established. Now the counterpart to that is B' Yahweh raises up threats to Solomon's security. He raises up, Jeroboam, for example. He raises up the Syrian Kings and he raises up everybody who's against Solomon. So it's a total reversal. So you have the prophet, put them on the throne, you have a prophet taking him off the throne. You have eliminating threats. Now you have new threats matching each other.

Now we get C you have the early promise of Solomon's reign everybody under his own vine and his own fig tree. C' the tragic failure of Solomon's reign, and he doesn't deal wisely with his allies and so forth.

Then you have a D Solomon uses his gift for the people, D this gift of wisdom, D' the tragic failure of Solomon's reign. It becomes self-absorbed. He becomes richer and richer. He's totally self-absorbed and losing his kingdom as a result.

Then you have E preparations for building the temple. And that's matched by E' Solomon dedicates the temple, but is warned by God.

Then you have F Solomon builds the temple, and then you have F' Solomon furnishes the temple through Hiram, the coppersmith.

Notice the pivot, Solomon builds rival buildings. The pivot is he built a palace for Pharaoh's daughter. He built a magnificent judgement hall called the Forest of Lebanon because it had so much cedar in it. He built his own house, but he stopped building the temple. It's right in the middle of the building of the temple. So he's building the temple and then he stops. And now he starts building his own mansion and palaces. That's his downfall. That's the pivot. And otherwise, if you don't understand, you don't have this lens on to understand chiasm. You say, what's this all about in the middle of chapter seven? And all of a sudden, if you understand it, it's the most crucial section of this passage, which seems irrelevant when you first read it.

So what I'm saying is: "you don't know what a text means until you know how it

means." And that's what I'm concerned about. I want to help you to know how it means. That's preliminary to doing any theology. Then you can do your own theology when I hopefully can give you some lenses and make credible, the traditional positions of the church. So somewhat apologetic, because I don't agree with most of academia. I think they're leading the initiates, the new seminary students, down a false path and hurting the church. So that's what we'll be doing. That's what we're looking at.

L. Survey of Approaches to the Psalms

1) Historical Approach [46:37-47:35]

So that one of those approaches, that's the objective. I want you to understand the approaches that we're going to be using. One of them is the historical approach. That's the traditional approach. You'll have to ask when the NIV translates "of David," is that the best translation or should it be "by David." "Of David" is a fudge translation, almost all translations, do it without making a decision about it. But it's leDavid. It can mean either "belonging to David" or "of David" or some way it's open, or it can mean "by David." And I'm going to investigate that, that's the historical approach. And what difference does it make? Whether it's grounded in history or not? What does that all have to do with Jesus? So those are the questions I have to ask and we're going to look at the historical approach.

2) Form Criticism Approach: Gunkel [47:35-52:07]

The second approach we're going to be using is what's called the form critical approach. And the form critical approach distinguishes or groups Psalms according to the different types. So basically you'll have three major types of Psalms. You have some divisions them. But you have hymns, songs of praise. And it's in the hymns, the songs of praise, that we get the doctrine of God, primarily, because there, they celebrate his attributes and they celebrate two things, his acts of creation and in history and his faithfulness to his people. So we'll look at that, the hymns -- the doctrine of God.

We'll also look at form criticism, we'll look at petitions, prayers. And there, for

example, you can get theologically, for example, there's no petition without praise. All petitions are doxological. There's only one exception Psalm 88. It's called the black sheep of the Psalter. Why is it that Job could protest, "wish I was never born" and call into question God's justice. God rebukes him and he has to repent. And the Psalmist does exactly the same thing, and God is pleased. What's the difference? The difference is Job had no praise. A petition without praise is not acceptable. It's an expression of unbelief. Once you start understanding the point, you see it's, "you have to know how it means to know what it means." So once you understand this distinct form here, then you're in a position to compare all these Psalms and compare it with other Scripture. But that's the kind of thing I'm trying to give you lenses to see so that you can understand. So you understand it's doxological.

And when you study them as a group you also learn that they are communal. They almost all end with the wish, not just for me, but for the whole world, for the whole community, that I will be part of a witness to the entire world for what the Lord has done to me. When we share our testimonies, we encourage one another and we share the gospel that way. That's how the gospel has gone on. So they are doxological. I would say they are communal and they're highly humble because what they're doing is, take the imprecatory of Psalms, they will not take matters their own hands. They depend upon God. The righteous are dependent upon God and they stand opposed to the person who avengers himself.

Keep in mind here, what happens all too often, people take what's meant for the people of God and apply it to the state. And that's a big error. It will destroy the state. The symbol for the church is the cross, the symbol for the state, in Romans 13 is the sword. And you have to keep those ethics distinct. I'm talking about the church. I'm not talking about the world. I'm talking about the church. The world is a different story. That's its own discussion again. So I'm just saying, I began by saying, it will give us doctrines about God. And I said, it will give a doctrine about saints. That's an important distinction. And that's what Paul said, "so that the man of God, the Saint of God, may be equipped to

every good work." And the scriptures were written for the church, for our edification; so that we can be good salt and light for the world. So that's something, what we get from form criticism. And I'm trying to help you to see why we get into these things. Because we will later on, we get into the forest and all the details. Then we can lose a big picture of where we are and what we're doing.

3) Liturgical Approach [52:07-53:41]

A third approach we're going to use is the liturgical that the Psalms was sung at the temple. How do we understand that? How did the temple function? How did it speak? what's the symbolism? And so we're going to be looking at the temple and we're going to be looking at the processions of Israel as they're reflected in the Psalms. So we're going to be in the temple and understanding what's going on in the temple and describe that temple a bit. Sometimes it's very paradisiacal. I think that's a word for the word paradise, in an adjectival form of it. Alright. We'll look at the liturgical approach.

Then the one I gave you earlier from the parallel, the structuralist is that's the rhetorical approach. Now we're going to be using the rhetorical approach all the way through the course when I deal with individual Psalms. So I'll just summarize the material there and almost everything I've written like the Summit Commentary on the Psalms or my Old Testament Theology, almost everywhere I lay out right at the beginning, the rhetorical approach. So people know where I'm coming from and how I'm reading the text. My real objective when I wrote the Genesis commentary, my real objective was that the reader would learn how to read. So I begin every section with that rhetorical approach. So you'd know how to read. That was the intention at any rate.

5) Eschatological or Messianic Approach [53:41-54:210]

Then we will have the eschatological messianic approach. That is how do these Psalms they speak of Jesus. He said, they all speak of him and he opened up to them on the Emmaus road. He opened up to them, the book of Psalms. And we're going to be looking at that. This is part of the complexity. How do we understand it's history for

David and yet it's also speaking of Jesus. So those things have to be grappled with in an authentic way. So you can see where we're going.

6) Redaction Criticism [54:10-55:56]

And finally, we're going to ask ourselves, it's called redaction criticism, but we've got to ask ourselves, how was the whole book put together? What was the redaction? What's the editing? Why is it in five books? How are these books and are these Psalms connected in any way? Or is it just a willy nilly collection with no meaning to it? I will argue there is meaning, but this is at the very edge of scholarship today, where we are, is understanding the editing of the book.

I think you can see if we go through the Psalms this way, you're going to have some idea of the content of Psalms. I'm not going to say, this is Psalm 1, Psalm 2, Psalm 3, that will not be my approach. My approach is a little bit more, I hope sophisticated than that. Now what we're going to do is we're going to look at these different forms, we're going to look at Psalms broadly in each case. So you get a total picture and then I will zero in on a particular psalm because the truth is what we really enjoy is the psalm itself. And I'm going to be sure every lecture we're going to get back and actually do a psalm, because nothing anyone could say can match the text itself. So let's just enjoy the text as we go along. So those are the objectives of what I'm up to and where are we going. I hope you enjoy the ride with me. I enjoy it. I learn every time on this tour through the Psalms. There's your calendar where we're going. This is the introduction to the course.

M. Preview of the Next Lecture on Hermeneutics [55:56-59:38]

The next lecture is on hermeneutics. And it's critical that you read the text with a pure heart in the right way. Most in the academia do not read it through the lens of a pure theological heart. They'll talk about ethics, but that's fundamental that you have to so much error in academia is because they come with wrong presuppositions to the text. And so I think it's worthy of a lecture to talk about: What do you think about Scripture?

And the truth is if you read, for example, a brilliant, brilliant scholar, Walter Brueggemann who is very popular today. Walter is just a brilliant guy, but I don't know what his doctrine of Scripture is. He never lays it out on a table. The truth is I don't think he has one. I don't think he has a doctrine of the Scripture. He has so much good stuff, but I want to know where you're coming from. Is it the word of God? Isn't it the word of God? How do you look at this book? And normally that is not addressed and it causes a lot of confusion.

We're going to be looking at Gunkel. He's one of the greatest scholars. He's the one who is the father of form criticism. And he has so much data it overwhelms you. You know who the Psalmist is, the righteous, he says it's primitive religion. What he means is he's got a psychological problem, It's paranoia. And the enemies are in his head and he does all this research and ends up, he has a psychic problem. That's the righteous. He never says it quite like that, but that's what he is saying and I'll quote him.

So it reminds me of the Mona Lisa, the greatest painting, by people who know something about it. It's the most famous painting--renowned. And if he'd gone over to the Louvre it's hard to get into the room with the Mona Lisa. It's packed with people. And everybody's concerned about her, quixotic, enigmatic smile. How do you explain that smile? So I was reading articles on how to explain that smile. And one lady said, I understand it. It's the smile of my little girl when she pees in the bathtub. I mean, it's trashing a picture. That really trashes it. That's how she saw it.

So what I'm saying is the hermeneutics is crucial to how you see this material. So that's my second lecture but it's going to be on hermeneutics for any book you going to study in the Bible.

And then you can see, we're moving then into the historical approach and then we'll do a psalm. And then even after the introduction I'm going to deal with Psalm 1 and we'll always be interspersing it with psalms. As you go through there, you can see the different kinds of psalms we'll be looking at, different approaches we'll be looking at. I'm saying, we're going to look at a broad approach and then do a specific psalm.

This is Dr. Bruce Waltke in his teaching on the book of Psalms. This is session number one: Introduction, Survey of Approaches. [59:38]

Psalms [\[Jump to TOC\]](#)
Session 2: Psalm 1 – Wicket Gate to the Psalter
By Dr. Bruce Waltke

This is Dr. Bruce Waltke and his teaching on the book of Psalms. This is session 2, Psalm 1 -- Wicket Gate to the Psalter.

A. Introduction: Kinds of Psalms [0:05-4:34]

This is still the first lecture part B in this hour, hopefully less than an hour, we're going to be reflecting and expositing on Psalm 1, the introduction to the book itself. The Psalms basically fall into the different kinds, so you have hymns and subdivisions of that would be like Songs of Zion and songs celebrating that the Lord is King as those are sometimes called enthronement psalms. I think it's a debatable term. I don't accept it, most don't, but some do. But that would be a subdivision of the Lord is King. We sing it in the hymn, the Lord reigns.

Second kind is what we call petition psalms. We call them petition because it's one of the motifs. The petition Psalms have about five distinct motifs elements to them. First is a direct address to God in some way, often an introductory petition. But then secondly, they will have a lament and their complaint. And it's a debate.

Should we call it a complaint or should we call it a lament? And I think sometimes lament is appropriate and I think sometimes complaint is appropriate. So for example, David's Psalm 51, is a confession Psalm is not a complaint. It's sort of a lament. But other psalms like Psalm 44, why is there suffering unjustly and where are you? I would say that's a complaint. So we could call them either way. We will see they usually contain a section on confidence that can change the dark questioning mood of despair and bring it into a confidence for petition. So there's usually a section on why do you trust God in the midst of your adversity, a confidence section. And then out of that, you have the actual

petition itself. Not always, Psalm 63, interestingly enough, has no petition to it. It is a lament, but no petition. The solution in Psalm 63 is to remember, and as that will solve the problem is just to remember. And then they end with some form of praise as I said, even the invocation may have praise, but then you have two kinds. They either enter directly into praise or they anticipate that when God answers the prayer, then they will praise. So that's the petition psalm. Now you could see a subtype of that is confidence. And though you have songs of confidence, like Psalm 23, Gunkel would classify that as a lament psalm because it's the confidence section of a lament psalm and so forth.

And then the third kind of psalm is an instruction and they punctuate the Psalms that makes the book didactic, it's teaching. So the very first psalm is not petition. It's not praise. It's instruction and it prepares you for entering into the Psalter. You don't enter into worship until you are prepared ethically because God does not want worship from unclean hands; it's abominable to him.

B. Psalm 1 as the wicket gate to the Psalter [4:34-6:12]

So immediately we have to go through the Psalm 1 in order to enter into that, we were acting the way God wants us to do. And the point is also, it's not concerned with adherence to the law, which is legalism, it's concerned with dependence upon God to live life and that's quite different.

So I call Psalm 1 the wicket gate into the Psalter. I'm picking that up from Pilgrim's Progress. You could see I'm calling it the wicket with a "T" gate, not with the "D" gate. So it's the wicket gate. Remember that a Pilgrim was in the city of destruction and he realized that it was doomed and he wanted to escape the city. And he came to the wicket gate and he had to go through the wicket gate before he got on the road to the celestial city. And if he didn't go through the gate then he had to go back to the city of destruction. There was no third way. You either go through the gate or you don't go through the gate. That's how I see Psalm 1. There's no third way, you either go through it or you don't go through it. If you don't go through it, you have no place in the book of

Psalms. So it's the gateway into the book. That's what I was saying by way of translation, by way of introduction.

C. Translation of Psalm 1 [6:12-10:54]

Now we begin the translation and immediately we face this whole problem with inclusive languages. "Blessed is the man" or because the Hebrew word *ish* some would say, means male in contrast to female. My research does not support that. The man, *ish*, is the individual in contrast to others. It's the individual person. Now, of course, in Israel was a male oriented they, and I think leadership oriented the writing. So that's my judgment. Well, how do you translate that in days of inclusive language? And this is what got the NIV into all kinds of difficulties. The problem in translation is that the pronouns, they are all inclusive. I, male/female, we male/female, you male/female, singular, plural, they male/female. But when you get to third person singular it's either he or she, and that's the problem. If I say, "he," I eliminate the "she." And so, and I don't think that was the intention. It didn't tend to exclude the woman. As I say, in Proverbs the mother has been taught because faithful instruction is on her tongue and you are not to abandon the teaching of your mother. So she's part of the process and was not excluded at all. But that presents a problem for the translator. So we wanted to use inclusive pronouns. So that's why we shifted over to "blessed are those who" then we could go with "they" and we didn't have to end with the he or something that was a difficulty. And it's a major crisis that the feminists created in language for us. Now I'm reading in the Oxford stuff that "they" is now acceptable for the singular. The NIV had already moved in that direction. But anyway, I translated it "person." So we would feel the individual. That's the problem when you make that change, you lose something in the process.

So I translated it, "bless is the person who walks, not in the council of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers." Now, here I did shift to the plural person, "but their delight is in the law of the Lord, and in their law they meditate day and night." I guess you're noticing, it's not saying, "they do the law." "They delight in the law." It assumes a new heart. That's different, this is not legalism. "That

person is like a tree planted by streams of water, that yields its food in its season, and its leaf does not wither. And in all they do they prosper. The wicked, not so, but are like chaff that the wind drives away. Therefore, the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous." I translate "the Lord" by what his name means in his own mouth. His name means "I am who I am." And if I say Yahweh, I think that probably was the pronunciation to judge from hallelujah, for example, is probably right. But it doesn't mean anything. Whereas to Israel, it had meaning it was a sentence name that had meaning. And so I prefer to give the meaning that he is the, I am. So "I am knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish."

Just by way of translation in the notes it's because I have to have a firm foundation fundamental, if you're working in the English it is fundamental. In the Hebrew text is knowing what the text is, you have to engage in textual criticism. Fundamental in English exposition is the translation and you know what the words mean.

D. Psalm 1:1 – Meaning of Blessed [10:54-15:13]

So the word "blessed," what does that mean? Many moderns translate it, "happy." I think that's inadequate. I don't think we have a word for it. But I point out that in Hebrew, there are two different words for bless and one is barak. You know, the Church Barakah? it comes from Barak. It means "blessing." So you have barak which means "to bless." And then you have this word ashre. The word barak means "to be filled with the potency for life." It's the ability to reproduce. So that when God blessed the creation, it was to be fruitful and multiply. Now, when you carry that over to the New Testament, Jesus blessed the disciples. He himself never married. So he's not saying to them be fruitful and multiply physically, but be fruitful and multiply spiritually. It's a different form of the kingdom. So that's the word to bless, barak.

Now, the other word to bless is ashre which is the word used here. That word ashre, means that you have a blessed destiny. It usually refers to the future and that future, that blessed future, is based upon your present relationship with God. The blessed person, when you use ashre, may be in deep trouble at the time. So I try to show that on

the next page to show you how it's used. This is on page eight of your notes. This is a quote from Eliphaz in the book of Job. This would be the Greek equivalent of ashrei makariyas. And he said, "blessed is the one whom God corrects." We don't think of a person that's being disciplined as particularly blessed. But that's a blessed person. "Blessed is the person whom God corrects. So do not despise the discipline of the Almighty, for he wounds, but he also binds up. He injures, but his hands also heal." You'll have a blessed future. So be thankful that you're a blessed person because God's disciplining you to give you the celestial city. You see that's different than the word, "fill you with the potency for life and victory." It's a different word.

Or another illustration is from the Greek of the beatitudes of Jesus, who are the blessed? It's not the way we normally think of it. "Blessed [makarioi, plural], are those who mourn for they will be comforted. Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness for theirs is the kingdom of God. Blessed are you when you people insult you, persecute you, falsely say all kinds of evil against you, rejoice and be glad because great is your reward in heaven." So the blessed person is a person who has this great reward in the future. That is not translated by "happy." It's totally inadequate for that. We didn't have it word. I agree the average person doesn't understand it always, but I think it carries more than just being happy. I would translate it "how fortunate." The trouble with that is it sounds like fate, but I would translate that in my own personal translation. I'm not offended by "how fortunate" and that leaves it open for the present and the future.

E. Sound in Psalm 1:1 and poetry [15:13-17:11]

I already commented on a person, on the ish, You can capture the notions in translation, but you can't capture the sound. Here are the first three words of the book of Psalms. Ashrei ish asher, by the way, the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet is aleph and if we want to learn Hebrew, what's the difference between A NICE house, A NICE house, and AN ICE house. What's the difference where you put that N? They mean altogether different things. The A NICE is a nice house, but the N with the A and you

have "an ice house." Altogether different. What's the difference, phonetically. That difference is the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet is phonemic, not in English, but it is in Hebrew. It's the catch in your throat that when you say ice you've got a catch, that's the aleph. And then you see how it's combined with the shin, with the sh. So you have ashre ish asher, you hear the assonance of that. That's what is poetry. That's the frustration of a Hebrew teacher, because you can't translate it. You have to know Hebrew, and that's the encouragement to learn Hebrew. You enter it to a whole other world. So anyway, I just thought, I'd share that with you what's going on in the Hebrew.

F. Psalm 1:1 – Stand in the way of sinners [17:11-18:53]

Now we read and the first word so "blessed is as the individual, the person, the man, who does not walk in the way of the wicked, and he does not stand in the way of sinners." And we changed that, that's exactly what the Hebrew says "does not stand" ESV has, "does not stand in the way of sinners." It's very literal. Why did we change it in the NIV? Well, the reason is that I was teaching a Sunday school class, and in it was a new student who just came to Christ. He didn't come through Daily Vacation Bible School the way I did, eight years old, I had memorized Psalm 1, many of us have I suspect, but he didn't come through that tradition. So he hears this, "does not stand in way sinners," Oh, I see, we're not supposed to oppose sinners. I said, where did that come from? And then it dawned upon me, that's exactly what the English says. "Does not stand in the way," does not oppose. That's the problem with word for word translation. So now as a translator, I'm just trying to share with you the problems of translation. How do you get around that? So the way we got around it is "does not stand in the way sinners take," but that "take" is not in the Hebrew text. So it's not word for word, but it is conceptually accurate, but then we're accused of being an inaccurate. So "does not stand in the way sinners take, or sit in the seat of scoffers" and so forth.

G. Two Dominant Metaphors of Psalm 1 [18:53-23:47]

And I don't know, then I talk about the major metaphor. We're going to be talking

shortly in forms and so forth. We're going to be talking about poetry and darling, you should be teaching the course on poetry. Anyway, I have to, in my limited way, be talking about poetry and it's fundamental to understand that poetry is figurative language. It's concrete. It's short, it's terse. It's a very elevated style of speaking and it's very important to understand you're dealing with poetry. So this Psalm has two dominant metaphors to it, comparisons of life. One is the comparison of tree and chaff. The other comparison is the metaphor is of way. And that's a dominant metaphor of Scripture, a way. Jesus says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." And "walk in the way" that we've got all the way through Scripture. Well, you all know. What does it mean? What's a metaphor signify. For me, I have alliterated with four C's. What this rich metaphor Connotes. One is it deals with Character. It deals with a disposition. When you're talking about "a way" you commit yourself to a certain way, and that goes back to your heart. A basic disposition that I believe in sovereign grace, that God moves our heart, our dispositions, to walk in a certain way. The first cause of all good is God. Every good and perfect gift comes from God. Faith is a good and perfect gift and it comes from God. There's no good thing in us. We do not generate faith. We totally depend upon God, but that's character, disposition. Your heart is inclined, my heart is inclined toward you. Oh God.

The second C. is that I think is useful is Context because you're always in community. And you're in the context of those who are saints and you separate, you minister to the saints. But you are identified, your identity is with the people of God, that community. So you live in a certain context. You live in the context of God's word. You don't live in the context of the junk on TV. You don't live in sex and violence. You live in the context of faith, hope and love, of virtue. That's part of the way. Blessed is the person who has this way of life and lives in that context.

The third one is the Conduct itself. What do you do on that way? Where do you walk? How do you take your steps? What exactly do you do?

And then finally a way that has Consequences. So you have this basic nexus of

cause/consequence, deed/results. So this is the way as I understand it. Blessed is the person who has this way does not walk in the way of character, context, conduct, and consequence.

And that forms an inclusio. What we call an inclusio is a beginning and end are the same. It begins with the metaphor of way. It ends with the metaphor of way. So "he does not walk in the way of sinners" and ends with "for the Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish" because the Lord is in that same context, character, conduct, and consequence. That's where God is. God knows that way and therefore, because God is spirit, he's there in that way. You're participating in eternal life because you're in with God, his way, his character that's life. So you don't ever perish as God never perishes. So your spirit and his spirit are united. Whereas the way of the wicked, God is not there at all. There's no presence of God, therefore it's death. So when you have no relationship with God, you're dead, you're spiritually dead. That's where it ends at the end of the Psalm. So this is where you are; this is where we end.

H. The Terms: Righteous and Wicked [23:47-31:42]

Now we have another crucial word that we need to consider. I've taken up the word person taken up the way, "does not stand in the way of sinners." I'm taking up fundamental stuff here. And these words occur all the way through the Bible. When you pick them up here, hopefully maybe I can give you a little bit of a dictionary to carry with you, that you'll memorize it. And when you see these words, you'll rejoice in the truth of them. The next one that I deal with is "righteous." And what do you mean by righteous? Now, as you know, I have the simple definition for the book of Proverbs is that "the righteous are those who disadvantage themselves to advantage others." And the wicked are those "who disadvantage others to advance themselves." So the righteous give way to the other person and on a line of cars to let them in. The wicked intervene and they put themselves before the other person. They disadvantage others to advantage themselves, where the righteous advantage others by disadvantaging themselves That's helpful for me, revolutionary for me.

But in the Psalms, it's a much more rich than that. One of the better essays in this Oxford Handbook as by Creach, Thomas Creach, he teaches at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. I'm going to just quote him it's fairly extensive, but I think it's worth our while and we'll be blessed by it. He divides it into two parts with regard to God. That's the first paragraph. And then the second paragraph is with regard to humanity. So he defines "righteous" with regard to God and with regard to others, humanity. I take time here because this is a very dominant thought in the book of Psalms. It comes all the way through the righteous and the wicked is just in most Psalms. So we better have a good idea what this is all about, I thought it worth my while.

So he says that, "the righteous depend on God for protection, plead to God for forgiveness, worship God in humility." And in other words, they're very God oriented. Those verses are all coming out of the Psalms. I'm not taking time to read them all, but they depend upon God for protection, plead for God for forgiveness and worship God with humility. "They call on and align themselves with the righteousness of God himself. They are rooted in the house of I am, feed on the word, find access to God through prayer. They relate to God as a servant to a King who is their Lord. Their childlike faith in his reign is their ultimate source of security. Their affirmation 'I am reigns' is often offered amid circumstances that seem to indicate that the wicked reign." That was his definition and that's so much there worth pondering.

"With regard to humanity in aligning themselves with God, they love and serve their neighbors. Their faith in God and obedience to him are inseparable. They have clean hands, [what they do] and a pure heart. Ethics begins with dependence upon God, not on adherence to a legal code." As I've said earlier, it begins with dependence on God, not I'm going to do it. That's the point by the way of the Lord's prayer, what does he mean when he tells us pray? "Do not lead us into temptation." Would God lead us into temptation? Does that prayer ever bother you? It's bothered me that I'm telling God that I have to ask him about to lead me into temptation as though God would lead me into temptation. Why'd we even need a prayer like that. And I think the reason is I'm saying to God, don't

lead me into temptation. See, we might have the idea, "Boy, God throw it at me. I can handle anything." And what Jesus says is, "No, you can't." You're saying I'm weak, don't lead me into temptation. I'm totally dependent upon you. When I saw that light that gave meaning to me that I can't handle it. Not me. I'm going to do the law. I'm going to show you like Peter, I won't deny you. He should've prayed. "Don't lead me into temptation." It was the self-confidence and the righteous are praying "No, I can handle it. I depend upon you." "The stance of the righteous before God sets them apart from the wicked. While the righteous praise God and pray to God when in trouble, the wicked almost always as a group flatter themselves and seek to advance their own cause at any cost. Greedy for gain, the wicked curse and renounce I am. This difference between the righteous and the wicked in turn produces the way of life that are diametrically opposed to each other. The wicked are self-absorbed; the righteous are God absorbed. And that's the radical difference. The wicked are oppressive and violent and take advantage of the righteous. The righteous are often powerless before the wicked and therefore seek God's mercy and justice. This helps to understand the imprecatory prayers, as prayers for God to avenge the wrong. The righteous never take it into their own hands to avenge themselves. They just don't do it. They depend upon God. It's not that they don't use means and I'll talk about that, but they are dependent upon God and not upon themselves. That is the key to the righteous, spiritually.

Yes, right to the point, right to the point. And that shows David's natural inclination because he was going to do it, and he was going to do it. And it shows Abigail's faith in Samuel. She believed that Samuel anointed David, and even when he's in that wilderness, she believes one day he's going to be a king. Yeah. She's a great woman of faith at that. I mean against all odds, she believed in the prophetic word, really. And that's a wonderful cross reference. See in Psalm 8 where we'll see the enemies of God, the wicked, are those who avenge themselves. They take it into own hands. They're going to get even with the other person, and they're not dependent upon God. They don't really believe God will right the wrongs. I've got a right the wrong. They have confidence

in themselves. So this basic word with regard to God, dependence with regard to others, loving and serving and trusting God in all things. That's a great word. Alright.

I. Torah [31:42-34:06]

Now the law, by the way, the third last word I have to discuss is law, which is Torah. And Torah basically means catechetical instruction. It's not a legal term of a law with penalties. The 10 commandments have no penalties to them. They're a way of life. It's a catechism. This is the way you live because you believe God redeemed you, he brought you out of Egypt. He gave you a destiny and hope. As a result, you live this way, that's pleasing to him. So Torah means "teaching" that's basically what it means I think law, I don't have a better word, and I think that some say, and I thought it for a while that the teaching then was the book of Psalm that it's an introduction book of Psalms. But when I looked at Torah throughout the Psalms, it always refers to the Mosaic law. And I don't think this is an exception. So what he's saying is the Psalms are consistent with Moses just as any teaching in the New Testament must be consistent with Paul. Any teaching in the Old Testament must be consistent with Moses. It's the touchstone.

So that's what I think is going on here, that you are totally under Sinai. David is going to build Mount Zion with the temple. He's going to make provision for it. It's in his heart; he's going to build Mount Zion. But Mount Zion always comes and bows before Mount Sinai. Sinai is greater than Zion. That's fundamental. Put another word Zion comes to Canossa and then to Sinai. What I have in mind there is from Henry IV in the 11th century, you may remember that he had the conflict with the Pope Gregory. And he came to Canossa and he repented. So I say, Zion comes to Canossa, and when it violates the law and repents. David will repent that's what I had in mind. All right. Those are the words, those crucial terms.

J. Rhetorical Approach to Psalm 1 [34:06-38:44]

All right, now we need to look at the rhetoric which deals with the logic of the Psalm, how it's put together. And that gets us into a rhetorical criticism as rhetoric is how

is it put together. So I didn't call it rhetoric yet. I will, but to introduce you I'm talking about how this is structured. You could look at it in numbers of ways, structured it in numbers of ways. Well, one of the things I noticed the stitching effect to it. You know, a lot of people are not interested in poetry. The job of an exegete is to lead out of the text, what was in the heart of God and his inspired author. God is ascetic. God is a poet. As a way of teaching theology is through the beauty of poetry through the uniqueness of it. So notice how this is stitched together and let the plus mean righteous and the minus mean wicked.

So how does it go? It starts "does not walk in the way of the wicked" minus. "His delight is in the law of the Lord," plus. "He is like a tree," plus. "The others are like chaff," minus. "The wicked do not stand" minus. "The righteous stand," plus. "The Lord knows the way of the righteous," plus. "The way of the wicked," minus. So it goes minus plus/plus minus, minus plus/plus minus as part of the poetry. It's stitched together by this alternation of plus and minus. You know, that's not a great theological moment, but it is something that God has enjoyed and I want to enjoy it with him. And that's my job.

Now C. S. Lewis in his *Reflection on the Psalms*. There's a lot of good in it. A lot of good in it. He's been canonized in the Anglican church and rightly so. But I think he had some people quote him, I think too authoritatively. His idea of inspiration wasn't as strong. His whole apologetics is based on the freewill of man. So I think there are, we ought to be aware of it, as much as I admire him and he's way beyond me. But nevertheless, I think his reflections on some of the Psalms, he is offended by the imprecatory Psalms. For example, he calls them "Devilish." So we'll talk about that. But he has so much good. He's just a saint really. In *The Reflections on the Psalms*, he says, the Psalms are like pieces of embroidery. I would say Danish lace. It has all kinds of patterns and designs to it. You can outline in numbers of ways. So it depends on what pattern you want to follow.

So I'm showing one pattern, in addition to the stitching pattern, you could also have this kind of an outline of two equal halves based on "way." The first half would be

the way of the righteous. The second half would be the way of the wicked. It would be in the form of concentric parallelism. You would have: the way of the righteous, the cause that character, context, conduct, and then the consequences pictured there. They are like a tree. The consequences refer to the present and the future, because their leaves never perish. They participate in eternal life, but they have their fruit in their future. So the tree imagery with the leaves and trees of life, it's you ever alive, but there's a moment when you get the reward in the future, for example. Then you get the consequences plainly stated, they prosper.

Now you reverse that, the consequences of the wicked, they don't prosper. The consequences pictured they're chaff, they have no life, no worth, and they're not going to endure by contrast to a tree. Then you have the cause is that the Lord knows the way of the righteous that's behind it. So you could see, I could divide it that way and I could preach it to teach it that way.

K. Psalm 1 as 3 Quatrains [38:44-41:25]

Very legitimately I chose not to. I see it instead also as couplets. And this is very common quatrains one, two, three, four, five, six. And that's how I'm going to seek to exposit it. That is, it begins with the cause of the way verses one and two. The consequences are pictured in the present being a tree versus the chaff and the consequences are plainly stated with respect to the future, that is prosper/not prosper. So that's how I'm going to look at it as three quatrains.

All right, let's see, first of all, then the cause of the blessed, of the rewarded life. First of all, it begins with a renouncing of a certain way, the way of sinners. And here in verse one, it is dealing with a progressive hardening and sin. There are two figures of speech going on here. One is anabasis and the other one is catabasis. Anabasis is the Greek word you're building up. Catabasis is you're building down, you're slowing down. Notice the anabasis and keep the translation there you see, "Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel," and then you move "does not stand in the way." And then you move "into the seat." You see the heightening, you start with the way of thinking,

counsel; that leads to a way of behavior; that leads to identification and leadership, you're "in the seat of the mockers." You see the progressive hardening. By my way of thinking, it starts with the way of thinking, to a way of behaving and you're transferred as in *The Godfather*. You were repulsed by the godfather, you end up as the godfather. The hardening that is paired with a catabasis from walking, standing, sitting, slowing down. See, this is a great poetry for me, the heightening and the slowing all going together to help us to feel the progressive hardening into sin. That he's getting worse and worse beginning with the counsel.

L. Vice is a Monster – Alexander Pope [41:25-45:14]

When I preach this, I like Alexander Pope and his heroic couplets, and one of them is: "Vice is a monster of so frightful mien, as to be hated needs but to be seen, yet seen too oft, too familiar that face, we first endure, then pity, then embrace." For me, now I'm 85. There was a time when homosexuality "was a vice of so frightful mien, as to be hated need but to be seen." But in the 1960s with the sexual revolution "seen to oft, too familiar that face." We endured it as a sickness in 1970 as a psychological sickness. And with Bill Clinton, we embraced it in 1992 when he wanted to put homosexuals in the military. Now the president stood behind it. And now because the serpent wasn't driven out of the garden, the serpent has driven the saint out of the garden. So "Vice is a monster of so frightful mien, as to be hated needs but to be seen, yet seen too oft, too familiar that face, we must first endure, then pity, then embrace."

I illustrate it by the Medusa. Remember the Medusa in Greek mythology. She was the one with the snaky hair and the hideous face. The myth was a profound insight. The myth was if you looked full face at the face of the Medusa, your heart would turn to stone. You would lose feeling. You wouldn't see it anymore. I would suggest we all have Medusa boxes in our living rooms, and we're looking at sex and violence, full force, and our hearts have turned to stone. We're no longer offended by it. Our hearts are hard due to this influence. I think this sort of tells us a lot about the context of the way of the kind of literature we read, the things we watch. I think Satan has put a Medusa box in all of our

living rooms. Or to illustrate it again. I think the famous novel of a Robert Louis Stevenson of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, that is, you know, Dr. Jekyll started as very kind a good doctor, but he understood there was another side to him. He tried to give expression dabbled with the possibility of giving expression, to that other side. He would take a toxin at night, a toxin and at night drank it and what happened. And he would become the diabolical, Mr. Hyde in the bars and the bar brothels and murder and whatnot. And eventually one night at the end, he's thinking about taking his magical potion and he doesn't take it. He turned into Mr. Hyde without drinking. Progressive hardening into sin. So that evil took over triumphed and destroyed him. And that's what I see happening in America, tragic. It's taken over and unless there is some miracle, and God is a God of miracles, and we live in hope and faith and we are the salt in the light, I don't despair. I don't see a future for our country. Candidly, thank God he reigns. So we live in hope.

M. Torah [45:14-48:40]

So that's from the cause is a progressive hardening to sin. I think that the way you could say as a character disposition and context is altogether important here. Who do you associate with? And that's in contrast to the other part, the positive, "but his delight is in the law of the Lord." So therefore this is, how is it that I'm raising the question here is: why did David find the law, the teaching, a tree of life and Saul/Paul AKA Saul, he found it a sword that killed him. Well, the reason is that Saul came at it as a legalist, trying to adhere to it and it killed him. Whereas the Psalmist is delighting in him. It's a totally dependent; it's a very different thing. Therefore, it can produce fruit in him. And that's why you have a tension between Paul and the Psalms. But you have to understand Paul is coming at it from his own narrative as a Pharisee of Pharisees, a legalist, who's going to adhere to the law and it killed him. He couldn't do it. None of us can. Whereas the Psalmist is coming as the righteous, who is totally dependent, not in the sense of the Pharisees understood righteousness, but as the Psalmist understands righteousness, which is childlike dependence upon God. So he reflects by his delight, the new heart. And he can't take his eyes off the teachings. He loves it. You know, it's just delight being with

you all and you telling me how you spend the night in prayer and how you are listening to the word of God, and you are bearing in the fruit. It's beautiful. I'm privileged to be here. So I'll let it go with that.

The context therefore is that he's in the law of the Lord, but now you have to make dispensational changes. Yes. The problem with dispensations, I understand the value of dispensationalism. The danger of dispensationalism is you dismiss the entire word of God. It's not addressed to us. It's addressed to the Jews and therefore we miss its resources when we understand how we should approach it with dependence upon God. We've come to it more or less through Paul's rejection of the law, which I think is a bastardization of Paul frankly. So at any rate and then it's the word of God is extended and the Psalm says that well, but I don't think we do anything wrong. His delight is in the entire word of God. And for us as Christians, the final word of God is the New Testament. We delight in the New Testament in the gospels and in the epistles. We spend day and night listening to our Lord who was so much greater than all. So we have to always bring it up to date, for how does the Christian respond to this? So I'm saying we're not limited to the Torah of Moses. We have the whole word of God and especially the Torah of our Lord Jesus, because he's our Lord. I think that's an appropriate use of the psalm.

N. Meditates [48:40-50:00]

Now that's the cause of the blessed of life. Notice he meditates on it. He accepts it. He treasures it. He pays attention to it. He prays for it. He seeks it. And that's based on the Proverbs, Proverbs chapter two, where in the Proverbs, how do you find the fear of the Lord? And he says, first of all, my son, except my teaching. And then he says, store up my commands, store them up. Then he says, give your ear to it, pay attention to it and incline your ear. Then he says, cry out for it, with all your heart. Then he says, seek it as you would for choice silver and gold. That to me is what I mean by meditate, and you chew it.

We have a German shepherd and it fascinates me. We may give him the finest

piece of meat. He's always ready for something to eat. He's always around the refrigerator. And when you give them some, gulp, that's it. Contrast that to how a cow chews it. The Bible is saying, don't be a German shepherd, gulping it, chew it.

O. Psalm 1: Streams of Water – canal [50:00-53:38]

Now on the next page 11, I'll come back to this. The consequence is pictured is that you're going to be, first of all, like a tree planted by streams of water. Now the word for streams means canals. And you have different words for water, water bodies. So you can have like Yam Suph, you can have Nahal, Wadi. The wadi runs in the rainy season and it runs wild and destructively. Then the rest of the year, absolutely bone dry. Or you could have a nahar like a river that can flood. But this is the word for canal. And I tried to picture myself, what is a canal? What is he talking about? And then I came across this picture and I'm going to come back to it again.

When I was exegeting Psalm 92 at a hospital Sangamon hospital, Zenger his commentary and what this is, this comes from the time of Ashurbanipal. They have the dates wrong. I don't know why, but his dates are, 665 to 627. But, in any case, you notice what you have here. I see that on the top, you have a temple, a pavilion in front of it, and the King is in it. The King is in prayer within the pavilion in front of the temple. Notice a river is flowing from the temple and the Bible talks about that. A river of life that flows from the temple, there comes the river. And then you see the canals coming off that water the garden. I think that's what he has in mind, streams of water. These canals and the source of the water is the word of God. That's the metaphor. That's the picture. So you have the word of God is like a river. Then you have these streams of water coming off. It that produced the tree of life. So that really helped me to understand the Psalm in a better way. So I thought I'd include the picture for you.

By the way, notice on the way up to the temple, there's a via Sacra, a sacred way, and notice that on the sacred way there's the sacrifice before you get to the temple. If you're going to go up there, interesting.

By consequence, you have the chaff, they have no life, no worth, no root and no

endurance. And so, as a result of that, you have the consequences of the future. The chaff does not stand in time, but when the time of judgment comes, it's blown away. So you take all the great people of history and what do they come to? I'm trying to remember the lines of Anthony and Julius Caesar and on the corpse of Caesar that will come to me. So this is what all your pride and pump comes to you, just a dead corpse here. So the chaff doesn't stand, but the righteous do endure for they participated in the Spirit of God. His Spirit resonates with our spirit and we resonate with him and we say, Abba, father that's worthwhile.

This is Dr. Bruce Waltke and his teaching on the book of Psalms. This is session 2, Psalm 1 -- Wicket Gate to the Psalter. [53:38]

Psalms [\[Jump to TOC\]](#)
Session 4: The Historical Approach, Psalm 4
By Dr. Bruce Waltke

This is Dr. Bruce Waltke in his teaching on the book of Psalms. This is session number four: The Historical Approach, Psalm 4.

A. Opening Prayer [00:24-1:32]

We pray Father that as we look at the text and we tend to teach, tend to treat it objectively, we pray Lord that in our hearts we may be responding to you as a person, listening to you and addressing you. Help us to do our work with honesty, integrity, and save us from hypocrisy. For we all tend to put on a face to be seen by others, but it may be inauthentic. We pray Lord that we may be honest and authentic and transparent before you to the glory of your name. Help us to think soberly and seriously, and with joy upon your good gift to us in Holy Scripture. We ask this in the name of our blessed Savior, Amen.

B. Introduction [1:32-2:43]

All right, yesterday, we introduced the course and it is different than what we normally get in church. In church, we normally get a direct theology, a direct spiritual life and application. In the seminary course, we get behind that so that whatever we say about God, we say it authentically. So that it's exactly true to Scripture. So the objective of the course is not to teach the theology of the Psalms or the spiritual life of the Psalms though that is the fruit of the course. Rather, our approach is how do we understand the Psalms, approach them, so that we understand them. We said that unless you know how a text means, you don't know what it means. And so we're trying to understand how it means

and get various approaches so we can be authentic in our interpretation and application of the Psalm to our theology and to our spiritual lives.

C. Historical Approach [2:43-6:39]

In the course, we are using different approaches to the understanding of the Psalms. We're using the historical approach. We studied that yesterday. Today, we'll be looking at a form critical approach. Later on, we'll look at other approaches like liturgical approach or rhetorical or approach an editorializing approach. All these different ways of looking at the text help us to understand the text and what it is teaching us about God and about ourselves as it's written for us as the servants of God.

Yesterday, we looked at the historical approach and we had to make a case that David is the author of the Psalms that are attributed to him and 73 of the Psalms are attributed to David. Normally in academia, Davidic authorship is denied. We noted that there's a basic skepticism to the Bible's own claims toward itself within higher education, which is based upon historical criticism. That includes a basic skepticism towards God's word. I think that's false. I think the data supports Davidic authorship. I tried to make a case for that and defended Davidic authorship. If David is the author, then the eye of the Psalm is the King. Once we understood that, that it's the King who is speaking and he represents the people. Just as the church is in Christ, Israel was in the King. The King was the tree. They were the leaves. Christ is the tree. We are the leaves on the tree. We are inseparable. And we began to see that once that it is about the King, the Psalms open up, it's a Royal hymnbook. We find references to the King throughout the Psalms, not only by David, but by the sons of Korah.

And that approach enables us to see the Psalms in their true light, that the average Christian does not see because we by-step this fundamental approach of the historical background with the Psalms. So it alters our thinking. And suddenly we lay a firm foundation for a Christological interpretation of the Psalms because Jesus said they speak of him. When we've realized they speak of the King and he is the King of Kings suddenly we begin to understand how they speak of his passions, his suffering, his struggles. David

has taken on every emotion we've experienced, and that is anticipatory of Christ who has taken on all of our sufferings, all of our emotions. Even He, on the cross, felt abandoned by God, the way we do in our crises. we feel abandoned by God. It's a common human experience and Christ experienced that. He was tempted in every way as we are. And when we don't find an immediate answer to prayer, we are tempted to unbelief. Where is God? And we struggle with our faith at that point. Christ also felt that. He took all of our sufferings upon himself. He was tempted in every way we were tempted and he triumphed spiritually. And so he's showing us how we triumph spiritually. So the Psalms, once we get this historical approach, we suddenly enter another world of understanding the Psalter. And we have a much better understanding of our savior and how the Psalms relate to us because we pray them in Christ who has been there with us in all our sufferings and in our trials.

D. Psalm 4 [6:39-8:33]

Our approach has been then to look at this concept broadly and then narrow down to some specific Psalms to apply it. So yesterday we looked at it broadly to establish an extensive royal interpretation of the Psalm. And we went all over the Psalter, looking at the King. I said, one of the evidences for that it's about the King is it gives integrity to some psalms that we normally would not understand. And that's why I've chose Psalm 4. And that's where we are today. We're going to narrow down and look at one psalm and we're going to understand, We'll look at it. It's a Psalm of David and we'll look at it from David's view point from the King's viewpoint, because that's the way the psalm is best understood. So we're on page. What is this? 25 of our notes, lecture four. And in each case where I deal with individual Psalms, I have an introduction, some basic background material, and then we get into the Psalm itself. By way of introduction, you can see at the top of the page, it says, "Part one: introduction," that's page 25. And then on page 30, we actually get into looking at the Psalm part two exposition. And I said, exegesis is leading out of the psalm what the author intended. Exposition is the part of the teacher who now

sets it forth in a way people can hopefully can understand it. So I speak of exposition though what we're doing is also exegesis. They're inseparable from one another.

E. Psalm 4: Introduction to Approaches [8:33-11:37]

All right. So by way of introduction, I have, first of all, translation, that's on page 25. On page 26, in this case, I just gave a little taste of the history of interpretation. I think often we're not aware of church history that this psalm has been meditated upon throughout the history of the church for 2000 years. We're part of that Catholic church, of that universal church. All too often as Americans, and often coming out of a more Baptist tradition, we are unaware of our history. We live on the edge of time and we lose the depth of time. And so occasionally I'll give you what the church fathers had said about the Psalms. I commented that I had the unique privilege of writing the commentary on the Psalms as Christian worship and Psalms as Christian Lament with my good friend, Professor Houston, who is a historian. He is a lecturer in history at Oxford University. And he has really opened my eyes to this history of interpretation. So in this commentary, which is unique, really, we have the voice of the Psalmist and the voice of the church. My responsibility was the voice of the Psalmist and his responsibility was the voice of the church. So there, I'm going to talk about John Chrysostom, which means "the golden mouth" and the greatest theologian, perhaps in the history of the church which was Augustine, Bishop of in Carthage in Hippo. Then after we talk about, just touch them a little bit, I'm going to talk about the historical context of this psalm. The difficulty of the Psalm is that the Psalmist is in crisis. The King is in crisis. The difficulty of the psalm is what's the crisis. And part of it deals with translation issues. So what is the trouble in which he finds himself? I'm going to try to investigate to find out what that crisis is by way of introduction.

The fourth thing I'm going to look at here is we always look at the form. What kind of Psalm is it? This is anticipatory of what we will be doing later on today is understanding the form. Then something about the rhetoric of the psalm and that in itself

is a separate lecture. So this is a bit anticipatory of those lectures that deal with form criticism and rhetorical criticism. Then finally, we'll get to the exposition of the psalm.

F. Psalm 4: Translation "High born men" [11:37-20:57]

All right, first of all, then the translation. So we've read it's a Psalm of David on page 25. I suggest if he could have the page separately. So you could look at it when we get into the exposition might be good idea. "Answer me when I call to you, my righteous God, give me relief from my distress. Be merciful to me and hear my prayer. How long?" Now here's a unique translation that I have to justify. "How long, high born men," almost all English versions simply say "men," "How long men." These are not ordinary men. These are high born. This is leadership. This is wealth. Now I don't believe in scholarly popes, but I also believe in and people in the pew that are willing to dig a little bit and examine scriptures like the Bereans to see whether or not what Paul was saying is true. I owe it to you to lay out, to what extent we're able on what basis am I saying it's "high born men." So I try to argue that case. If you turn to page 32 to defend that translation of why I've come to that conclusion. I don't believe in scholarly popes. I believe you should lay your cards out on the table. So I'm a Protestant and we can all look at the data and draw our conclusions.

All right. So now it's talking about they're explaining this against the King, that these men are turning that glory into shame. And first of all, it's against God. The word translated "high born" and for those, this is seminary level work. So many of the students I suspect should have some Hebrew maybe not, it's not essential. The Hebrew word is "Bene ish" you'll know the neighbor read or I think, you know the word "bene" a little bit. It means "Ben" like Ben Gurion and so forth. It means "son." So bene is the plural. So it has Bene. And then the issue is ish. We had each yesterday at Psalm 1.1 "blessed is the man," but bene ish is different than simply ish. It's a contrast to the other expression, which is bene adam. Ish on its own would be the individual, Adam is like mankind, humankind, broadly speaking. And when these occur bene ish and bene adam in all the other translations they distinguish them. And now I happened to use here the ESV, which

many people think is the most literal. I don't think the most literal is the best translation. I think the best translation, is in the language of the people, but that's the philosophy of translation. Notice how they translate these words. "Hear this all peoples, give ear all inhabitants of the world, both," This is from Psalm 49.2 "both low and high, rich and poor." The "low" is the bene adam. the high is the bene ish. And there they translate the word that I have here in Psalm 4 bene ish, they translate it "high." The NIV does the same thing. They translated high versus low. So you could see it there as Psalm 49.2. It's only used three times. I take the other instance of it. "Those of," this is from Psalm 62.9. "Those of low estate are but a breath. Those of high estate are a delusion." The low estate is bene adam. The high estate has bene ish. So both other times is translated high as it contrasts to common and lowly. So therefore that's what the word means. And it makes the most sense of my Psalm. I'm talking about high born men. The problem is that David's high born men are turning his glory into shame. And they're not only turning his glory into shame, but they are turning away from God. "How long will you love delusions and seek false gods?"

Now we begin to understand the crisis. His leadership is losing faith in him. So they're turning away from him and turning his glory into shame. The same way when we're in a crisis, as they're in a crisis, when we go elsewhere and we no longer trust Jesus, we turn his glory into shame. We're loving a delusion instead of a loving God who was our true hope and our true security. Now we begin to understand something of the crisis because David is facing apostasy within his own leadership. So "how long will you high born men turn my [the King David] turn my glory into shame." I think the average person doesn't get much out of the Psalms because they don't understand. They're trying to say, when was my glory turned they're trying to interpret it as my glory into shame. And they don't understand it. But suddenly when you realize it's the King who is glorious, they're turning his glory as the son of God, as the King of God, they're turning away from him and they're turning away from the King and the turning away from his God for the King and the God are inseparable. So they're turning away from God. If you turn away from

God, it's inevitable you're going to go to another god because we are mortals and you're going to serve some master. You're going to trust something. Most people turn away from God and trust their own money or whatever it may be. But we all, either we know how finite we are. So therefore we trust something and we begin to serve something. We all do that. So you either are serving what is not God and many serve mammon. As Jesus said, "you cannot serve God and mammon." They are incompatible. They are two different things entirely.

So they're turning away from God and they're seeking false gods and in their world, of course, the false god is the Baal and he's the god of rain and storm. And so they're looking to that god. I think it could see how important this historical interpretation is because suddenly understand who the speaker is and what it means to be turning his glory into shame and seeking false gods.

But there, you also see the importance of translation because if it's high born, it gives it a totally different impression. This is his leadership. This is his cabinet. These are his advisors. It's the leadership of the country, prophets, priests, and so forth. They're going elsewhere because they've lost faith in the King and faith in God. And it's a real crisis in Israel at this point. The same crisis we face when Jesus is on the cross and he's saying, "My God, where are you? Why did you abandon me?" It's a crisis we go through. So what he's going to do is try to restore their confidence in this psalm. So it begins by saying, and he has seven imperatives. "Know that I am, has set apart the godly for himself. I am, will hear me when I call to him. Tremble and do not sin. When you are on your beds, [talking to the high born leadership] search your hearts and be silent. Offer the sacrifices of the righteous and trust in I am."

Then he cites the people, "Many are saying," and here again, a translation, this could go either way. It could be translated, "would that one would show us good," which would express some doubt. But I think it should be translated and I can't prove this one is a viable option that I think is the better. "O that one would show us good. Let the light of your face shine upon us I am." That's what the many of saying.

G. Psalm 4: New Wine and Joy [20:57-26:33]

Now the King speaks, "Fill my heart with great joy when their grain and new wine abound." Now here I have another critical crux. We call this a crux interpretum, a critical interpretation, that affects the entire meaning of my psalm. Does it mean, "fill my heart with great joy more than when their grain and new wine abound" or does it mean that's the ESV "more than when their grain and new wine abound" or "when their grain and new wine abound." That's very different. He's looking for something other than grain and new wine. He wants something that fills them with more joy than the grain and new wine, or is it that the grain and new wine will fill him with joy? That's the big difference. So I have to defend that translation with the NIV. So again, I will engage the debate. That's on page 35, where we discuss the difference between them. You could see it in the middle of the page. I'm doing by the King for harvest. And I translate the "fill and my heart and joy." And "when," literally "from the time of" not "more than when" *pache* means in scholarly literature is a gracious way of saying, if you don't mind, I might differ with you. So when you say Latin *pache*.

So how do I decide that that collocation, normally this the Hebrew here is I didn't give it to you, but it's "me im" is the Hebrew. And normally the *me* would be comparative more than that would be normal. But with "et" time, and in it's eight other instances, it always means "from the time of" "when," and that's what I'm arguing. "Me et" elsewhere is always temporal, never comparative and I give you some verses. *Min* by itself after *simach*, joy, has a temporal sense in Deuteronomy. If *min* is comparative, then there's no reason for the joy that is given and so forth. The main point is that this collocation elsewhere always means "when." It's the normal interpretation. I know of no exceptions with this combination of terms. And when you're dealing with this gets into Hebrew and something more deep than beyond what this the basic background to a course like this.

So I translate it, "fill my heart" and that "fill" imperative, that's an issue of Hebrew grammar. And that is what happened with me. I tell you the truth. What happened with

me as I started out wanting to be a theologian, I realized that everything I know about God is through words. I believed in the revelation of Scripture. So I realized to be an authentic theologian. I had to know what words meant and how language meant. And that's why I ended up getting into degree in Greek and New Testament and a degree in Hebrew and Old Testament that was foundational to me. Therefore, I realized that all theology goes back to words. And if you're going to do accurate theology, you have to know how to understand words. You learn to understand collocations that words go together. For example, if you want to know what butterfly means, I say you don't study butter. You don't study fly. You'll have no idea what a butterfly is. You want to study pineapple, you don't study pine and apple it's a collocation. The same things here with "me im." It's a collocation. You've got to study it together. They get it right. You've all gotten into Hebrew again. I hope you're still above water and I have a drowned you yet, but there we are. I don't know how else to do this, but be honest and authentic with what I'm doing. So plow with me a bit. I don't plow shallow. I kind of plow deep as you got to work a little a bit to stay with me. Sometimes I do the best I can.

"Fill my heart with great joy when their grain and new wine abound. I will lie down and fall asleep in peace." Then here, my translation wasn't good. It should be: "for you, I am, make me dwell apart in safety." I think he means, dwell in a part where I'm secure and I'm safe and in security. But that's not a crucial interpretation to the psalm. We've already now begun to understand the psalm a bit just in the translation. I think already you're beginning to see it gives a totally different slant on this psalm when we begin to understand the historical approach to the psalm.

H. Church Fathers on Psalm 4 [26:33-29:06]

I just give you some church fathers. This is John Chrysostom, at 347 to 407. This I picked out of Professor Jim Huston's material, but he goes all the way through or throughout the whole church history and what the church fathers had said. Suddenly you discover we've had great heritage in the church, a great heritage within the universal church. He says, "We have both intimacy and confidence in God." And he's commenting

here on his righteousness. "Let us therefore study how to converse with God. No intermediary, no oratorical skills are needed only a humble meek and trusting heart. But as only the ways and things of the world that will keep us separated from his providential care." And here's Augustine, "how loudly," see this is what I like about Augustine. He doesn't talk about God. He talks to God. He teaches theology by praying. We will get into that. "How loudly I cried to you, my God, as I read the Psalms of David, songs, full of faith, outbursts of devotion with no room in them for the breadth of pride. How loudly I began to cry out to you in these Psalms, how I was inflamed by them, with love for you and fire, to recite them to the whole world where I able as a remedy against human pride." That's from his Confessions.

And then, in particular, quoting Psalm 4 as expressive of the stages of his life experience so far, "it all found an outlet," says Professor Houston, O this is quoting Augustine. "It all found an outlet through my eyes and voice. When your good spirit turned to us saying, how long will you be heavy hearted human creatures? Why love emptiness and chase falsehoods? I certainly had loved emptiness that chase falsehood and you Lord had already glorified your Holy One, raising him from the dead and setting him at your right hand." We have a great heritage and you can appreciate these church fathers who shepherded the church through difficult times in their day.

H. Historical Context: Drought Crisis [29:06-35:50]

So the issue is: what is the historical context? I've already commented that under the historical context is that his leadership is losing faith in him. The king and God are inseparable just as Jesus Christ and the true and living God are inseparable. If you reject one, whoever honors the Son, honors the Father. And if you love the Father, you're going to love the Son. They were inseparable. So what is the crisis? Why are they defecting from him? And I'm suggesting the crisis is, first of all, there was a drought. There is an I try to argue that. There's no rain. There's no harvest. There's no new wine. There's no wheat, no barley. It's a drought. I think that's the crisis. Notice what they say, what their prayer is. I gather this from the petition section of the Psalm. "Many are asking, O that

one would show us good. Let the light of your face shine upon us. I am. Fill my heart with great joy when their grain and new wine," the King speaking for the people. So they have food to eat.

The question, therefore is: what is this good? They're praying, "O that one would show us good." That's an adjective, substantive adjective. It's substituting, what is the good that they're asking for? Good may refer elsewhere to the rain and to the harvest. Again, I tried to demonstrate that. Psalm 85.12, this is on the top of page, 80, 27. Here's what they say, "Indeed, the Lord will give us what is good and our land will yield its produce." In the next hour, I'm going to talk about poetry and parallelism.

In a case like this of ambiguity by "good." You can get the meaning of it by the parallel, which is produce. And so the good is the produce, I take it, of the land. So, "the Lord will give us what is good." And what is the good? "Our land will produce its produce." Just anticipation, you see, it will be helpful when we get into form, which is partly poetry, to understand how to read poetry, because the B verset, the second line, elaborates, the A verset. So therefore, and they go together. See, first of all, the ultimate cause is the Lord. The immediate cause is the land. The ultimate cause of good is God, but he does it through the land. So when you learn to read the Psalms and poetry, you start cutting it with a much sharper knife and you begin to meditate appropriately on every line and how they related to one another. And it will certainly deepen your meditation and Bible study when we begin to understand Hebrew poetry. But the parallel shows anyone who works with poetry would know immediately this good is the produce of the land.

Well, let me take another one. "They did not," this is from Jeremiah. "They did not say to themselves, let us fear the Lord, our God who gets autumn and spring rains in season, who assures that the regular weeks of harvest. Your wrongdoings have kept these away. Your sins have deprived you of good." There, I think you could see clearly that he's talking about the rain and the harvest. So I take it, therefore, when the people are saying who will show us good, they're asking for rains and crops. That's doesn't, but I

wouldn't know that necessarily, except by his prayer that follows the people. They're praying, O that one would show us rain and crops. And he says, fill my heart with great joy when day of grain and new wine abound, I think I'm on solid ground to say a problem here there is a drought, this lack of rain. And that's the real crisis as everyone knows that when you have no rain, especially in that economy, that agrarian economy, they depend upon the crops every year just to live and to survive. When they go a year without rain, they're in deep trouble. And the country, the nation is in deep trouble at this point. That's the first part of the crisis is the drought. And so I tried to argue that.

The argument first of all, there's no mention of an enemy in this psalm, which is unique. There are 50 Psalms of lament. 47 mentioned the enemy, three do not mention the enemy. There's something else. This is one of the three. There's no enemy invading the land, there is no one trying to overthrow, well, an enemy from, without, at any rate. He doesn't mention that. I said, the good occurs elsewhere as a metonymy. That means one down for another and you have to fill it in--for rain and for harvest. And I tried to show that. Then he says, "fill my heart with joy when their grain and new wine abound." And I argued that case. This would fit then Solomon's prayer number four. Solomon names when he builds a temple, he named seven crises. When people would come to the temple in a crisis like war, and one of them is famine. When the people would all come together and pray for rain and crops. So he says this is Solomon's prayer at the dedication of the temple, "When the heavens are shut up and there is no rain [in this case] because they have sinned against you. They prayed toward this place and confess your name and turn from their sins. When you afflict them, then hear in heaven and forgive the sin of your servant and your people. Indeed, teach them the good way in which they should walk and send rain on your land, which you have given your people for an inheritance." So I think, this psalm, there's no suggestion that this is sin but it does show that you come to the temple in a crisis of drought and you come for rain.

I. Second Crisis: King Responsible for the Rain [35:50-39:27]

That's the first crisis, but there's a second crisis. That crisis is the King is

responsible for rain. This I get from the historical background. This is developed by John Eaton in his *Kingship in the Psalms*. I give you two quotes, one from Ashurbanipal in Assyria. That's one of the good things about today's situation in the middle East. People know where Iraq is. And they are beginning of know where Iran is. I mean, that world used to be totally unknown to my students. Now, everybody knows that world. So when I talk about Iraq and that's where the Northern part, you read about a Mosul, that's Assyria. When you read about Baghdad, that's Babylon and down to Bozra. So now, at any rate, they used to be the two were together as part of Assyria, Ashurbanipal, king of Assyria, notice what he boasts, "Since the time that I sat on the throne of my father, my progenitor, Adad," [which in their mythology was the storm god] has loose his downpours, and Aia [who is the underwater god of springs and so forth] and Aia has opened his fountains. The forests have grown abundantly. He attributes the abundance of the land because the gods favored him ever since he sat on the throne, the storm, god, favored them with rain and the underwater god gave them water. And it's because I'm the King. That's his boast. Or again, here's the Pharaoh. Now the Pharaoh is a god. "It is I who produced the grain because I was beloved by the grain god [Amon]. That is no one went hungry in my years." So he boasts that, "It is I who produced the grain because I was beloved by the grain god."

Now that's in the pagan religion, and this is Israel's king, the true king. There is no rain and he's in trouble. And so this is common. "How long high born men will you turn my glory into shame? How long will you love delusions and seek false gods." And the false gods are the Baal, the storm god, "who drove the clouds of across the sky, and let his voice be heard in the crash of thunder." So he was the storm god. He's pictured as having a crooked spear in his right hand, which would be the lightning, and a big club in his left hand, which represented the thunder. They're turning now from the true God to Baal. That was the alternative to them instead of trusting God in the midst of it. By the way, I'll come back to that. So I'm saying it's the second crisis. The King in the ancient Near East was like a shaman figure in Indian religions. And he was responsible for the

rain. So here's the true king, responsible for rain and there is no rain. That's the crisis. And they calling his kingship into question.

J. Third Crisis? King's Prayer [39:37-44:27]

Third crisis is the King in that world was supposed to be potent in prayer. Here's Pharaoh, "everything proceeding from the lips of his majesty, his father, the god Amon [the grain god] causes to be realized then and there." In other words, the Egyptian religion was name it and claim it, immediate response. As soon as I pray, I get the answer. Some would say, "they had enough faith." If Jesus prayed, and didn't get the answer right away. That's bad theology is just not true. There's always a gap between virtue and its rewards. There's always a gap. There should be a gap. Just to comment on that. You see if God rewarded virtue immediately, it would destroy us spiritually. We would use God we're that selfish. He would be good, a genie in Aladdin's lamp. This is what I want says me. And so he delays it and gaps it. So we're not destroyed by confounding morality and true faith with pleasure. We would use God for our pleasure and we would confound morality with pleasure if we got it right away. So what does he do? He gaps it. So what do we do? We glory, not only in our justification, we glory in our sufferings because we know that our sufferings are going to produce virtue, patience, hope that will not be put to say shame. And by the gapping, going through these times, we are developed spiritually and not being destroyed. So we don't get the answers right away. Jesus went through that with us, he learned obedience through the things he suffered. We learn obedience through the crises of unanswered prayer sometimes. It develops our spiritual life and but then we're assured we will not be put to shame. Though this Psalm will end with no answer to the prayer, we know it was answered. It's in the canon of Scripture, but it's there for our edification to teach us a life of faith and doctrines about God and doctrines about ourselves.

So then here's the Assyrian King. "His prayer will be well received by the god." So when they say, he says, how long, that implies an accusation, that of a crisis that has been going on for some time. It's implicit in the words, how long. So that's a critical

situation of unanswered royal prayer that cannot continue.

C. S. Lewis in his novel *Till We All Have Faces*, that's his last novel, describes a critical situation in his imagery to understand it "within the ancient kingdom that he's created [of Nome] when the rain fails and starvations threatens his kingdom, the king's rule is in jeopardy. So what does he do? It's a time for supreme sacrifice. His favorite youngest daughter Psyche is called upon by the high priest to be offered as a sacrifice to appease the anger of the gods." This pagan response is the antithesis of that of the Psalmist who is being tested to put his trust intimately in the creator, the I am, in spite of the disastrous drought. He's not going to offer his firstborn son. He's simply going to trust God and his word in the midst of it and not try to appease an angry God. That's what Lewis is teaching. This is the experience of Jesus. "He saved others." They said, 'he cannot save himself. He is the King of Israel. Let him come down from the cross and we will believe in him. He trusts in God, let God rescue him now, if he delights in him. For he said, "I am the son of God."'" That's how they tested him, but he went through this crisis into death and then he emerged out of death and he conquered death triumphantly. That's the gospel. That's true therapy. That's true healing. When you understand that, Okay, that's the crisis of the psalm.

L. The Form of Psalm 4 [44:27-48:35]

Now the form. I think you could see why it took me 30 years to write the preface. All right, well, I don't know how else to do it, but to look at it, word by word and really dig into it. All right, the form, we have already seen it's poetry, and we'll talk about parallelism, terseness, concrete imagery. The form of this Psalm is a lament or petition, and these kinds of psalms have distinct motifs. One is the address to God, "my righteous God," and in this case an introductory petition, a lament. The lament is that "turning my glory to shame," turning it to other gods. How does he restore confidence? In seven admonitions to the apostates. Then comes his petition to people for favor and for harvest. Then at the end of the psalm, he, in effect, gives praise to God by going to sleep at once in the crisis. No longer fretting and no longer worrying. He's at peace because of his faith

in the psalm. That's how it ends. As far as rhetoric is concerned, let it go at this point.

Here's how the Psalm develops. There's a superscript concerning its composition. That is its genre and its author. It's addressed first of all, to God. Then in verse two to the high born in two through five. And then he goes back and addresses God again. But this time by his covenant name, I am, but begins with addressing, Elohim God. His introductory petition is this is on 1. B. 1. is that God would answer his prayer, be gracious to him and hear and bring relief from the distress. His address to the high born and he rebukes them and gives them the first admonition. The rebuke is they're being faithless to the king and to God and the true God. His first admonition to them is know your king. Know that God has set me apart. Know your king, don't lose faith in your king in the crisis. Know your king. Then he has six more admonitions that fall together in pairs. Tremble, do not sin, be silent and they better search your hearts. Offer the sacrifices of righteousness and trust I am. Then the third part is the petition to I am. It's by the people for favor from God and by the king for joy and year round harvest. Then, in confidence, and implicitly with praise, the king goes to sleep. Then I argued yesterday for the director of music. That is, that the beginning of Psalm 5 is to postscript the Psalm 4. In other words, this prayer is now given over to the church to the people of God to sing so it can become our prayer. So "for the director of music" is extremely important postscript. It's not just the king, but he's given it to the people. So they all sing it with the king. We sing this altogether with Christ. But today we're not living in a physical kingdom, we're living in a spiritual kingdom and we're praying for our spiritual rain. It gives us hope in a drought. Think about that, and do not despair.

M. Exposition of Psalm 4 [48:35-50:09]

All right, let's look at the psalm more closely the more closely. Let's look at the exposition then. First of all, the superscript is by the king. Almost all scholarship rejects it. But when we understand it's high born men, this is not every man. They were departed from and turned his glory into shame. Secondly, he has a distinctive glory. Know that the Lord has set me apart with the distinctive and that could apply to everybody, but he has a

special grace in prayer. He's incorporate solidarity with the people they're saying, "O that one would show us good." Then he, in solidarity with them, says, "fill my heart." So he's working with his people. They go together, you could see it's a corporate solidarity. And there's no reason to question his authorship. There is no reason and yet it's universally denied. I couldn't teach at a university because I argue this. It's a closed mind. It's incredible.

All right, the address to God, first of all, with the introductory petitions and this I should do better here. This is "answer me when I call." This is actually three requests. One is answer, the second is relief and the third is be gracious.

N. Names of God [50:09-54:30]

There were two principle words for God. And I'm trying to give you basic vocabulary. God, Elohim, speaks of God and his transcendence. It's what distinguishes God from humanity, his eternal power, and his incommunicable attributes. He's everlasting. He's an aseity; that means he's from himself. He's not derivative. He's not dependent upon anything. No one gave birth to God. God is. So he's the transcendent, all powerful from which everything else derives. He's the creator. This is God.

The other word for God is Yahweh, which means "I am." And that's his covenantal name. That is his personal name. That is how he relates to his people. He is the God of Israel and his name is I am. So when Moses says, "who is the God we worship?" He says, "I am who I am." So Yahweh means "I am" and I tend to translate it because Yahweh doesn't mean a thing to the average person, but "I am" can. He's the great I am. We understand that and I'll come back to that.

So that's what happened in Israel, they ceased using his name, I am. It used to be, they called on the name of Yahweh. They worshiped in the name of Yahweh. Can you imagine what it would have been like if suddenly instead of calling upon Yahweh you're calling upon Jesus Christ. Instead of praying in the name of the name of Yahweh, you're praying in the name of Jesus Christ, that would be an extremely radical change. So what happened was, in the intertestamental period, instead of saying, Yahweh, they always

would say, Lord, they would use a title and they prayed in the name of the Lord. Now that made an easy transition because he's the Lord Jesus Christ. So that when you have in Rom. 11, "whoever shall call upon the name of the Lord" in Joel that's "whoever calls upon the name of Yahweh." And it's one of the strongest arguments for the deity of Jesus Christ. So that now the Lord Yahweh is Christ. But now we know in more fullness that God is a Trinity. They didn't know that in the Old Testament, but we do. We now know that there's, the father wants to be known through the Son. He wants, the apostles preached in the name of Jesus Christ. They prayed in the name of Jesus Christ. When I listen to a lot of preaching and evangelical churches, they talk about God, but they don't talk about Jesus Christ. And we don't honor God, unless we honor Jesus Christ. He loves his Son. He wants to be known through his Son. Therefore, we worship the Lord. Jesus Christ. I think it is in providence that we use, that they began using a new title that enabled the church to simply pray in the name of the Lord and identify with the Son of God. And that's a suggestion.

When it says "my righteous God" it is a crucial word about God. That's his active, not static attribute. That means that prompts God to set, right those things that have gone wrong. And the righteous king is suffering. It's not right. It's topsy-turvy and the righteous God sets what's wrong, He sets it right. In America today there's a lot wrong, but God can set it right. He sets things right. He does it for us. This should be "my God" this is a great God is personal. It's "my God." And when he says, "be gracious to me" hanan, is translated mercy, be gracious. The verb hanan means, look at me, look at me with favor and meet my need. Just do me a favor. It's like a beggar on the street. I have no claim just look at me, do me a favor and meet my need.

N. Prayer and the Theological Wordbook [54:30-58:03]

That's grace. Page 31 hear, which means to assess and consider the situation. And now I take up the great word of "prayer." What does "prayer" mean? In a word I'm arguing that prayer means to evaluate a case, make a decision and intervene that's prayer. We're asking God to evaluate my situation, make a decision about my situation and

intervene. Those are basic ideas.

One of my surprises in publishing has been the Theological Wordbook by Moody Press and I get a little royalty out of that. I remember I didn't expect any royalty from it. It came out in 1980 and in 1984, I got a letter from Moody with a normal stamp on it. I get so much literature and publishers. I actually without opening it, threw it in the wastebasket. I said, well, that's not really right. They took all that effort to send me a letter. So I'll open it up. It had a check in it for \$1,800. I couldn't believe it. I'd thrown it in the wastebasket and I didn't expect anything. It does quite well. It's amazing to me, it's just all God's grace in spite of it. Anyway. That's why did I mention that anyway? The Theological Wordbook, God has used it, and many, many pastors write me and thank me for that. So in the Theological Wordbook, this is what I, what we do. We go through every word like this. And the way it works is that, well, we originally had it done on Young's Concordance and I had to teach at Regent. I had to teach exegesis to people who knew no Hebrew, who had no real background. That's very hard to do, to teach how to really do exegesis. So in doing word studies, how do you do word studies? So I'm trying to think, how can I help these people? It dawned upon me, we've built it off the Young's Analytical, which is but it's not that simple. It dawned upon me. What we can do is use Strong's and the King James has a number by every word. Every word is listed there. Every word has a number. That number will take you back to the concordance in the back and he will give you a brief definition of every word. So I realized what we should do is in our Theological Wordbook is have a number that corresponds to the Strong's concordance. So all people have to do is find the number in Strong's Concordance, match it up with our numbers and they can get the word with a full study that they couldn't get. Well, that was so simple. It's one of the few things I ever did that was practical. It was so simple that what Moody did, they had already published one volume. They scrapped it and redid the whole thing again. So anybody can use it, just match, get a good Concordance, get a King James, get a Concordance, get the numbers, match it up and you'll get this kind of word study.

O. Expository Outline [58:03-1:05:40]

Then any praise to escape the distress. And he's hemmed in. And when he asked deliverance he means make broad space to get out of this distress. To the high born apostates that here we have the first, accusation. This is page 32. I already said there were seven admonitions. So for them, the high born apostates, this is verses two through five. I divided it to accusation, how long. Then the first admonition is the accusation that they've turned to worthless deities versus the potent king. So I have the accusation. And then I have the first admonition is "know your king."

The next three occur in pairs in verses four and five. So I'm going to put it down into the accusation and first admonition, that's A on page 32. And then on page 33, B are three pairs of admonitions to encourage confidence. Then at the end we have the petitions verses six and seven. And on page 33, we have the confidence. So that's the outline about the exposition. Let me go through that again. I kind of bungled that on you. In verses two through five, he's addressing the apostates. A. The first thing is the accusation and the first admonition. The accusation is that they are turning to worthless idols versus the potent King. So we've got 1. under that, the accusation. And on page 33, you have the first admonition is: know your king. Then we have the three parts of admonition. Well, anyway, so number 1. Is the address to the apostates is A. the accusation, the B. is three parts of the admonition. Then he'll turn to petitions.

On page 32, the accusation of apostasy is that they turn against God, against the king and therefore against God. I've taken up these terms. So you could see what they are. At the bottom of the page, I say, "how long" implies an accusation. It's an impasse that has reached a critical state. It cannot continue. I discussed the words, glory and shame. I think we don't have all that just stand there without taking time on it. He not only accuses them of being pusillanimous and feckless in relationship to him, but they also have turned against God. This is on page 33. How long will you love delusions? Love is "a strong desire from one's perception for someone or something that causes them to run after, seek and remain faithful to that which is loved." So I define what love is. You run after people,

run after sex, for example. They run after fame. Most lists there are three today. They're basically three gods: money, sex appeal, and pride. As I say, if you're like me, I have no money. That's not the problem. I obviously have no sex appeal. My danger is I seek fame, pride. I think that's the danger of an actor or a teacher or a preacher is seeking the praise of people, which is a delusion, fickle praise. There's only one worthy of praise is God himself. Intercessory, prayer, no temptation intercessory prayer, but there's a lot in the pulpit. Okay.

Now the admonition, first thing to restore their confidence is to know the king's potency in prayer. He says, know that, which is an objective fact. "Set apart" that means he's remarkably distinguished. The Hasid, his loyal one, it means a covenant partner for himself, that this King belongs to him. Thank God for this king. The king loves his God. And so they love and serve one another. I did not like the book, the Shack. I don't think it's good, but I think it's very bad theology in a lot of ways. But it does, the strength of the book is it does give us some idea of how the Trinity may relate to one another. That's the strength of the book. How the father really, I mean, I don't like re-imaging God, that is to my mind, almost blasphemy. You don't re-image God, the only way we know God is through imagery, his Spirit. So when you start recasting, God as a woman you've made a fundamental change. He's known as Father, not as mother. When you make that change, that's a fundamental change in imagery. I don't mind being black, but that again, he's not red, yellow, black, or white. He's the God of all people. So I just don't like, re-imaging God, I think that's heresy. I think it's audacious pride to say the church has got it wrong for 2000 years, come to my shack and I'll tell you what I'm really like. Who has the right to do that? I'll tell you what God is like. That's proud. I go by what the Bible says. I listen to the church fathers. I don't they've all been wrong. I've got it right. I don't understand how evangelicals have bought into this book. Do you see my problems? So "know your king." I am is Israel's covenant keeping God. He healed, he will hear when I call. There is power in his prayer, and God ultimately did hear him.

P. David/Jesus and Kingship and prophetic authentication [1:05:40-1:09:33]

Question that arises is how did David know that he was king? What gave him that assurance? He was certain, he was the king. He could have been considered just like maybe he had some kind of psychological complex or something. No, it was because the prophet said you are the king. Everybody knew that was Samuel was the prophet and the prophet anointed him. He had the authentication of the prophet and then the Spirit of God came upon him. There was the authentication of the Spirit. Then he went out and he fought Goliath and he did the works of God. How do we know Jesus is the son of God? Well, it's similar. In John 5, he gives four evidences for himself. One is John the Baptist, one is the voice of God from heaven, the third one is his works, and the fourth one is the testimony of Scripture. So thus, when he says, I give you John the Baptist, not because I need it, but for your own sake. What happened in the case of Jesus is that in the inter-testamental period, they knew that was no prophet in the book of Maccabees, chapter four, chapter nine, they say prophecy has ceased in Israel. They knew they had no prophet in their midst. So they say, "when prophecy ceased in Israel." But when John the Baptist appeared on the scene, they all knew the voice of God was in the land again. All Israel, all Jews went out to hear him. And that's why Jesus said, why didn't you listen to John the Baptist? Everybody knew he was the prophet of God. John said, Jesus is the lamb of God. I'm not worthy to unlatch his sandals before him. So you had to words of John the Baptist, and then you had the voice of Samuel. The Spirit of God was on him. He was full of charisma. They knew he was different. Then he went out and fought the Goliath and did the works of God.

With Jesus, you have the voice of John the Baptist at his baptism. The heavens are open and the spirit of God descends upon him and is seen as a dove fair and gentle and mild on his anointed shoulders. The Spirit sets him apart, drives him into a wilderness, which you don't expect, where he hungers for 40 days. You don't expect that but that's part of his preparation of suffering. He did the works of God. As he said to John, the Baptist, when he began to question him said, "go back and tell John that the deaf hear, the

blind see, the lame walk, the dead are being raised and the gospel was being preached to the poor" that I'm fulfilling what Isaiah has said would be the case. So he did the works of God and it was validated. His greatest work of course, was triumphing over death itself.

How do we know we're the children of God? Isn't it the same way? We have the word of God. He said, as many as received him, he gives them the right to become the children of God. We believe that word and we've received the Spirit of God. We become new creations in Christ Jesus. We walk differently. We live differently. We think differently. I mean, I know we're not walking to the same drum beat as the rest of the world. So we live differently with the Spirit of God upon us and we validate who we are by that.

This is Dr. Bruce Waltke in his teaching on the book of Psalms. This is session number four: The Historical Approach, Psalm 4. [1:09:33]

Psalms [\[Jump to TOC\]](#)

Session 5: Psalm 4, Hebrew Poetry, Psalm 23

By Dr. Bruce Waltke

This is Dr. Bruce Waltke in his teaching on the book of Psalms. This is session number five, Psalm 4 on Hebrew poetry.

A. Introduction: Accents and Music, Superscripts—Mizmor [0:22-5:42]

In your notes, I divided it into some introductory material. And then on page 30, I began actually looking at the psalm, the exposition of the psalm. I looked at the superscript and the superscript means written above the poem, "super"- above and "script" - written. And the superscript gives us the basic or background information that we need. We're told, first of all, it's genre is a psalm and a psalm basically means it's a word study on the Hebrew word "mizmor." I'll talk about that with Psalm 100. But basically it means it's a song sung to the accompaniment of music. So what we're looking at often with inspiration and prophetic material, you have music that accompanies it. So this psalm, this song, what we're looking at we don't have the melody. In the Hebrew text every word has an accent mark, and it is thought by some, they were musical notations. In fact, there is a scholar Susanna Halke Ventura, and she produced work in 1979. She did brilliant work, absolutely brilliant. She was both a Semitic scholar and a musicologist. And she thought she could reconstruct the temple music from those accents. They were actually, the accents, she argued, were hand signals, and you can actually see on Egyptian reliefs from first dynasty almost and a little later, you could see that with each instrumentalist, lyre, flute, whatever it may be, there would be, since they didn't have written music, there was a someone who would use hand signals to tell the musician what to play with hand signals. So she argued that these accents originally were hand signals telling the musician what to play. So she thought that she could reconstruct the music on

the basis, instead of being C, building it off the scale of C, she said it works off the scale of E. So she reconstructed temple music. She made a case convincing enough that at the most learned society of academia, which is the Society of Biblical Literature, they gave her a plenary session to present her music and actually played some of the music.

I had a wonderful student and he gave me a record of her playings of her music. I sat down with a psalm, I forget which one it was, and listened to it with her music. Of course, in music. It's we always say, I know what I like, but the truth is, we like what we know. New music doesn't appeal to us particularly. So I figured, well it's okay, but it's new to me and I'm not used to this, but it was okay. So I put it on our record player and we were entertaining guests. And I had on the background music on my record player, including this student who gave me this record, who had raved about it to me. Well, I forgot about it. And the music was playing softly in the material. And I had this record at the bottom. We were now toward the end of the dinner. And this came on Elaine, not knowing what it was. She said to me, Bruce, turn off that horrible music. We all had a good laugh.

Well, anyway, that is a way of telling us it was sung to the accompaniment of music. That is what we get at the beginning. Most of those words, Miktam and so forth, we don't know what they mean because we don't have enough context to determine what they mean. So anyway, that's the superscript and it also tells us about the author. In 14 cases out of the 73, it tells us some incident in David's life that enables you to leap back into David's career in 1 and 2 Samuel. You could relate those incidences to the book of Samuel. That's a superscript and that's in prose and it's above the poem itself.

B. Structure of Psalm 4 [5:42-10:23]

So we looked at the superscript and then we said that divided it up on page 30, we have the address to God with introductory petitions. And then on page 31, where we ended, we have the address to the high born apostates. You see the Roman numeral II addressed to the apostates. Then we addressed the third part is on page 34. We have the petitions themselves. And then finally at the end on page 35, Roman numeral IV, we have

the confidence and implicitly praise to God. Those are the parts of the psalm.

All right, turning back then to page 30 on the address to God and introductory petitions we already did, we divided that into two parts. It is addressed to God. It's a petition to gain an audience and find God's favor. So he's asking God for permission to come into his court, present his case, hear me with grace, do me a favor, give me a response in the presence of God. That was the A. address and the petition to gain an audience and find favor. And then the request was escape, give me relief from my distress. And then we go to the next part to the high born apostates. We begin to understand what his distress is. As we've read the whole Psalm, we discovered that the distress is that his leadership has less faith in him and less faith in God. That was the distress, which has now developed.

And now on page 31, he is now in poetry. It's an apostrophe like, he's been addressing God and all of a sudden he's addressing these apostates. Now I think that's literary fiction. It's a poetic way of getting across his truth and his poem. So he shifts in the imagery. He's no longer addressing God; he's now addressing the feckless apostates to restore confidence in him. Whether he actually did that or not, I don't know. I'm dealing with poetry, which is filled with imagery and so I don't read it in the same way as I do prose material. It's imaginative. That's how I basically see it to get across his truths in his psalm.

So he's now addressing the apostates, and I divide that up and it is addressed to apostates on page 32, he makes an accusation against them. "How long will you turn by glory to shame?" He makes some accusation. And in addition, he says, the first admonition to them is: know your king. Those were the two parts where we've been addressing the apostates. And the first part was the accusation and his admonition to know the king. We discussed the accusation of turning away from him to false gods. His first admonition to them on page 33 was to know your king and God answers his prayer. He's been addressing God. And he turns to them and he says, know who I am and that

God answers my prayer. It may be gapped, but he will answer it because the son of God himself is praying and God delights in him.

C. How did he know he was the king? [10:23-11:03]

Now he continues, trying to build up their confidence, not only in "know your king," I ended the last hour with how did they know he was the king? And I suggested the three words: the word of the prophet, the word of God, the Spirit of God and the works of God. And I said, that's how we know we are the sons of God. It's the word of God; it's the spirit of God and his changed life that we're participating in a new covenant. We're walking to a different drum beat. That was my suggestion. I think it's true to Scripture. So that's not just my suggestion, putting Scripture together for us.

D. 3 Pairs of Admonitions in Psalm 4: 1) Tremble and sin not [11:03-14:52]

Now we're into the three pairs of admonition. I said there was seven imperatives. And the first pair is to dread the consequences of apostasy. It will bring the judgment of God, "tremble and do not sin." Here I have a problem. How do I translate the Hebrew word, and I give it to you there, *rigzu*. You could see it on page 33 under "Dread the consequences of apostasy." I translated the word *rigzu*, which means literally to quake or tremble. It means to shake, tremble or shake. Now, the problem is why are they shaking? Why are they trembling? It could be because they're angry. He's saying to them, be angry at this situation in which you find yourself. That's how it's translated in the Greek translation and that's how it's used by Paul in Ephesians 4. Paul, I think knew the Psalms backward and forward. And so he says to the Ephesians "be angry and sin not" which is what the Septuagint translated it as. So is that what the original meaning of the Hebrew is? In the New Testament, Paul uses the Greek translation in the same way that a minister today who has the King James will preach off the King James. He may not be concerned about the Hebrew text. He's going to use this because the people know it. The same way a preacher may use the King James or any translation to present a truth. So it's possible, Paul is simply using the Septuagint because that's what the people knew and he presents a

truth. What he's saying is the truth. That doesn't necessarily mean that that's what David meant, unless you're dealing with prophecy and you say David, being a prophet, said this. That you have to take seriously. But when you have something like this an allusion to texts, I dropped down by that to understand what it meant in the original Hebrew. That's a judgment on my part.

It doesn't make much sense to me to tell these apostates to be angry. Angry, at what? Angry at your situation, but that would be moral indignation and that doesn't seem to fit them. So I think it means more likely to tremble in fear at the consequences of apostasy. Tremble and do not sin by forsaking the king and God who is elect, the eternal God and his elect king. So he's saying to them, first of all, if you're going to go after another god, understand what you're doing, fear God and don't sin, because you're going to have terrible consequences. That's how I understand what he's saying here, when he says, "tremble and do not sin" that would be the suggestion. And I give you all the data there and why I draw that conclusion. So what it's saying is on to page 33, tremble out of fear of the consequences of sinning. Quiver in face of the impending doom and so forth. That's the first thing. Now I've suggested keeping your translation in front of you. If you can go back to page 25 and I've taken the first imperative of verse three, "know that I am has set apart the godly for himself. I am will hear when I call." And now I'm at 4A. "tremble and do not sin."

E. Search Your Hearts [14:52-18:30]

Now I'm at 4B. "And when you are on your beds," it says, "search your hearts and be silent." What does that mean? "Search your hearts and be silent," be still. And why on your bed? And that's what I'm really addressing on page 34. Number 2, 4B. I understand when you are on your bed, search your hearts and be quiet, be silent. I understand that to mean, let your conscience confirm your faith, search your hearts and be silent. I define the translation for search on it. That's beyond what we want to do in this course.

It's your heart. I'm trying to give you a basic biblical vocabulary. What is your heart? The heart is conceptualized as that part of the body that informs all of your

activity, the way you think, the way you feel, your basic disposition and what you do. So, for example, we're told that when Abigail told Nabal how she had befriended David and had provided him with food. We would say, he had a stroke, but the Hebrew says is his heart died because he was like stone. We would say he had a stroke. But for them, when your body didn't move, the heart had died. So his heart died. And then it says, 10 days later, he died. In our judgment, if the heart died, rigor mortis was going to set in. But that's how they thought the heart was the locus from which all activity flows. So when we talk about the heart, it's your basic disposition that determines everything you read, what you think and what you do. So he is saying that's the locus of where you make decisions and you act upon them. So he says, "when you're on your bed, search your heart," the place of your religious decisions. And "be silent" at the end, I suggest means out of dread, to tremble, keep quiet. But I understand that their saying, let your conscience speak to you and confirm you. You really if you are within the covenant community, you really can't live worshiping a false god and denying the king. And I think he says, "when you're on your beds" and I put that here, that's in quiet, contemplation. In a group, one is inclined to think and act rashly and hypocritically. Whereas when off stage and in the privacy of one's own bed, when one is more authentic and you can be your true self. When you are alone and you don't act rashly and hypocritically to please other people, let your own heart confirm you in your faith, that's how I understand what he means. When you on your bed, search your heart, then keep quiet.

F. Third Pair of Admonitions: Trust I Am [18:30-20:00]

The third pair going back to verse five is "offer the sacrifices of the righteous and trust in the I am." We'll get into this in the liturgical approach. When they prayed, they would offer up a sacrifice. So he saying to them, trust I am, and offer him your sacrifice, not Baal. We today would say for us, the sacrifice of an animal is gone, but the prayer is not gone. So we offer the sacrifice of praise without the animal, because it's the praise, our praise, is like a sacrifice, a sweet savor into God's presence. So that's what he's saying is trust. I am and offer him a sweet sacrifice of your prayer in the midst of this crisis and

new drought. So that's how I understand what he's saying. First of all, know your king. Secondly, understand the consequences of your sin. Thirdly, let your heart confirm you or condemn you. And fourth, trust in the Lord and offer him a sweet sacrifice. And that's how he's restoring, his leadership to himself.

G. People's Petition for Favor and King's Prayer [20:00-21:38]

Now we have the petition by the people we've talked about that for the favor of I am. And we've already talked about the main things. And now by the king page 34 was the petition by the people, "O that one would show us favor." Remember? "Be favorable to us. Many are saying, O that one would show us good. With the light of of your face shine upon us, I am." And then we have B. the king's prayer. "Fill my heart with joy when their grain and new wine abound." I talked about that in the last hour of that translation. The psalm ends, and he goes to bed. "I will lie down and at once sleep in peace. For you, I am, make me dwell apart in safety." His prayer, the psalm ends with unanswered prayer, but he goes to sleep. Not worried, not fretting, knowing that God will answer his prayer. He knows his God, and he knows who he is. He's at peace. Now that's sound therapy exposition. It's in the text itself. It's just good. It's true. It's true.

H. King's Sleep in Security [21:38-23:11]

So the King resolves to go to sleep and I discussed the Hebrew words there. And the reason he goes to sleep he's at peace. This is on page 36. "You, I am cause me to dwell in security" and it should be "apart in security." I argue the case for that translation. I'll end it, I give you cross references that I think support the same trues of the Psalm of trusting the Lord with all your heart. So Isaiah 26 "for the king trusts in the Lord and through the unfailing love of the most high, he will not be shaken." And that's true of Jesus. He was in every point human and identifies with us. Psalm 21, "the steadfast of mind you will keep in perfect peace because he trusts in you." In Philippians. Paul says, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and petition with thanksgiving, present your requests to God." And if you do that, "the peace of God,

which transcends all understanding will guard your hearts and minds" will protect you from false gods. He will guard you and protect you.

I. Application of Psalm 4 [23:11-24:47]

I end with, I got a letter from a former student who was in Vietnam. I've been teaching since 1958 so here's what he wrote. "In one of the battles I fought in Vietnam, there were dead and wounded all around me. Having gone for three days without sleep, my ability to make wise decisions was at a dangerously low level. At 3:00 AM. I found a hole in a jungle base virtually under the battery of canons. The heat of the jungle night combined with that of the canons, which fired volleys about every 20 seconds was insufferable. The heat of the jungle night combined with that of the canons, which fired volleys about every 20 seconds was insufferable. Even in the stench of the gunpowder, the mosquitoes relentlessly pursued their blood thirsty duty. As I laid there, this verses of Scripture came to me as audibly as any human voice, "I will lie down in peace and I will sleep, for you, O Lord make me dwell in safety." I think I had the best two-hour sweep of my entire life. That was his experience with this Psalm.

J. Extent of Hebrew Poetry [24:47-27:07]

So that's Psalm 4, and how it still speaks to us today for the director of music. So may it encourage our hearts in the midst of a drought. All right. It's wonderful to be in the text, but my job is to give you approaches and to be academic and not to be always theological and spiritual. That's what we enjoy, but we've got to do hard academic work in this course. So that's what we're doing now. We're going back to more dry bones. And now we're on lecture five poetry and in each case, each one, I try to do a psalm because that's what we really like. You can't beat the text. First of all, then poetry. And I give it's extremely important that we understand what our literature is about. "Nothing can be of greater avail to the proper understanding of any writer than a previous understanding of his general character and the peculiarities of his style and manner of writing." So you have to understand, first we have to understand that language, and then you have to

understand his style of writing.

The second thing I discuss is by way of introduction is the extent of poetry in the Old Testament. This is astounding. Half of the Old Testament is in poetry. All the prophets are in poetry. Job is in poetry. Psalms is in poetry. Proverbs is in poetry. It is half of the Old Testament. That's in contrast to narrative, which is in prose, like from Genesis through Kings and Chronicles. That's all prose. What it tells me is that God is aesthetic and he likes poems. My experience is most people in the pew don't, but God does. So it's worth our while to understand what a poem is.

K. Approaches to Hebrew Poetry [27:07-28:38]

So, part two: What is Hebrew poetry? Often the most elementary things are the most difficult to define: what is a poem? The best definition I've read is by Barbara Hertenstein Schmidt, "In contrast to prose, poetry is a more restricted form of speech. It's a sustained rhythm in a continuously operating principle of organization." So, for example, we like organization; we like rhymes. So we might like, "I take him at his word indeed," notice the rhythm. "I take him at his word indeed, Christ died for sinners this I read, but in my heart I find a need, of him to be my savior." Okay. So you can hear it's a sustained rhythm that we're used to in modern poetry. It has its own way of restriction. In Hebrew poetry, there's no rhyme. Hebrew words are inflected, masculine and feminine, so rhyme is cheap. It comes automatically. So it's just natural to it. So there's no rhyme and we don't really know what the meter is. But we know it's restricted in some way.

L. Parallelism: Lowth's Approach [28:38-34:24]

So what are the restrictions of Hebrew poetry? And they are three. The first is called parallelism. You say a line, and then you say another line. So for example, Psalm 2, "Why do the heathen and rage," and in place of the heathen and rage "and the peoples imagine a vain thing. The kings of the earth gathered together, the kings of the earth sit together, against the Lord and his anointed one. Let us break their chains asunder, cast their cords far from us. He who sits in the heavens laughs, the Lord has them in derision.

Then he will speak onto them." And "the Lord has them in derision" and so forth. You can see you say, "why do the heathen rage" you back it up "and the peoples imagine a vain thing." It's that repetition that we call parallelism and it's all the way through the Psalms. Poetry, all poetry, the basic concept is parallelism. It's not just true of Hebrew poetry it's true of all Semitic poetry.

I'll come back to that. So according to Bishop Lowth "resemblance in grammar and its sounds [phonology/ morphology.] The way words are put together and [syntax] and our sense between two versets. The primary operating principle of organization in Hebrew poetry, which also gives it a sustained rhythm is parallelism. It aims to give complex information in a unified way. One hears the message stereo-phonically." It's like you had two speakers and you're hearing it in all of its depth in this richness, by this parallelism. That's a way of thinking of it. I'll come back to that.

The second one is it's very terse and it omits particles and gaps, and the focus is on the paragraph. So in other words, instead of like in prose, you have a motion picture, in poetry you have the slide show, one picture after another. I don't want you to read your notes. Now I just want to, I want you to look, listen, this is it. This is the event of a Jael in Judges 4, with Sisera. And this is the prose. "And Sisera, said to Jael, 'please give me a little water to drink because I'm thirsty.' And she opened the milk skin and gave him something to drink and she covered him." Now, what did you get? You can interact here. What did you get? What did that tell you? Just let me read it again to you. "And Sisera said to her, 'please give me a little of water to drink because I am thirsty.' And she opened a milk skin and gave him something drink and she covered him." What's the main point? What did you get out of that? He was thirsty. He was thirsty. Anybody else want to add to that? He was thirsty. And she met his thirst. Let's continue that. Say that again. Don't look at your notes. I'll just wait. She met his thirst, but not with what he asked for. What did he ask for? He asked for water, and she gave me a milk. You're sharp.

Listen to this in poetry. That's exactly what you get in poetry. Here. It is in poem in Judges 5, "Water, he asked. Milk, she gave. In a princely bowl, she offered him the

curds. That's poetry. "Water," see how terse that is. And she picks that out. What you just picked out. "Water, he asked. Milk, she gave." To put him to sleep and then to set him up "in a princely bowl, she gave him curds" the very best. Now it's terse, but it's powerful. That's poetry. You see the difference. It's not run on prose. It's very terse. And it gets right to the point. That's the nature of poetry. It's powerful. But you're right, you have to think about it. You have to think about it. It has a concrete, a heightened style. There were concrete images and all sorts of figures of speech. And that's why knowing the nature of poetry I had no problem with saying the address to the apostates was probably an apostrophe in literature, and may not have been reality because it's full of these kinds of figures of speech. You have to be ready for figures of speech. You don't read it the same way you read prose. And because of that, it's less clear. This has profound hermeneutical implications to it.

M. Moses as Prophet: Numbers 12 [34:24-39:09]

Turn with me if you will, you'll see this in Numbers chapter 12, he's talking here about prophets but notice the implications of this for the interpretation of Scripture. Numbers 12 is about Miriam and Aaron contesting Moses' leadership. He married a Cushite who was probably black and they didn't like it. And so they contest. By the way, I think Augustine was also from Africa, probably a black. We've gone through a horrible experience in this country with that they didn't do in other countries. But anyway, "Miriam and Aaron began to talk against Moses because of his Cushite wife. For he had married a Cushite. 'Has the Lord spoken only through Moses' they asked. 'Hasn't he also spoken through us.' And the Lord heard this." And they put this in parenthesis because we wonder if Moses really said this that he's a humble man. "Now Moses was a very humble man, more humble than anyone else on the face of the earth," which is not what a humble man would say. So it's put in parenthesis. That's not my point. "At once the Lord said to Moses, Aaron and Miriam, 'Come out to the tent of meeting all three of you.' So the three of them went out. Then the Lord came down in a pillar of cloud. He stood at the entrance to the tent and summoned Aaron and Miriam. When the two of them stepped forward, he

said, 'listen to my words, when there is a prophet among you, I, the Lord, reveal myself to them in visions. I speak to them in dreams, but this is not true of my servant. Moses is faithful in all my house, with him I speak face to face clearly and not in riddles. He sees the form of the Lord. Why then were you not afraid to speak against my servant, Moses.' In other words, Moses has a more direct revelation than the prophet. He sees God, a theophany, and he doesn't have visions or dreams. And also Moses speaks clearly and prophets speak in figures, imagery, poetry. It's not as literal as prose. So therefore the prophet has to agree with Moses, which is clear. What's interesting, when it says, "Moses is a servant in all my house" that's picked up as you know in Hebrews. And if Moses is a servant in all his house, Christ is over the house and he's building the house. So if the prophet is subservient to Moses and Moses is a servant in the house and Christ is all over the house, whose interpretation has priority? Christ. And that's what changed a lot of my theology.

I began with the New Testament and not with the Old Testament and that gives you a different picture. In the New Testament, I couldn't find a third temple. And I was told in John 16, "the Spirit of God will guide you into all truth and show you things to come." And I could not find in the teachings of Christ or the apostles the millennium. It just wasn't there. Where you do get the thousand years is in apocalyptic literature. We have the angel take a chain and bind the serpent, the Satan and put him in a big pit, put a cover on it. He did that for a thousand years. And we take the thousand years literally. But the rest of it, we don't take, literally we know it's symbolic. Why isn't the thousand years symbolic? It was that kind of thing.

See this, a lack of understanding forms of literature, where we take everything literally. But when you're dealing with apocalyptic, when you're dealing with poetry, you don't necessarily take it literally is what I'm saying. And we're usually taught, take it literally. I'm saying, when you deal with poetry, it's a different story. It's figures of speech and you have to be more sophisticated. That's why this discussion is fairly important for our understanding of the Psalms. We have to understand the full like "show us good."

That's poetry, it's figure speech that's metonymy, for example, for the other. What it is not page 39, it is neither patterned meter nor rhyme. And I show there's no consensus as to meter or rhyme.

M. Parallelism a la Lowth [39:09-46:00]

So part four, page 40, I deal with parallelism. Actually the one credited with the first scholarly work on parallelism is this Bishop Lowth in 1732. And I give you, he was both a Bishop in the Church of England and a professor of poetry at Oxford. Robert Lowth was the first to draw attention to parallel structures in Hebrew poetry of the Bible. That's not really true at some of the rabbis beginning with the 11th century like Ramban were also observing parallelism, but Lowth is the beginning of modern scholarship on this other subject. In 1753, he published *De Sacra Poesie Hebraeorum*, On Sacred Poetry of the Hebrews, which has since influence virtually all future scholarship in the poetry of the Bible. So everyone who works with poetry works with this parallelism. It's just fundamental to it, to our understanding of it.

Now this is how Lowth defined parallelism: the correspondence of one verse or line with another. Like "why do the heathen rage; and the peoples imagine a vain thing." I call parallelism. When a proposition is delivered and the second is sub-joined to it or drawn under it, equivalent or contrasts with it in sense or similar to it in form of grammatical construction. These, I call parallel lines and the words or phrases answering one to another," [like why do the heathen rage and the peoples conspire imagine a vain thing] "to one another. I call parallelism." So that's where it begins. But notice how he thinks of it. It's sub-joined to it. It's added to it. It's drawn under it. He says, "it's sub-joined to it, drawn under it, equivalent or contrasted with it.

In 1980, there was a revolution in our understanding of Hebrew poetry that contrasts with Lowth that dominated all poetry. That definition dominated until 1980. I'll say more about it. Here's Lowth's view of parallelism, "The swan upon St. Mary's Lake float stubble, swan, and shadow." So the second line is like a shadow of the first line.

He had fundamentally three types of parallelism that I still find helpful. In what he

calls synonymous parallelism the parallel versets referred to the same linguistic reference. The two lines of the verse refer to the same thing. "He rebukes them in his anger and terrifies them in his wrath." Psalm 2.5, see the parallelism. "He rebukes them in his anger." "Rebukes is matched with "terrifies" and "anger" is matched with "wrath." You could see, they are almost synonymous.

Antithetical, we saw that in Psalm 1 "for the Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked perish." This is chiastic notice that the first line ends with "the way of the righteous," the next line begins with "the way of the wicked." "The Lord knows" is the opposite of "perish," which means "knows" means "life" the opposite "perish." And it helps us to understand when you understand the parallelism, we can understand what it means, what it says "for the Lord knows" because the contrast to that is "perish." And therefore one is life and one is death. But again, it's a figure of speech that you have to fill it in for the Lord knows if the Lord knows that he's present in this life.

Now, synthetic is, there's no shadow. It's just like prose. This is psalm, this should be Psalm 1.2 is, all right. Verse two, "Who delights in the law of the Lord, and meditates on his law day and night." Notice how the second line adds to it. "Day and night" and "delights" and "meditates" go together. Law of the Lord, his law, you could see what's reflecting going together, but now something has been added. A real, synthetic is Psalm 2.6. "I have set my King upon Zion, my Holy Hill." Well, "my Holy Hill," not just Zion, but it's almost run-on.

In post-Lowthian refinements, I just comment so if you read on poetry. The terminology has never been standardized. The lines like "why do the heathen rage?" That's a line. "People imagine a vain thing" that can also be referred to as a stich. It can also be referred to as a colon. Those are two common words. When you put the two lines together, we refer to that as a bi-colon. When you have three lines together, like Psalm 1.1 "Blessed is a man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked" next line, "stand in the way of sinners," next line, "sit in the seat of scoffers." He got three lines. We call

that a tri-colon. All right. Now, if I talk about two bi-colon, I would say bi-cola. So this is for some on a seminary level, and this is what students have to read about. They're going to read about bi-colon and I have to explain what these terms mean, and that's what I'm doing here. I'm explaining what these terms mean so that when you're reading, you know, what's going on. But you liable to read, stich, you liable to read, colon. You put two together. We're going to call them bi-colon, or tri-colon for three together, tri-colon. If you're dealing with a whole verse, you elaborate to call the first stich, a hemi-stick. So there's never been a standardized vocabulary in our field, in this field, which can lead to a lot of confusion for a student. And so I'm trying to cut my way through the thick of that so we know what's going on. Okay?

O. Parallelism a la Kugel and Alter [46:00-51:47]

Now that was the emphasis until, 1980 with Robert Alter and James Kugel. Kugel at the time was at Yale. He has since gone to Harvard. Alter is at the University of California, Berkeley. They have changed our way of thinking about Hebrew poetry. Instead of thinking of it as saying the same thing, they argue that the second line is emphatic adds to it, reinforces it. It's not a throw away shadow. The difference is significant and you read it very, very differently.

Now what happened was this was back early eighties. I was asked to give a lecture someplace in California, forget the context but it was on Hebrew poetry. And I was all primed with Lowth and everything that happened since then. That was going to be my lecture on Hebrew poetry. I made a big mistake. I read Kugel on the airplane and he said, it's all wrong. I knew he was right and I have to give a lecture and everything. I was going to say, I knew it was wrong. That's extreme. So now all I could do, I was flying by the seat of my pants. I explained to the audience I read this book, I think it's right. It shipwrecked by lecture. I got to fly by the seat of my pants and make a lecture up as I go out.

I'll tell you what Kugel said. That was a memorable experience as you can imagine. But here's what they're arguing. This is what this is from somebody who's

following Lowth. So he explained, "So the poet goes back to the beginning again and says the same thing once more though he may partly or completely change the actual words to avoid monotony." Now that was his viewpoint of Hebrew poetry. You just changed the words to avoid monotony. Kugel went off to say, no, no, no. The second verse is saying more and is saying it emphatically. It's either saying it emphatically or it's adding to it. In truth of matter there is no synonymous parallelism. In truth because the different words mean different things and they add something to it. So, I'm jumping here. That was the emphasis. And then C. I deal with further types of parallelism and I'm going to skip that.

I'm going to come over to page 43 to James Kugel and Robert Alter, this rejection of Lowth's idea of restatement and synonymy. Okay. So this change of thinking that now dominates the field of understanding Hebrew poetry. The definition of it was it's now statement and related or emphatic statement, not restatement. You're not saying the same thing over again. You're saying something that enriches it. It expands it, it reaffirms it. Let me quote from Kugel. I think he's a bit too extreme. He says overall Lowth's view has had a disastrous effect, on subsequent criticism because of it synonymy was imposed where it did not exist. Sharpness was lost. And the real nature of biblical parallelism was henceforth condemned to a perpetual falling between two stools, [by which he means synonymous parallelism and synthetic parallelism]. Rather, the second verset strengthens and reinforces the first." He writes, "the B verset was connected to the A, had something in common with it but was not expected to be, or regarded as mere restatement. It is the dual nature of B, both to come after A and thus add to it, often particularizing, defining, or expanding the meaning and harken back to A, in an obvious way to connect to it. What this means is simply the B verset being connected to the A, carrying it further, echoing it, defining it, restating it, contrast it with it doesn't matter, which, has an emphatic seconding character and it is this more than any aesthetic of symmetry of parallelism paralleling, which is at the heart of biblical parallelism. To the state the matter somewhat simplistically, biblical lines are parallelistic not because B is

meant to be a parallel to A, but because it typically supports A carries it further, backs it up, completes it, goes beyond it. Before that work dissertations were written, trying to give a taxonomy of all the kinds of parallelism there are. There are so many, you couldn't do it because of simply the B verset in some way is emphasizing and adding to giving you a different perspective on the A verset.

P. Verification of Kugel's and Alter's Approach [51:47-1:04:29]

So instead of thinking of them as saying the same thing, they're saying related things, but somewhat differently, and you look for the differences between them. So if Lowth's view was "The swan upon St. Mary's Lake floats double, swan and shadow," I would say Kugel's view is "The swan upon St. Mary's Lake floats double, goose and gander." In other words, the swan is now divided between the male and the female, and you see them differently. It's a related state, but it's not a restatement. That would be trying to help us understand the difference in these two viewpoints, which I think are fairly substantial in the way you read poetry.

Let me go back. If I may, let's go back to page 41. No, where's the one I want. Well, I don't see it off hand. It will come to me. We'll come back to it. The arguments on page 44, the arguments in favor of Kugel over Lowth is synthetic adding to it is normal. Then if you go back to the rabbis who composed and developed Hebrew poetry. They thought of it as differentiation. And I don't know how much to go into here. Take for example, Matthew 21. Let me start with John 19:24. This is the story where Jesus on the cross. And they took his garments and divided them among them. They took his cloak and cast lots for it. Okay. Now turn, that's actually a quote from Psalm 22. Turn with me, if you will, to Psalm 22. What they're quoting is verse 18, "they divide my clothes among them, and cast lots for my garment." From Lowth's viewpoint, clothes and garments are saying the same thing. From Kugel's viewpoint, they say different things. And that's what John does. They divided his garments and cast lots for his cloak. There's a difference between garments and cloak. Instead of seeing them as saying the same thing they say different things. And John so interprets it, they divided my garments among them,

whatever clothing he had, they cut it up and everybody got an equal piece. But for the basic cloak, like the shroud of Turin, the whole thing that would be different than, but anyway, the basic cloak, somebody got the whole thing. So they cast lots for the cloak to see who would get the cloak. They didn't divide the cloak as they did the other garments. You see the difference between reading it as saying the same thing versus saying different things.

Take another one. This is where, for example, Zechariah 9.9, where you have the king comes riding upon a donkey upon the colt of a donkey. This is Zechariah 9.9. "Rejoice greatly daughter Zion, shout daughter Jerusalem. See your king comes to you, righteous and victorious, lowly and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey." Okay. Now the Hebrew says "and on a colt." So most understand it more as synonymous that the donkey is now defined as the colt of the donkey. But Matthew doesn't read that way. "He came riding," well, turn to Matthew and see how Matthew reads it in Matthew 21.1 through 5, "As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples saying to them, 'Go to the village ahead of you. And at once you will find a donkey tied there with her colt.'" So there are two animals, the donkey and the colt. It is not a donkey defined more narrowly as a colt. It's different. "If anyone says anything to you say that the Lord needs them and he will send them right away. This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet. Say to daughter of Zion, see a King comes to you, gentle and riding on a donkey and on colt the foal of a donkey." So Matthew, in some way, pictures Jesus, as both with a donkey and with a colt. They would distinguish. That's the difference, whether they're the same thing or the different things and you could see how. I remember when I was in class at Harvard, the professor laughed at Matthew for not understanding Hebrew parallelism, that they're the same thing. But we now know they're not the same thing.

Okay. Listen to this difference. Come and take a look at, look at Psalm 2 and verse five of Psalm 2. Okay. Verse five. "He rebukes them and his anger, and terrifies them in his wrath." Now for Lowth "rebukes" and "terrifies" are saying the same thing. But if you

think about it, they're not the same thing. "Rebuke" is what the Lord does. "Terrifies" is what they fear. Instead of looking at it as saying the same thing you're looking at, you are cutting with a much sharper knife. You're saying to yourself, as you, meditate upon them, what's the difference between "rebuke" and "terrifies." They're related but how? And you begin to exegete much more finely when you understand Hebrew poetry. That helps to see the difference. There's always some difference, almost always some difference between them and that's the change. I give the arguments in favor of Kugel over Lowth, page 45.

I can't get into it. I'm not talking about Hebrew accents and the principle of continuous dichotomy. This is going to be too advanced, look at the diagram below. You could see the principle that every verse has two halves and it's divided in Hebrew by a certain accent mark it's called an athnach. I have to be simplistic here, but there's basically an accent mark that puts it into an A verset and a B verseset. The A and B make the bi-colon. Now the accents go further. And so you get the A and B divided. The A will be divided into an AA and an AB, and the B will be divided into a BA and a BB, or it could be A, an AB, A, an AA and AB and it could simply be B.

Here's an illustration of it from Isaiah 53. "He grew up before him like a tender shoot and like a root out of dry ground." That's the, A with the AA and the AB. So in other words, the AA, the imagery is of what we would call a horticultural term of a "sucker." It doesn't belong there. That's what's meant by this yoneck. It's a sucker. What you want to do in horticultural is you want to cut off the sucker because it takes off from the main plant. So he was growing up before like that. And more than that, at the other comparison, the AB, "it was like a root out of dry ground." In other words, he had no promise. It looked as though he should be destroyed and out of dry ground, he's not going to live. It's an anomaly. Now, the B, "he had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him." Notice the A is figurative, a shoot, a root out of dry ground. Now, the literal, "he had no beauty, nothing that we should be attracted to him." He did not look like a king. In fact, going back to the donkey, he comes

in riding on, not a horse, like a Kaiser Wilhelm entered Jerusalem. He comes riding on a donkey and a foal of a donkey. That is a donkey about the size, about the size of a great Dane dog with his feet dragging along the ground. What kind of king is this? Which shows us what we should be like lowly and humble. He comes riding on in lowliness, nothing in him that we would do. This is not what you expect for a king. It was different, altogether of different. But notice the A is figurative and is literal.

When you learn to read poetry, you begin to think differently. That's what I'm driving at in this course. I'm giving you approaches, a way of thinking about it. A way of understanding what you see it in your Bibles, in the NIV, you've got a line and then you've got a second line. But now I'm trying to show you to think there's a difference between them and it's much more sophisticated than even that. So it's all broken up into all kind of parallelisms. It's an absolutely fantastic system that overwhelms me and amazes me.

And it can go into a third division. Here again from Isaiah, this is the A. "he was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth. As a sheep before her shears is silent. Yes, he did not open his mouth." Now there, you see, you have an AAA. "He was oppressed and afflicted yet he did not open his mouth." Now we have the metaphor "as a sheep before his shears is silent." And then we have a climactic as a separate verset entirely: "He did not open his mouth." He did not complain. This was his destiny, his moment of glory.

Q. Psalm 23 [1:04:29-1:14:32]

Now we turn to Psalm 23, and I thought you couldn't do a course on the Psalms without looking at Psalm 23. First of all, the translation, some matters of introduction, translation, form, and structure and so forth.

Translation "A Psalm." And you now know that means "a song with stringed instruments." "I am my shepherd. I do not want. In green pastures he allows me to rest, by choice watering places he leads me."

Here I translated "my soul he restores." The word "soul" in Hebrew does not mean

the same thing as in English and then in the New Testament. In the New Testament, you have a body, soul, spirit. In the Old Testament, you are a soul and soul means your desires, your appetites. Usually it's with yearning "my soul yearns for you. O God." And you hunger and thirst. It deals with your appetites. So that's the soul. If you take that Theological Wordbook, I have several pages on what the soul is in the Old Testament. It's not the same as in the New Testament. It deals with your vitality, A.R. Johnson defined it as a passionate vitality. You're alive, and you have appetites and drives. It refers to your drives and appetites. I translated it, "My vitality he restores, he leads me in paths of righteousness for his namesake. Even though I walk in a dark ravine, I do not fear evil for you are with me. Your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare before me a table in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil, my cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy will pursue me all the days of my life. And I will return to dwell in the house of I am for endless days." To cut the quick of it, I understand this Psalm to have three vignettes, three scenes. The first scene is that of a shepherd with his sheep. The second scene verse five is a sheik in his tent as a host and the Psalmist is a guest with the Sheikh who's living in a tent. So the first scene is out in pasture land and the Psalmist images himself as a sheep. He's exploiting what it means to be a sheep with Israel's covenant God, as your shepherd. Then he shifts that scene and we're now in a tent with a table and a cup, and he's being entertained in the tent.

The third scene is of that the temple. We've left imagery. We've left the figurative. We've left the allegory of pasture and tent. We now come to reality. What I'm talking about is the temple, that's the pasture. That's the tent. That's where this happens. What I'm talking about to put it in prose. I'm talking about God's goodness, I'm talking about God's kindness, His hesed. That's what I'm talking about. This imagery is to teach me about God's goodness and God's faithfulness.

So he starts off with these pictures. The first picture I understand it to be that the shepherd would lead his sheep out into green pastures and shepherd has to be very, very sensitive to sheep. They die easily. They have to be well tended to. He leads them out to

the green pastures and he allows them to rest and he gives them an abundant supply of water by, he says, "by choice watering places," I would translate it "He leads me." Then he brings them home. And their way home is through a dark ravine. "I don't fear any evil because God is with me." So, in other words, what he's saying is, he provides for me, he restores me, he protects me. That's the imagery I would get out of it. I'm so sated with his goodness; I can lie down in the midst of the best grasses. I'm lying down in it. I'm so refreshed by these quiet waters. I have no fear even going through the darkest ravine, you are with me and you're protecting me. And so I walk securely. It's a psalm of trust. I walk securely through life.

But now when he gets back to the sheep-fold where the shepherd would normally take care of the sheep. He doesn't want to go back to a sheep-fold. So he changes the imagery. Now he's in a tent with a sheik and he teaches the same thing. "You prepare a table before me," that's equal to the green pastures. And it's all "before my enemies." That's the equivalent of "though I walk through the darkest ravines you're with me," you protect me. So he's having this banquet in the midst of all his enemies who are looking on. So he's being protected. So he says, "you prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies." And then as the water refreshing me, "you anoint my head with oil, my cup is overflowing." I'm totally refreshed. Then he says, "Surely, goodness and kindness will pursue me forever." So it's great to be a sheep on the pastures, better yet to be a guest at a tent, but how much better to be in the temple with the Lord. And that's eternal forever, all my days, forever. And "so I will return to dwell in the house of I am for endless days." The full light of immortality has not been passed, but he knows it's for endless days. It is the best he could express it in that dispensation. Notice what happens here a bit, notice how cleverly the Psalm has put it together. Notice that in verses one through three, he's talking about the shepherd. "The Lord is my shepherd." He's talking to the congregation, that's gathered at the temple, the King is speaking. And he's telling them as "the Lord is my shepherd," I don't lack. And he provides for me and he's saying that's for his congregation. And then the next part in verse five, when he's in the tent, he's talking

directly to God. So you have, "you prepare a table before me." So he's no longer talking about God. He's talking to God. This is the nature poetry you'll make these kind of shifts. It stands so smoothly, but notice, and then verse six, he's talking again to the congregation. What I'm telling you is that God is faithful. God is good, and it's at the temple here and it's for endless days. Don't miss what I'm talking about by this imagery. And again, he's talking to the congregation. So he talks to the congregation. He talks to God.

But notice, this is what we call a janus. Notice how he makes the transition from talking to the congregation, to talking to God. He begins to talk to God under the imagery of the sheep and the pasture. So that's what you get in verse four, "even though I walked in a darkest ravine, I do not fear evil." And now he's already talking to God, "for you are with me." He actually made the switch in verse four from talking about God, to talking to God. He did it at the latter end of the verse, under the sheep and shepherd imagery. And we call that a Janus and said, it's a transition from one section to the next section.

This is poetry. It's brilliantly put together. When we begin to understand what poetry is, that's basically what I wanted to share in all these notes.

But I always like to bring it up to the New Testament because with Jesus, he's both the sheep who himself walked with his Father as his shepherd, but he has now become our Shepherd. And so when I say, "the Lord is my shepherd," I'm thinking about the triune God. I'm thinking about the Son of God. He's the great shepherd. He's the chief Shepherd. He's the good Shepherd that gave his life for his sheep. It's so much greater that he died for me. That's my Shepherd. And so I want to read it within the light of the New Testament and that's what we do at the end there in that section.

This is Dr. Bruce Waltke in his teaching on the book of Psalms. This is session number five, Psalm 4 on Hebrew poetry. [1:14:32]

[\[Jump to TOC\]](#)

Psalms

Session 6: Form Critical Approach and Hymn Motifs

By Dr. Bruce Waltke

This is Dr. Bruce Waltke in his teaching on the book of Psalms. This is session number six: Form Critical Approach and Hymn Motifs.

A. Prayer [00:25-00:54]

We ask for strength from you. Incline our hearts toward you. Helped us to combine spiritual words with spiritual truth. You promised to be with us. Our sufficiency is certainly not of ourselves. Our sufficiency is of you, in Christ's name. Amen.

B. Approaches to Psalms: Review [00:54-4:39]

In this course, we've been looking at various approaches to the Psalms to help us understand. Our focus has not been primarily on the theology of the Psalms or the spiritual life of the Psalms, but so that we ourselves can understand the Psalms and interpret them in an authentic way appropriate to the Psalms themselves. In this course, we are trying different approaches to the Psalms one of which is the historical approach that we looked at yesterday. Our method is to give a broad viewpoint of things, and then narrow down to a psalm or two. For my judgment, that's the best part when we're actually in the text.

So we looked at the historical approach and we noticed that the subject is basically the king. You could think of the Psalms, I think, originally as a Royal hymnbook with all the people of God gathered with the King at the temple. And he represents the peoples in himself. The Old Testament is a metaphor of the New. It's concrete, physical. And so the earthly temple is a picture of the spiritual temple. The King is at God's right hand. It puts the judgment hall in the earthly temple and hall of judgment is a picture so we can better understand Christ at the Father's right hand. He's the judge at the right hand. We make a

transition from the metaphorical to the spiritual, and we have the metaphorical so that we can understand the spiritual.

So the Old Testament is kind of like a picture book. So we saw the King and he's a picture of the greater king. Israel, they are our fathers. John 8 (Rom 4:12) speaks of them as "our father Abraham" who is said to be "our Father." Galatians 3.29, "You are the seed of Abraham." We are identified as the people of God today, that is, the church. And so we looked at it broadly, and then we looked more narrowly at Psalm 4. Then we approached it more from a literary viewpoint. We dealt with poetry in general. How do you read poetry? How do you approach the psalm? Because it's all in poetry. How do you read poetry? We noticed that all poetry has a certain form of parallelism. You state something, and then you say it again, but it's not just the restatement it's related statement and that's quite different. And as you read the lines and you see how the related. You're asking two questions: how are they related? And, how are they different? And you cut it with a very sharp knife. You begin to read it the way the poet thought. What we're trying to do is enter back into the mind of the poet? How was he thinking? So we can be authentic in our interpretation. And that's why we engage in this sort of work. What is in the background of the gifted poet, David, who was well-spoken because he is aware of the literature of that world and how the poetry works.

C. Form Critical Approach [4:39-7:05]

Now, we come to another approach, which is called the Form Critical approach. Then in the next, what I've originally allocated is two lectures. We're going to look at it very broadly as an approach. Then we will narrow it again, and we'll look at a particular Psalm and do it in more detail, more refined. So that's kind of the way we're going at the course.

So at the form critical approach, and I divided it into two parts on page 50, I think it is of your notes. Part one "By way of introduction." And then one form, there are basically five different kinds of psalms at a minimum, five forms. We're going to concentrate on the one, which is the hymn, the praise Psalms. And it is in this kind of

Psalm that we get theology in spades. We're hearing Israel itself giving testimony to what they believe or what God has put in their hearts about God. So their words to God of praise become God's word to us and through their lips, not now through the lips of a Moses or through the lips of a prophet, but now through the king and his people, we are being taught about God. It's a different form of revelation that we get in the Psalms. Just another way of looking at God. These are the hymns of praise and that's what we're going to be looking at. So we have to look at it broadly, and there's a lot of material here and it's easy to get drowned in the material and this can be a very difficult lecture for that reason, because it covers a mass of material. But I feel it's needed to get a total feel for the book of Psalms whereas if we stay with just a few songs, you don't get a feel for the total book. You don't see the total scene of things. So we need to see it totally. We need to see it individually and more narrowly.

So in this particular one, we're going to be looking at the Psalms from a form critical approach. We're going to be classifying them according to whether they're hymns or laments or songs of trust or instruction and different kinds of psalms. So that's how we're going to look at it and group them together.

D. Introduction pre-Form Critical Approaches [7:05-8:30]

So by way of introduction, I give a survey of the academic approaches to the Psalms prior to form criticism. Then I think we'll talk about that and by way of introduction there, what is the next survey? Academic approaches, well, that's Roman numeral I. Then we're going to go into Psalms of praise in particular on page 55. So I really didn't have a Roman numeral II, so that's not the best thing, but anyway, that's what happened. Under academic approaches we begin with prior to form criticism, when we have the traditional approach, which is you depend upon the superscripts and you date them back to David and earlier in Israel's history. The one thing we added to that approach that wasn't traditional is to emphasize the concept of the King that is not normally in the literature. I think it's right, but it's become more of a focus in more recent literature. So that's the traditional approach. We talked about that.

E. Literary Analytical Approach: Wellhausen [8:30-27:27]

There's a gapping approach in between that and the form critical and that is what we might call the literary analytical approach. You may be asking yourselves, why does academia reject Davidic authorship? What's the argument? Why are they skeptical? And we need a bit of background to understand where academia is and why most seminarians are taught not to trust the superscripts. We need to go back into the literary analytical approach.

Now I've already talked about presuppositions and the presuppositions, as I said, you put reason above revelation. You don't trust revelation. You trust your reason above it. From reason you begin with skepticism about the Bible to begin with. You don't believe in divine intervention. The scientific method has no place for miracles or God intervening. It's just the scientific method doesn't know how to handle that. It's just not subject to scientific investigation. So anywhere because they have a lens that you can't see the spirit, they can't see God and they end up with just material and that's oversimplified but that's about what it amounts to.

The real skepticism began with the Pentateuch with and came to a climax with a German scholar by the name of Julius Wellhausen and about 1869, 1870, he came out with a Magnum Opus that just toppled the academic world called the Prolegomena to the Pentateuch. Now there had been suspicions before or evidence before that the Pentateuch consisted of documents. And they isolated the documents by certain literary criteria, that's why I call it the literary analytical approach. They isolated documents by means of a literature, a literary analysis. So it is observed that in some cases, God is referred to as Yahweh, which with German, they don't have a "y" they have a "j" so you spell Yahweh with a J. So they isolated, the literary critics, they isolated the document that belong to. The German language and it's kind of a joke in our field, that the first Semitic language is German because all the scientific work has done in German. They just seem to have some scientific mind. So everything is very analytical and very precise and scientific. Well, anyway, so that's the J document.

The other documents don't use that name for God. They use the other name for God, which is Elohim (E). They isolated by literary criteria the use of vocabulary and other words. They identified there were two documents and they called the one document E because it uses Elohim. And the other document they also used Elohim. The content of it was mostly dealing with book of Leviticus and priestly material. So they called that the priestly document. So now you have three documents, you have a Yahwistic document, you have an Elohist document and you have a Priestly document. So you have a J document and E document and a P document. But there's yet had another document that differs again and that is Deuteronomy. It was a different kind of a book that's called, as you might expect, the D document. So now you've got what is known as the J E D P theory. The question was which came first? And it's interesting and you could see why it's very plausible theory. There is a lot to commend it in my judgment. For example, in the J document, when do people begin to call upon the name of Yahweh? In the J document, it begins with Genesis 4 with the birth of Seth. And Seth had Enosh. And when Enosh was born, that's when men began to call on the name of Yahweh. So according to the J document, the name of the Yahweh began with Enosh. That fits.

So then in the E document, and they had already isolated, both Exodus 3, Moses has asked what's your name. According to the E document, the name Yahweh is revealed when God calls Moses at the burning bush. So you have a different origin for God and the name of God Yahweh in the E document. And in the P document, that's Exodus 6 where God says to Moses, "heretofore I was not known by the name Yahweh." So what do you do with that? Abraham was calling upon the name of Yahweh. And we're told in the J document that then men began to call name of Yahweh. According to the E document, Moses has to ask his name, but now in Exodus 6 it is as though he didn't know his name. And "I did not make myself known by that name." So that's the P document. I think it could say that's very plausible that we have distinct documents that give us different origins for the name of God, and they contradict one another. That's what's behind this whole documentary hypothesis.

What capstoned it was Wellhausen's work and he could demonstrate the sequence. The sequence was the earliest document was J, the next document was the Elohim. So he dated J basically to about the time of David and Solomon, about 950. He dated the E document to 850. And he dated the D document to the reform of Josiah that's 620. And the reason is that they discovered the book of the law in the temple, which was attributed to Moses. The question was asked: how could the book of the law be lost in the temple? And everybody agrees in academia that basically the book of Deuteronomy is a forgery. It's a pseudograph. It's not by Moses. It was composed during the reign of Josiah in order to justify his reform of removing all the high places. So that's what Josiah did. It was a completely from that time. You can demonstrate it or archeology that during the reign of Josiah, they just destroyed the high places, but obviously the high place existed before that. So therefore the D document is firmly dated, from the academic viewpoint, at 620 BC. And the P document is dated to the exile or to after the exile. And it's dated late. So what had happened is the whole Bible is turned on his head.

So what we thought was early by Moses is now late. So all the priestly material like Leviticus and material in Exodus that we thought was the Mosaic has now turned upside down and it's the last thing. So this is what happened in academia, and it creates a whole attitude that you can't trust the Bible's own claims to itself, because it says Moses wrote it, but we all know Moses didn't write it. So therefore this is secondary and it can't be trusted. So if you don't trust Moses, why do you trust David?

So what you have to do, this is a whole separate course, obviously in seminary in an introduction where you must answer these hard questions, you must address them and you can see why. When I was teaching introduction, I presented Wellhausen straight out with no apologies. The students went away thinking our Bible is destroyed, but then you come back and you have to rethink these arguments. Basically the arguments are based upon the presuppositions that God never intervenes and there's no real prophecy. The J document is dated really by Jacob's blessing and Genesis 49. And particularly what the tribes would be, but there's no real prophecy. So everything that we call prophetic has to

be *ex vaticium* which means from the time of the event.

When I still talk about it and say, Exodus 6 is the origin of it. So how do you understand that? How to explain it? When I stood for my oral defense, I was asked that question, knowing that I'm conservative and I really trust Scripture: how do you answer the question of Exodus chapter six? Now I know the conservative answers, but I didn't think they were any good and I couldn't buy into them. And I simply said, I think that documentary hypothesis is extremely plausible. And at this point I don't have an answer to it, but there's a lot of things I don't have an answer to. And if I have to have an answer to everything, then the only conclusion I can do is I have to be agnostic. I can never commit myself because my finite mind can never come to infinite truth. So I don't have to have answers to everything in order to believe. If I had to do that, I could never believe because you still have questions I don't have answers to.

It was about 30 years later that I read an article that helped me to understand what was going on at Exodus 6. But I didn't have an answer for 30 years, but I live with ambiguity. We all live with ambiguity. And so I read an article in 1995 that I thought was very convincing. And it was dealing with this formula. "You did not know that I am Yahweh." And the writer showed clearly that this recognition formula that you did not recognize who I am. That is, I am who I am, you didn't experience it. You didn't know it. There was prior to the Exodus, God never demonstrated his power. They never knew who he was until he destroyed Egypt with the plagues. That was totally Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, they knew the name, but they never knew what that name meant. They never felt the power of that name. So that's called a recognition formula. And when you get the recognition formula "you will know that" in the book of Exodus and the Old Testament it's in war. But then when God puts the people into captivity and it looks like the king has lost this mountain, God has lost his temple, the King's crown is rolling in the dust, then you come along with amazing prophecies in the Ezekiel, and again, you get this whole cluster. When you see these prophecies fulfilled, "then you will know that I am Yahweh." And now it's the fulfillment of God's word that you will know that I am Yahweh. So it's a

recognition formula and they never experienced God. They never knew God. Abraham calling upon the name of God is not the same as knowing God's full power. Those are different things. They seem so the same thing when you first hear it, but it's not the same thing. So now it's a new understanding of it.

So far as Deuteronomy is concerned that the external evidence is prior to the monarchy, as they've anticipated the King, there's no reference to Jerusalem in the book. It has not become the local central sanctuary, but that's a whole discussion on Deuteronomy.

I'm trying to give a background of the skepticism toward the authorship of David and the attitude toward the book of Psalms and why academia has rejected the superscripts. So you have to understand that background to understand where Gunkel is coming from, because Gunkel comes out of this academic way of thinking. And it's out of that context that we get to the form critical approach. This is why very many conservatives are very hesitant to enter into the form of critical approach because it comes out of this soil of criticism behind it.

So far as Deuteronomy is becoming a formula in the book of Deuteronomy, I would suggest you read McConville's commentary on Deuteronomy. I think it's a superb commentary, in the Apollos series. And if you want more on dating of Deuteronomy, you should read, McConville, just a word about Deuteronomy. I think conservatives have made a big mistake, equating the book of Deuteronomy with the Book of the Law. I myself have drawn the conclusion that the book of Deuteronomy was written during the exile. That's the book but what the book is about is the writing of the Book of the Law by Moses. It's a history of the Book of the Law. The Book of the Law is by Moses, but the book of Deuteronomy is not by Moses. And that's why you can get the obituary of Moses at the end of book of Deuteronomy, because he didn't write the book. He wrote the Book of the Law and he put that in the tabernacle next to the ark. And that's what I would hold Moses wrote. But there are 59 verses in my judgment in the book of Deuteronomy that Moses didn't write. So I think we've made some errors in overstepping and saying more

than what the Bible is saying. It never said Moses wrote the Book of Law. It said, Moses, delivered the Book of the Law. He wrote the Book of the Law. So we have to be a bit more sophisticated. I'm suggesting, in our discussion when we discuss these matters.

Well, that's the background as far as the dating? An anecdote: when I was teaching at Dallas, a president of a class at Southern Methodist, Highland Baptist church, the Southern Methodist Church that's affiliated with Southern Methodist University and this one class was, I gathered, a very liberal and the president of the class called me up, knowing that I'm evangelical. And he said, I'd like you to come and instruct our class on what is an evangelical? So we know what you believe and where you're coming from. I said, "Sure, I'll be glad to do that." I have one requirement: everybody comes with the Bible, because you don't understand who I am until you have a Bible. You have to look at the Bible that's fundamental. If you're willing that everybody will come, you all agree you're going to have a Bible, I'm willing to come and teach. But if not, I'm not coming. "Sure, everyone will have a Bible." When I got there nobody had a Bible, not one, not even the president. So I said, take out your Bible--Nothing. I turned to the president and said, look, we had an agreement that I would teach only if everybody had a Bible, but nobody has a Bible. So I'm not teaching and I'm going to leave. Well, you can imagine what that did. He had built up this class and everybody was waiting for it. And now I'm going to walk out. But I thought, well, let's have a good visual object lesson here. Evangelicals believe the Bible and we trust the word of God. So you have to understand that and if you don't get that, I'm leaving. Well, when he saw the class was going to go to pieces, he said, "Well, where do we have Bibles?" And they finally decided that janitor would know where the old Pew Bibles were. So they got the janitor. I think they had three basements. We went down to the third basement and in a back closet. There were the old Pew Bibles from the church. The Bible was lost in the church. It was an incredible anecdote. No one there would have problems with my saying, "Yes, the Book of the Law could be lost at the temple during the reign of Manasseh and his policies. It was a highly, that's anecdotal, obviously. And as a scholarly viewpoint, we need something more than

that, but it illustrates what I'm saying. That what seems on the surface incredible, it's truly not all that incredible. So that's the background to form criticism. So we really need a bit of that. That's a separate course though, as you could see. But it's out of that background that we get Hermann Gunkel. He's been trained through the Wellhausian approach and what happened, the Wellhausian approach, toppled all these Christian seminaries. Wellhausen himself said that he was teaching in a Lutheran seminary. He said, I'm destroying the faith of my students. I'm going to go and teach in the university whereupon the theologians, picked up Wellhausen and taught it in the seminaries and killed the church for all practical purposes. That's part of our whole problem today. It goes back about a hundred years or so to this basic liberalism really. And I'm not there as you can hear.

All right. So the literary analytical approach and I divided into who are the men we're primarily talking about and the background to it as Wellhausen is the beginning of it. Then you had Briggs, he's an American Presbyterian scholar and later he becomes a priest in the Protestant Episcopal Church. The fact is, he was defrocked by the Presbyterians because of his views. T.K. Cheney was the English, divine and Bernard Duhm was the German. They introduced this propagated, this new approach or were influential toward it. Almost all the academic literature prior to Wellhausen would be more traditional, more conservative from about 1870, the time of Wellhausen, to Gunkel say 1920, all academic literature was based upon the Wellhausian view of source documents and that sort of a thing.

F. Form Criticism [27:27-32:08]

Beginning with 1920 with the crucial scholar here is a fellow by the name of Hermann Gunkel. And he wrote his first work in 1904. He wrote a commentary, I think in 1920 or 24. His final work, his massive work, is called, the it's all German, Introduction to the Book of Psalms: the Genres of the Religious Lyric of Israel. He died in 1932 and his student Joachim Begrich, finished the work post-humorously in 1933. It's massive of his typically Germanic detail, very scientific. And it was translated not until

1998. You can get it from Mercer Press, I think it's in was it Macon Georgia something like that. But Mercer Press has published it in translation. And if you're willing to shell out \$550, you can buy it, but that's what it cost. I'm going to give you a lot of stuff free and maybe more than you want. But at any rate, I just scanned certain things out of it. There's so much detail I wasn't going to type it all so I just scanned it. So I took the book and I put it in electronic form so I could scan it and work with it that way.

So what's the method of the form critic. Well, first of all, he buys into historical criticism, for example, skepticism, coherence, and analogy, and that's foundational those presuppositions. I talked about that. They dismiss the superscripts because the Bible on its own authorship is not credible. They claim the superscripts are not part of the Psalm, even though every Psalm hymn outside of the book of Psalms has a superscript. As I saw showed yesterday, Exodus 15, Judges 5, so 2 Samuel 22 and whatnot. It's assumed it's secondary. What's troubling, even in the TNIV Study Bible it's not clear and not firm on some of this stuff, the old NIV Study Bible. It's great. He's a great scholar, but it's not as firm as I am, or would like it to be.

So we believe in the grammatical historical method, that words have meaning within a historical context. Now we've done away with David, what is the historical context? Where did this material originate? You can see without David, without the superscript, we're really at sea. We don't know for sure where it comes from or where it originated. And there's a lot of speculation about this.

So that's what by form criticism Gunkel was trying to decide the historical context out of which the Psalms originated because the superscript was dismissed and we're trying to find a historical context. By so-called scientific typologies, they dated it, the book, most of the material, all the material, not to the first temple, which Solomon built, but to the second temple that was built during the days of Haggai and Zechariah. This is an advanced course that assumes biblical foundations behind it.

So the way they dated it therefore was by so-called scientific typologies, namely they thought they could trace the evolution of language. What was early Hebrew, and

what was late Hebrew. They thought they could trace not only the evolution of language, but they could trace the evolution of religion. A kind of a phase view from animism to polytheism, to henotheism, to monotheism. Dating it by the philosophy of religious development, the Psalms are highly, highly spiritual, so they would be very late at the end of the spectrum. Those were the reasons for dating it.

G. Waltke's Appraisal of Form Criticism [32:08-37:22]

My critical appraisal of it, of course, I disagree with the basic historical criticism because it is at loggerheads with the Bible itself, which presents me with a God who answers prayer and dynamically intervenes. What happened since then that has shattered the scientific language bid is the discovery of the Ugaritic texts in 1929, published in 1940. There in these texts that come from Ras Shamra. If you think about the map of Syria, Palestine, Lebanon. And you know, you have the Island of Cyprus off there. Cyprus is shaped like a feather. If you took the tip of the feather and you went directly to the coast, there is Ugarit, modern day Ras Shamra. It was there that these tablets were discovered. These tablets give us really what Canaanite religion was there, the worship of Baal, and their temples of Baal. Their poems praise of Baal and they're in parallelism, just like the Hebrew. They saw poetry is in parallelism in the ancient Near East, and the same words are being found. So therefore we could no longer date it linguistically to the late temple period. So the language showed it could be earlier. The whole idea of the evolution of the religion has since been called into question, and it's not that simplistic. So the basic foundations have been eroded from it. But that's my criticism of it.

I think it's a destructive to the interpretation of the Psalms. And from my viewpoint, I'm talking about the literary analytical approach and all these, I find no exegetical value in them. So when you don't find any exegetical value, you're not going to find much theological or spiritual value either. So it goes together.

Well, that brings me up then to the form critical process, the background, I've talked about the literary analytical approach and my criticism of it. Now I'm up to the form critical approach. And that would be basically, I've put here in 1900, but because his

original work was 1904, but basically from 1900 to the present, all scholarly literature is influenced by form criticism. You'll notice when I begin my commentary by way of background, I'm asking the question, what form of literature is this? What kind of hymn is this? That's the fundamental question that we have to ask? That's the strength of the approach, because it makes us aware of different kind of psalms and different kinds of hymns. We think of them quite differently as being hymns or as petitions or instruction and so forth. I say by way of the man who was influential here, that throughout the church's history, some commentaries recognized that Psalms fell into various types, such as penitential psalms like Psalm 51, and that they met differing emotional needs of the church from joy to pain, to protest, to anguish. And the Psalms will address every emotion we experience. So they recognize these different kinds of psalms, but they never did it really in a scientific way. The big change came with the German scholar Gunkel. He was the great champion of form criticism. He scientifically refined form criticism and there I give you his bibliography. Middle of the paragraph after his work in 1933, footnote 33 excepted the conclusions of the literary analytical approach, but modified it significantly. He's a product of his day and his age in the university, which has been impacted by Wellhausen.

By form criticism he sought to establish the historical settings of the Psalms. Now here's where he went off base and here he is to be rejected. He concluded that the forms originated in the era of the first temple, not David, but at least preexilic, but the extant psalms which imitated these early forms belong to the period of the second temple. So you could see he's a product of this age. All of academia said, it's second temple. His data is telling him it's like first temple. So therefore, what does he do to put it together? Well, the form originated in the first temple, but the psalm itself comes from the second temple he had to satisfy that political correctness if you please. He believed that. So it imitated the first temple, and he's a man of his age, like all us are.

G. Sitz im Leben and Gattung [37:22-52:33]

So, what was his method? Twofold, his first method was what's called, as I say,

the first Semitic language is German is "sitz im leben." That means what was the "setting in life" where the psalm originated. So the Proverbs are not by Solomon, but where did they originate? Well, they originated in the court yard or they originated in a home. They did not originate with Solomon. So you get a setting in life where they originate. Where did the psalms of David originate? Well, some of them originated in the temple and other psalms originated in private prayers or whatever they may be. So you tried to get the setting in life where they originated. So on every Psalm, you tried to get the sitz im leben, this setting in life, where this psalm operated.

Now you could see from the historical approach. What I did in Psalm 4, I'm trying to get the historical context, but I'm not asking where did it originate, in contrast to David? I'm asking a different question. I'm asking what is the historical situation that prompted that prayer? That is not the same thing. The form critic is asking, where does it originate and where is it disseminated? Where was the circle? Where was the tradition passed down? It's thought it was passed down, it originated more orally. Now forget about David. It originated orally in prayers and they were passed down orally. Well, that's the first box try to set the sitz im leben, this setting in life.

The second is called the gattung. This is German word for the genre or the form. This is you're notice that certain psalms have certain moods like a lament. The psalms have certain vocabulary, they have different motifs, different outlines. So this approach categorizes the psalms by the common treasure of words, moods, ideas, motifs, and other literary criteria. The approach gained support from analogies with ancient Near Eastern hymns that belong to similar categories as those with the Psalter. So at this point, scholarship is now aware, due to archeology, of the Sumerian and Acadian literature. They now have hymns from Sumer. They now have hymns from the Mesopotamian area. They now have hymns from Egypt and they also are of similar form. So this kind of analogy with the ancient Near East confirms that we have distinct kinds of forms of literature. That was at his disposal, what he didn't have at his disposal in the 1930s, he didn't have the Ugaritic texts because they had not yet been published. They're going to

be published 10 years after him. They only showed that the material was much earlier because they're dated from anywhere from 1400 to 1200 BC. So it showed the material was much earlier than anybody really dreamed.

So his conclusion then after looking at all common words, motifs, ideas, moods, and so forth on page 52, top of the page, he concluded there were five principle types of psalms. There were Hymns of Praise. Well then he has Royal Psalms, but that actually gets included under Hymns of Praise. In other words, they'll praise of him, the King. There were Individual Laments, Communal Laments and Thanksgiving Psalms. So those are his principal types, Hymns of Praise, Royal Psalms.

Now he ended up with 10 Royal Psalms because these psalms mentioned the king. These would be Psalms 2. "I've set my king on Zion, my holy hill." We looked at Psalm 20 where they pray for the king, as he goes out to battle. We'll look at Psalm 21 where the king comes back from battle. Psalm 45 is the marriage of the king and the song talks about a splendor and the beauty of this Gentile bride that's being brought to him. So it's a marriage of the king. 72 is really by Solomon and it is again about the king. And we're going to see how important that is for the editing of the Psalter, because Psalm 2 about the king is the introduction. Psalm 72 is the end of Book II, which is about the king and is talking about the king's universal rule in space over all nations and in time for all of history. That's 72. I guess it doesn't mention the king, 101 is more difficult from this viewpoint, but 101 is often thought to be a mirror for princes. It's for the leadership and what they should be like. 110, of course, it's the famous psalm, "The Lord said to my Lord, sit at my right hand. And you are a king after the order of Melchizedek." And that's Psalm 110. Psalm 132 mentions David bringing up with the ark. And 144 again, mentions the king. So these are the 10 Royal Psalms.

What I've done in the preceding lecture is I've extended with John Eaton. So it extends beyond just these 10 psalms, which are just scattered throughout the Psalter. There's no rhyme or reason to it. 2 and 20 and 21 and 45 to 72 fits where it is. But it, keeps the focus on the king and it's much more extensive than these 10 Psalms. But

Gunkel is the first one formally to identify Royal Psalms, which is a strength.

Then we have individual laments. And Gunkel included Psalms of Trust like Psalm 27 here and our favorite psalms like Psalm 91 Song of Trust, "a thousand will fall at your side, 10,000 at your right hand." These are Songs of Trust. There are Communal Laments when they go down and defeat or like a drought.

And then there are Thanksgiving Psalms. There is a difference between, and there's a work by I really like by Claus Westermann and he really distinguished between Hymns and Songs of Grateful Praise. So I would make it, so we have to distinguish hymns. There are two kinds of Songs of Praise. You have Hymns and they celebrate God generally. They talk about God as creator and they talk about God as a champion of Israel's history. So they talk mainly about creation and Israel's history. Those are the Hymns. Psalms of Grateful Praise are the opposite of Lament. That is God has answered the prayer specifically, and you're giving God thanks specifically for the answer to your prayer. So these are the five dominant types.

So I've got to do a critical appraisal of it. I'm a little bit too negative on the *sitz im leben*. I believe the Hymns and Grateful Songs were composed for the temple. That's why they were originally composed for the people of God to sing. I believe the grateful songs were sung in conjunction with offering up the sacrifice of thanksgiving that went together with it. But overall, I'm skeptical that we can decide where Davidic psalms originated other than himself. More positively even Davidic songs may have originated individually, they were given over to the director of music to be used in the temple. They didn't originate in the temple, but they came to be used in the temple. There's some distinction there, for my thinking between them.

And number four, I say it's rather speculative and there's really not a complete consensus about the original setting in life. I'm not going to get into all the different viewpoints. It's just too detailed for us. I give you a brief smattering of what Brueggemann and what Gottwald followed some of these other fellows say. What about the *gattung*? Do they really fall into these distinct types? I believe the Chronicler would

agree with Gunkel that there are these three distinct types. Here we have 1 Chronicles, 16.4. Guess I didn't translate it. Yes, I did. I give the Hebrew there for advanced students and then I translate it. "Then he appointed some of the Levites as ministers before the Ark of the Lord." And it names three types: to invoke, to give thanks and to praise. Those are three of the five types Gunkel identified. Gunkel, I think made a mistake in singling out the Royal Psalms, because I think it's more extensive than just these 10 psalms. So now I got three of the five. I remember when I first read this when I was going through, I'd just, you know, familiarizing myself with Gunkel. I said, yeah, I think that makes sense. And I read Chronicles, I fell off my chair, almost literally. Here it was. The Chronicle had already told us there were three types.

The difficult one is I don't agree with the NIV translation here. Namely, notice how the ESV, I think rightly says, "then he appointed some of the Levites as ministers before the Ark of the Lord to invoke," notice what happens in the NIV "to extol." So instead of petitioning, it's saying the same thing to extol, thank and praise. They're all three kinds of praise Psalms in the NIV. So the issue is the Hebrew at stake. Here the Hebrew word is the *lehaskir*. So, which is the right one. Originally glosses, I think, well *haskier*, which is translated here "extol" is translated by "petition" and Psalm 20 the superscript, where you have *leDavid lehaskir*, and the NIV has "of David a petition." So it's translated it by petition. So why not translated "petition" in 1 Chronicles 16.4? The other one is public praise or confessing what God did for you (*hodot*) and praise (*hallel*). And the *Hallel* deals more with who God is. And the *hodot*, thanksgiving, is more about what God did specifically. So I hope I didn't overwhelm you here, but I'm suggested according to the Chronicler, David appointed to the Levites to petition God, to give a God's specific thanks for what he's done and to praise God in general. We have three kinds of psalms, three out of, and he had distinguished, and I think basically look at Gunkel's five types, you can pretty much boil them down to those three types where you have Hymns of Praise for going back to page 52, hymns of praise, Royal Psalms is not by mood, it's by a word. You have Individual Laments versus Communal Laments. Well,

these would be individual petition versus communal petition. And there's some validity to that. But if you understand it's the King, it's hard to make the distinction between the king and the people. He doesn't extend the royal concept to these other psalms. So he has two kinds of lament or petition. Are you with me? So we ended up with basically one. The last one is a Thanksgiving, either of the individual or community and that's the *hodayot*. So basically by his own analysis of the content mood, or words, he ended up with three fundamental types of psalms, which is exactly what the Chroniclers has said David did.

Yeah. Question: I heard someone define praise as a declaration of who God is and what he is done. So that definition actually pulls up two to three. You don't like that? No, I like that definition. Yeah. I think that's adequate. I think that's good. We'll see that. I think that can't be that defined So I think it's a good definition. So there we have, this is in my critical appraisal, that the Chronicler told us there are three kinds. In essence Gunkel had given us three kinds. He's missing one category and that is Instruction Psalms and that is not mentioned in the Chronicler either. Because instruction psalms are like Psalm 1. It's neither petition, nor is it praise. It's instruction that's leading you into the Psalter and it is not said to be by David. So the three types are confirmed empirically. I think the distinction between individual and community is somewhat flawed by the failure to recognize the extensive royal interpretation that the individual is the king and the "we" is the people. I argue the royal is not a distinct type. It's not a form but a topic.

H. Minor Types of Psalms 52:33-58:59]

There are minor types that would fall within this. There would be the Songs of Zion. It's another form of praise which shows they thought that that was a distinct type. I would say that is a distinct type. When they went into captivity the Babylonians tormented them and said, "Sing to us one of the songs of Zion." Which suggests that they understood that was one of the distinct type of psalm and indeed, there are distinct Psalms of Zion and at the end of this lecture I point them out. This may have significant hermeneutic, exegetical and literary values to recognize that you have different kinds of literature. It can affect the way you interpret words and understand words. The word, for

example "ball" on the social page is totally different word from ball on the sports page. And then depends on what sport what the word "ball" means. Football, baseball, basketball, and so forth. So the same thing's true. The word *peti*, which is often translated "simple." It basically means "to be open." In the book of Proverbs, they're part of the fools because they are open never having made a commitment. So it's negative. In the book of Psalms, the *peti* is a description of the righteous because they are open to God. The same word means very different things in the book of Proverbs than in the book of Psalms. So if you want to study words, you have to be conscious of what kind of literature you're dealing with. You can't simply go through a concordance and find all these different meanings because they vary from point to point.

It's not only valuable for form. It's also valuable for the way we interpret say poetry or apocalyptic literature. You can't read all that literature as though it's prose and literal. So it's helpful to understand you have different kinds of literature. And that can be helpful, for example, it is commonly said that David rejected, well, Psalm 51 rejected the sacrificial system because he said, sacrifices. Well, let's get it. What happened to my Bible? Psalm 51 at the end of it, O, thank you. Well, don't worry, right? This is a Lament Psalm. It has all the motifs of a Lament Psalm and where he is, where we are in the Lament Psalm in Psalm 51. We're in the praise section. We'll look at Psalm 51, but this now is the praise. It begins in 14. "Save me from blood guilt. O God, the God who saves me, and my tongue will sing of your righteousness that you establish," [right Order] O Lord open my lips and my mouth will declare your praise." Here it is. "You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it. You do not take pleasure in burnt offerings. The sacrifices of God are broken spirit." He seems to be rejecting the sacrificial system, but this is a *Todah* Psalm and it has distinct motifs and we're in the praise section. What he's talking about, I'm not going to bring an animal sacrifice. We're here celebrating your forgiveness. He has murdered a man. He's got a pregnant wife. This is not the time for a big celebration. What we can feed upon is a broken spirit. It seemed inappropriate to David that God would want a big meal, everybody eating, celebrating. He said, what we

can feed upon is my broken spirit. He's not rejecting wholesale. He is saying, this is not appropriate now. I'm not going to bring that Todah. You don't want an animal, which would normally go with that the Todah of the Thanksgiving always included word and animal sacrifice. He's talked about the word. "I will declare your righteousness" and he praise God in word. But he said, I'm not going to offer up an animal.

But he hasn't rejected it totally because at the end of the Psalm, after he's forgiven and in time to come, verse 19, "there will be righteous sacrifices, whole burnt offerings to delight you. Then bowls will be offered on your altar." He's not rejecting the sacrificial system. He's just simply saying that can't be part of my testimony of praise to you. It's inappropriate. That makes sense to me. This is just normal and academic literature to take it out of context. As they say, David, this is part of the advanced theology of the Psalter, rejects the sacrificial system. It's just too simplistic. Thank you, darling.

So I'm a page 54, and I'm saying this has hermeneutical, exegetical, literary values. I said, it helps us too, in word studies, it helps us in understanding whether it's prose or poetry or symbolical or literal. And it's also helpful to interpret that there are different motifs. When we enter into these motifs, that's part one, an introduction to form criticism. But we've covered a lot of ground. I mean, we've got the whole background of the literary analytical approach. I hope you have some idea of the context out of which form criticism is emerging and why it takes the shape that it does.

I. Praise Psalms [58:59-1:04:54]

Now we come part two. We're going to limit ourselves to Praise Psalms. And basically there are two types. There's a praise of God in general for creation and salvation history and then there is Thanksgiving, Grateful Praise for specific answers to prayer. I'm suggesting here following Westermann and his praise and lament in the Psalms, I think it was a good work. He argues there is no word for thanksgiving, or basically there is no word for thanksgiving in German and in English. I remember I read a dissertation that made this case. There is no thanksgiving in the Old Testament. I thought that's wild. What he meant was that in the Old Testament, you never said to God, "thank you." You

did something different. The word "give thanks" means "to confess." It can be to confess sin, but also it is to confess God, you did this for me. So it is public praise, public confession. You're telling everybody, you're praising God for what he did for you.

When I grew up as a kid in my church, we had prayer and testimony on Wednesday night and we'd begin the hour in prayer and we end the hour in praise and we would tell each other what God is doing in our lives. We were singing to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs. I think that's what it's all about. So you have, we don't say to God, "thank you." We tell everybody else what God is doing in my life. Nowadays we have that. What's God doing in your life? And we share with one another what God is doing in our lives, at the present moment. We're all in a growth process with one another.

The hymns, now the next part of this, after the two types, I talk about the hymns and then on page 72, it won't get the Songs of Grateful Praise until page 72 and Roman numeral three Songs of Grateful Praise. There are 15 of them about. Let's begin then going back. These are the three parts of this lecture. There are two types. And therefore I talk about the, Hymn and I talk about Songs of Grateful Praise. The great bulk of this material is on the Hymn and analyzing the Hymn.

First of all, I talk about the motifs of the Hymn What are the elements of it? How was it structured? I'm a little uneasy with this because I feel a little bit like a botanist that I'm tearing a flower all apart. When you've all finished, you don't have a flower anymore. What I'm doing is I'm tearing the psalms all apart. When I'm done, we may end up without the beauty and the fragrance of the Psalm itself. But I'm also saying there is a value to the botanist who analyzes the stem and the leaves, and the roots and what it all is. That's what we're doing here. We're really tearing the flower apart to see how it's composed. But then at the end, we've got to put it together again so we can smell it and enjoy it. So right now I'm in the analysis stage of a botanist. I always do better scientifically. I do better analyzing music than listening to music, but I do enjoy music. I'm typically too Teutonic.

So I'm talking about the motifs, then the next thing I'll be talking about is the performance. This will be on, where is that? No. What happened to page 64 and on performance? I see liturgical approaches, but I couldn't remember it. So I'm going to talk, going back to page 55 so we can see where we're going. Don't get lost. I'm talking first of all, about the motifs. Then I'm talking about performance, and then I'm going to be talking about theology. What exactly are they celebrating? And that's really the heart of the matter. So we want to talk about theology. That's on page 64 and then my outlining got it wrong. I realized at this point, and that's not too unusual for me. Instead of having E it should be D on page 71. I'm going to just simply mentioned Songs of Zion and there you get all the songs of Zion and that should be D. So A. is motifs, B. as performance, C. is theology. and D. is Songs of Zion. And then finally the last one, which should be E., but F. is here on page 72 Enthronement Psalms. So that's the outline of what we're doing with the Hymns. We're going to talk about their motifs. We're going to talk about who performed them. We're going to talk about what they celebrate, What's the theology? And then we'll just briefly mention two minor types of praise, Songs of Zion and Enthronement Psalms, where they celebrate God as king. We're together with me where we're going? Are we still lost?

J. Hymn Motifs [1:04:54-1:06:19]

Let's start with motifs, the elements. It's very simple. There are three parts. The main body is the cause for praise that's where we get the theology. And then we have a conclusion a renewed call to praise. So you can see, we have it on top of page 56. We have the conclusion often with its renewed call to praise. Take the shortest Psalm 117. It's only two verses, but there you have all three elements. "Praise the Lord," the call to praise. The performance "All you nations, extol him, all you peoples." Why? Here's the cause, the body: "for great is his love toward us and the faithfulness of the Lord endures forever." That's the quintessence of it. Then comes to renewed call to praise. "Praise the Lord." Very simple. That's the complete psalm that has all three motifs. I couldn't get a

shorter one where you could see it. Now that may seem simplistic. It certainly is, but it's worth reflecting on it and we will reflect on it.

K. Psalm 33 [1:06:19-1:11:56]

Now, Psalm 33 I thought that was too short. So I gave all of Psalm 33 and here you get the full orb'd reason and our time is short. I put this in here because the danger in this course is you don't get into the psalm itself. You just get all of this analysis. I like to hear the psalms. So let's read it, "Sing joyfully to the Lord you righteous. It is fitting for the upright to praise him. Praise the Lord with the harp. Make music to him on the 10 string lyre. Sing to him a new song." What do they mean by that? The "old song" is the Song of the Sea of Exodus 15 of the Exodus. So they are saying, sing a new song. He's done more than the Exodus. He's a constantly at work in our lives. So they're saying, sing a new song, beside the Exodus songs, is the way I understand it. "Play skillfully and shout for joy." Now, the reason, "for the word of the Lord is right and it's true. He is faithful in all He does. The Lord loves righteousness and justice. The earth is full of his unfailing love." Now he goes back to the word that you could depend upon it. "By the word of the Lord, the heavens were made, their starry hosts by the breath of his mouth. He gathers the waters of the sea into jars. He puts the deep into store houses." Notice the poetry, the imagery, the figurative language is part of poetry. "Let all the earth fear the Lord, let all the peoples of the world revere him. Where he spoke and it came to pass. He commanded and it stood firm." Then he talks about God's justice in history. "The Lord foils the plans of the nations, he thwarts the purposes of the people, but the plans of the Lord stand firm forever. The purposes of his heart through all generations. Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord. The people he chose for his inheritance. From heaven the Lord looks down and sees all mankind, from his dwelling place He watches over all who live on earth. He who forms the hearts of all, who considers everything they do. No king can be saved by the size of his army, no warrior escapes by his great strength. A horse is a vain hope for deliverance, despite all its great strength it cannot save. But the eyes of the Lord are on those who fear him, on those who hope in his unfailing love, to deliver

them from death and keep them alive in famine. We wait in hope for the Lord. He is our help and our shield. In him our hearts rejoice, for we trust in his Holy name. May your unfailing love be with us. O Lord, even as we put our hope in you."

Well, that's a typical praise psalm. It's wonderful, much better than our feeble analysis of it and tearing it apart. But let's go back. Let's talk, we're now going to the first part, which is the call to praise. And this is number one. We're going to now deal that with it more fully. This is on page 57. The introduction is: the call to praise. Here I'm going to make with Gunkel several comments. First of all, we should notice it's an imperative mood. It's a command to praise the Lord. We'll talk about that. On page 59, we noticed the mood is one of enthusiasm. It's not tepid. God does not guide lukewarmness. It's like lukewarm coffee to him and he spits it out of his mouth. He wants fervor. He wants enthusiasm, not formality, is what I get there. Under C I discuss who performs it, who does the singing of the Psalms? And I analyze that. And I think that takes us through, those are the three things I'm going to discuss by way of the introduction: the imperative mood, the mood of enthusiasm and who sings it, who performs it. First of all, then the imperative mood is typical German. Everything gets analyzed. He gets it. It's in the second person "you." What's known as a jussive, "made people." And then what's known as a cohortative "Let us." So he looks at you to do this. May others do this and I'm going to do it. He analyzes everything. And all of this is documented in his [Gunkel's] introduction. It's an amazing piece of work. He doesn't have a computer. Now, could you do this with a computer? I don't know that you could. But anyway, when you read the introduction, you really understand what's in the Psalms, but you miss the spirit. He analyzes it, but he himself I don't sense any enthusiasm or faith. It's amazing.

L. Lewis' reflection on Praise [1:11:56-1:15:58]

But looking at that introduction where we're called to praise God, that's troubling. At least it was for C. S. Lewis. If you think about it, is God narcissistic, is he insecure? Does he have to have us tell them how great you are. I would never ask you to praise me.

There would be something wrong with me. You looked out there and rightly so. What do you make of this? This is an honest question. God's telling you, praise me. And that offended Lewis and I couldn't understand it. So that's what he's grappling with. It takes an honest question. How could God tell me to praise him? Is that not narcissistic self-centered self-absorbed? So he just typical C. S. Lewis, he's going to reflect upon it. And he's going to think about, well now why do we praise? He's going to take a piece of art. And we praise a piece of art. He shows why it's totally appropriate to praise the piece of art and it would be totally wrong not to praise it. If he can praise a piece of art and that's the right thing to do, then isn't it the right thing to do for someone so much greater than a piece of art. That is the right thing to do, as the Psalmist says, "it is right and fitting." In our liturgy in our little Anglican church every Sunday, we say, "it is right and fitting to praise the Lord." And it is right and fitting. That's what Lewis is grappling with it. By the way, he was made a canon in the Anglican church. There's a whole Sunday now devoted to C. S. Lewis in the Anglican church.

Well, let me read from Lewis in his own words. "What do we mean when we say that a picture is admirable? The sense in which the picture does, we mean, the sense in which the picture deserves or demands admiration is this, that admiration is the correct, adequate or appropriate response to it that if paid, admiration will not be thrown away. And if we do not admire, we shall be stupid and insensible and great losers." That. If you don't admire something that is truly admirable, you are the loser and you're not really participating fully in all the beauty and that could be yours. So he now appropriates that to God, page 58.

Lewis then moves from that demand to admire objects in art and nature to the man to praise God. "He is the object to admire, which, if you like, to appreciate, which is simply to be awake, to have entered the real world. Not to appreciate which is to have lost the greatest experience and in the end, we have lost all. You haven't really lived. The incomplete and crippled lives of those who are tone deaf, who had never been in love, never known true friendship, never cared for a good book, never enjoyed the feeling of

the morning air on the cheeks are a faint image of someone who has never experienced the wonder of God and could praise him and admire him." I think that's beautiful on Lewis' part and why it's for our good, he calls on us. It's right. It's fitting. This is admirable. I don't even know the Hollywood stars. The adulterers, the fornicators, they're not the people I talk about. They're not the people I admire. They're the ones that I really don't identify with. I admire God. I talk about him to the world. It's boring, but to the saint it's the joy of our lives. So it's worthwhile reflecting on these details of the imperative.

M. Psalm 95 [1:15:58-1:18:32]

And I add here from Psalm 95, we're to praise him in all circumstances, you could see that. "Come let us sing for joy to the Lord. Let us shout aloud to the rock of our salvation. Let us come before him with thanksgiving and extol him with music and song, for the Lord is a great God, the great King above all gods. In his hands are the depths of the earth, and the mountain peaks belong to him. The sea is his for he has made it and his hands formed the dry land. Come let us bow down in worship. Let us kneel before the Lord, our maker, for he is our God. And we are the people of his pasture, the flock under his care. But today, if you would only hear his voice" and the danger is they're in conflict, they're in danger. It's like they're at Meribah or Massah and they're in danger of doubting God. "Do not harden your hearts, as you did at Meribah, as you did in the days of Massah in the wilderness, where you ancestors tested me. They tried me though they had seen what I did. For 40 years I was angry with that generation. I said, they are a people whose hearts go astray. They have not known my ways. So I declared on oath in my anger, they shall never enter my rest. In other words, it seems to me, they're at a place of Meribah or Massah or difficulty. And they're in danger of complaining and bitterness and not praising the Lord and don't harden your hearts.

So now the call to praise takes on new meaning and that's how I understand Psalm 95. We praise him at all times in all circumstances, that's instructive. So in Psalm 22, when he says, "My God, why have you forsaken me?" That's in the context of Psalm 22

"in the assembly I will praise you" and so forth. As I said, you never get lament without praise. And we're commanded to praise. It's not optional, we're dead if we don't. And I think this is a good place to end is the introduction to these hymns of praise.

This is Dr. Bruce Waltke in his teaching on the book of Psalms. This is session number six: Form Critical Approach and Hymn Motifs. [1:18:32]

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Psalms
Session 7: Hymns, Cause for Praise, Hymn Theology
By Dr. Bruce Waltke

This is Dr. Bruce Waltke in his teaching on the book of Psalms. This is session number seven, Hymns, Cause for Praise, Hymn Theology.

A. Opening Prayer [00:24-2:07]

We thank you for all the means of grace, the blood of Christ that died for our sins and cleanses us from all sin, cleanses our hands from our misdeeds, cleanses a lips from our poor speech, and wrong speech. Thank you that you forgave us in Christ. So our sufficiency in our ministry today is not of ourselves, but it's all of your grace. Thank you for your Spirit that inspired your word. And now we pray that your Spirit will illuminate your word. I pray that you'll give me the grace to handle it with integrity and grace and intelligence. That is not of myself, for I know how sinful I am, but of you. I pray for every student that listens to this course. Some are lowly and discouraged, may they be encouraged. Some are proud and feel self-assured. May they be humbled under your word. It's the same word, but will minister to each student differently. May your Spirit apply it appropriately in Christ's name. Amen.

B. Review of Our Approach to the Psalms [2:07-5:39]

All right. We're considering different approaches to the book of Psalms. Our intention is not to develop the theology of the Psalms per se or the spiritual life that we may gather from the Psalms. But rather to give us all as students, tools for a lifetime of study in the Psalms. It could be helpful, I think in this course and considering different approaches by which we can mine the Psalms for is theological and spiritual truths for our edification.

So one approach was a historical approach in which we except the superscripts that give us the authorship of the Psalm. In many cases, 73 of them, are by David. I made the case that against most academia that indeed those superscripts are trustworthy. Indeed, as the New Testament recognizes as well, David indeed authored these psalms. We made that case as best we could. That had profound implications for the way we understand the Psalms because we now understand that the "I" who speaks in the Psalms is the king. That enabled us to explore more broadly that the king is a very dominant person in the Psalms and the Psalms often speak of the king, even of those that are not by David. So Psalm 84, which is a Pilgrimage Psalm, when they arrive in Jerusalem, they pray for the king because he's the one that represents the kingdom. With that Royal interpretation, and we understand ourselves in the king and the son of David quintessentially is more than the son of David. He's the son of God. And so the Psalms speak of him either directly or indirectly but they're about the king and therefore, and the Davidic house and Jesus is the son of David. So therefore they speak of him. The New Testament interpretation is not something imposed on the Old Testament. It grows naturally out of the trajectory of the development of God's revelation of himself. We also know that the church today, you and I, we are in the church that we are in Christ and that we are the seed of Abraham. Therefore, we are in Christ and he prays for us and we are praying in Christ. So that when we pray, we are praying in conjunction with Christ. We pray in the name of Christ in unity with the son of God and the son David. So that I think it has profound implications.

D. Form Critical Approach [5:39-7:59]

Another approach is the Form approach, understanding the kind of literature with which you are dealing. We began that on the broad concept of poetry. So we went into: how do you read poetry? And we saw poetry has three aspects to it. In Hebrew poetry, at any rate, as all poetry is terse. It's like a slide show. Prose is more like a motion picture. So you get a very defined picture with each verse. And you have to put together how the verses go together as they develop. So it's terse. It's a very heightened style. It's full of

figures of speech. It shows us that God himself is very aesthetic.

But the fundamental idea of poetry is parallelism. You say a line and then you say not a restatement, but a related statement that gives you another angle on it. So we said, for example, Psalm 2, "he will rebuke them in his wrath and he will terrify them... He will rebuke them in his anger. He will terrify them in his wrath." So obviously you have the parallelism between anger and wrath and rebuke and terrorized. But then the rebuke and terrorized they're parallel, but they're not the same thing. Rebuke is what God does and terrorize is the result of the rebuke. So as you read Hebrew poetry, what you do is you look at the stereophonic way, you are hearing truth, you get two aspects to it. And you think about how these two lines related--and that's profitable. And at the same time, how do they differ? That enters into all sorts of rich insights into the word.

E. Psalm 23 [7:59-11:32]

So we did that at the end of the last hour on form. And we looked at a given poem and tried to, we did Psalm 23. One of the aspects of the poetry is, of course, figures of speech. The whole Psalm is a figure of speech of a sheep and pasture land. It's showing us in the Psalm 23 that the Lord provides for his flock. The Lord restores his flock. The Lord protects his flock, and it's all done through this imaginary language. So the flock the provision is feeding on the, well in the Greek and Hebrew there are different words for grass. The deshah is the very finest grass, not St. Augustine grass, a golf course grass the very tender grass. And restoration he is by the quiet waters and he restores this sheep because the sheep cannot take too much. Then the sheep comes back and even though it was through the darkest of ravines, the sheep doesn't fear for God is with him.

He has the weapons to destroy the enemy and then it changes the image. Now we're in a sheik's tent. So when he gets back, it wasn't so good an idea to end up in a sheep fold. So instead of being a sheep fold, we're in this tent and the same truths of being presented because now in place of grass, you have a table and a cup running over abundant. And in place of the watering hole, we now have oil anointing the head to refresh. And the protection is all of this is in the presence of my enemies. So he's saying

the same thing again, but with another image from the sheep, which is wonderful, better the sheik's tent and our host.

But then he adds climatically with the last scene, which is the truth of the psalm, is the temple. "I will return to the house of the Lord," which is the temple. There, he tells us what this provision / protection, if you want to put it in prose and abstract it, what I'm talking about is God's goodness and his faithfulness to us. And so you get the literal interpretation of what it's all about at the end of the Psalm.

But the point there is, I've tried to use the psalm to illustrate, this is figurative language. The truth is whenever we talk about God, where God is spirit, anything we say about God is figurative, it's metaphorical. We can only describe God in these metaphors. I refuse to change metaphors about God. So if God presents himself as father, and that's a metaphor for representing his relationship to us, I cannot change that image to mother. When I did that, I fundamentally changed the way God is understood. So I have to stay with its own metaphors. We moved beyond poetry into more finesse with the Psalms.

F. Psalm Forms [11:32-20:15]

And now we would talk about different forms of the Psalms. This is when I gave a whole background yesterday to form criticism it's strengths and its weaknesses, and how it came about as a result of higher criticism. But, in any case, we saw that the concern of form criticism, which came out of Germanic scholarship. So they talk about, and I'll use the German words because this is what's used in the literature, so, as you're reading, you're going to see these terms. You're going to see, *sitz im leben* which means "setting in life," where did the psalm originate? Now, those originally who engaged in form criticism, they had dismissed the Davidic authorship. They needed a historical context and so they asked what was the setting in life, where this was circulated where this psalm originated.

I think some psalms such as the psalms of Hymn that we'll look at going to be looking at, and the Songs of Grateful Praise, they did originate in the temple, probably with guilds of singers. I think they originated also with David who designed the temple,

looked forward to the temple. I suspect he composed hymns in anticipation that there would be a temple. He had laid aside all the money for the temple, all the reserves for the temple. He had given the design for the temple. He was the poet Laureate who wrote the dedicatory song, Psalm 30 for the temple. So I would imagine he also prepared hymns for the temple. So he could well be the author of hymns that were intended for the temple. I'm really not sure whether his Petition Psalms were in his mind, originally intended for the temple. I don't know, that it is not clear to me, but what I do know is that eventually his poems of great anguish and pain and protest and struggling with God's justice, they eventually ended up in the temple worship because they were handed over "for the director of music," which meant now what was personal to David is now applicable to all of us. That gives us the license to use these psalms for ourselves because they were handed over to the director of music. So his petitions and his praises were intended for our use, our petitions and our praises for the whole community, in connection with their king. So that begins to give you a different way of looking at the Psalms.

Now I'm looking at, and then I said, they are grouped, Gunkel grouped them, by common words, common moods, common motifs, and so forth. He ended up with five basic types of Psalms. These were the Hymns, which was songs of praise and I think, wrongly, not unfortunate, that is too strong, a word. He limited the Royal Psalms to 10 psalms that mentioned the king. So Psalm 2, for example, "I've set my king upon Zion, my holy hill," he called that a Royal Psalm. Psalm 18 of the king's victories. Psalm 20, where the king goes out to battle and the priest and the people pray for the king as he goes out to battle. Psalm 21 the king returns victorious from battle. Psalm 45 is the wedding song for the king. And Psalm 110 is a coronation of liturgy. I have set, he's a king like Melchizedek and that's about the king. So you have 10 Psalms that explicitly mentioned the king, but they're not all grouped together. They are just kind of sprinkled through the Psalter because the whole, the "I" is basically the king and these happen to mention the king on specific circumstances. So that's the second category and a category that is too restricted for me.

The third group is after Hymns has third group, which he called them Complaint, Psalms. They go by different names. They can be called a Complaint. They can be called Lament. They can be called Petition. As we'll see these psalms have distinct motifs. The psalms that we may call Petition, they have within them as one of the motifs, they have lament or they have complaint. Therefore, you can either call them by the one motif, which is petition. They almost all except Psalm 63, to my knowledge have a petition, or they have lament and you can say lament or complaint because sometimes they're lamenting their situation in which they find themselves, or they're protesting that it's unjust that we're in this situation. You could call that a complaint. That distinction is not normally made in the literature, but it's a worthwhile distinction. So therefore, he grouped them all together and he called it a complaint. I say complaint, lament, petition different names are used in the literature and I'm partly for students doing this so that when you read commentaries and you read this kind of language, you know what the words mean and where the writer is coming from.

So far we've talked about there's a praise psalm and a Hymn and there's a Petition Psalm. And then there's a third one, and that is Grateful Praise, a todah. And a Grateful Praise differs from praise in general. In that praise in general, you're talking about God's attributes as being his essence, his communicable attributes, his eternality, his omnipotence. And you're talking about his work in Israel's history broadly. It is not specific. So you trace through the history of Israel and what God did for his people broadly throughout history. That's the praise. The Grateful Song is a specific answer to prayer and it's not broadly. It's God, I asked you for deliverance and you delivered me. That's a Song of Grateful Praise. So it's legitimately a distinct type. There are 15 Songs of Grateful Praise. There are 50 songs of petition. In your notes, I give you all the psalms, whether they're Hymns of praise or not. I didn't do that. Gunkel did that. I talked about that yesterday. It's a massive piece of work and a typical Teutonic German way, every detail. It's an amazing piece of work. I don't know that he ever really himself praised God, maybe he did, but I don't sense it. He didn't though he died. It killed him. Well. In

any case. So, he divided it between Community Lament and Individual Lament where the whole nation, whether the whole nation was lamenting as in a drought or in defeat or an Individual Lament like David's lamenting and against the enemies of either the Saulide period or the Absalom revolt period and so forth.

G. 1 Chronicles 16 [20:15-22:17]

So those are the broad categories. I was saying that it happened at the time I was reading Gunkel that I was reading the Chronicler and I was bowled over really by 1 Chronicles 16.4 where David appointed the Levites to petition, the lehaskir, lehadot, to give thanks, lehallel, to praise. Right there, the Chronicler told me there were three kinds of psalms. There as to petition, there was to praise and there was to give thanks. It didn't distinguish between the individual and the community. Part of it is because it's a very difficult distinction because the "I" is the King who represents the people and who's concerned for the people. That's why when we looked at Psalm 4, he says, "Many are saying, 'O that one would show us good,'" which we said was rain. And then he says, "Fill my heart with great joy when their grain and new wine abound." So he identifies with the community and this constant back and forth. So it is Christ praying for us, for our good, and he rejoices when our needs are met by his grace. Then we got into, we're in the midst of Hymns or Psalms of Praise. So we are looking at that one particular form. And our method is to look at the Psalter broadly so we have a feeling for the Psalter. Then I will pick out one or two isolated psalms and deal with them in some depth. So we can savor what we've learned, broadly and the whole mass of psalms.

H. Thanksgiving, Songs of Grateful Praise [22:17-24:34]

So that's where we are, we're on page 55 of our notes and the middle of it. We have the Hymn. In this lecture six and seven, we divided it to three parts. And the first part was to distinguish between these two types of Praise Psalms, the Hymns and the Thanksgiving, the Songs of Grateful Praise, specific answer to prayer. And I also commented that there is no word for thanksgiving in Hebrew. We don't have a better

translation. And I tried to explain that because in thanksgiving and Thanksgiving day, we say, "thank you." That's not Hebrew. Hebrew is on Thanksgiving day, you would stand up and say, "Let me tell you what the Lord has done for us." And you'd be very specific. You don't say, "thank you, God." You tell, it's public, let me tell everybody what God had done for me. It's public praise. It's grateful praise. So it's not some private exchange between you and God. It's a praise because it's the word thanksgiving which is todah which means "to confess." It can be used for confessing sin. But it's also a statement of praise that I confess "God did this for me," and it's not an accident. So you'll publicly confess what he has done for you. That's what we mean by grateful praise. And that's the distinction I'm making on the two types of psalms at the top of the page. Then we have the general praise. We deal with the Hymns as we've discussed it. And then at the end on page 72, I have there a little section on Songs of Grateful Praise. So I start with noting that there are two types. Then I developed but one type and then it developed the minor type. So that's how the lecture is laid out.

I. Hymns [24:34-27:22]

Now let's look at the Hymns. My outline got a little bit mixed up here, but there are five points I want to make about hymns. The first one is the motifs of the hymn. The second one is the performance, who actually performs and sings the Hymns. And that's a bit down here I should have put down the page where that's from. Yeah, we're on page 55 and I'm trying to find the next one. By performance page 64. Yeah. That's performance 64 is that's the performance. Then the C. Is the theology of what do they praise about God? What's the content of praise, the theology of praise. Then I talk about a subtype of praise psalm, and that is the Songs of Zion, which is on page 71, where you celebrate where God lives, Songs of Zion. Then, finally, I mentioned briefly, but didn't develop it. And I just call attention to there are so called Enthronement Psalms. I think it's a misnomer. It's somewhat of a misnomer, but it's in the literature and everybody will talk about an Enthronement Psalm. And anyone dealing with integrity and scholarship and reading is going to read about Enthronement Psalms, Songs of Zion and so it's

appropriate that in a seminary level that it's my responsibility to orient the student to the literature, to introduce the student to the literature, to introduce concepts. Since so much is academic literature is written from presuppositions that are not Evangelical, that as an Evangelical professor I'm interacting and appraising all the time, sifting what is good and what I think is bad and evaluating it so as to guide the student through it. So that's what we're up to.

J. Hymn Motifs [27:22-29:24]

All right, going back then to page 55 under the hymns, I begin by discussing what are the motifs of the hymns. There are three. There is the call to praise, the introduction. And then there's the cause for praise, interestingly enough. I like to think of it as the call to praise is the match that ignites the fire. The cause for praise is the fuel that is lit up, and what are you praising? Its one is the match, the call is the match that ignites the fire. And then you have the fuel that is the fire itself that's the cause. Then it ends often with a hallelujah, praise the Lord, and you go back to a renewed the call to praise. So those are the three types that we get. The conclusion, as I illustrated it on page 56, by the shortest psalm. They have the call, "Praise the Lord, all you nations, extol him, all your peoples." And now you have the cause "Great is his love toward us and the faithfulness of the Lord endures forever." And then you have "hallelujah, praise the Lord." And that's as short as you can get. Profound, absolutely profound. You're asking the pagan nations to praise the Lord because of what he did for us. Think about that. Isn't that incredible. You want the world, the nations, to praise Israel's God for what he did for them and what it means to them. That demands a little bit of an explanation I think. And that's what we will be looking at and what we are talking about here.

K. Psalm 33 [29:24-34:14]

Well, yesterday we looked at the whole Psalm 33, which is a much more normal and extensive hymn of praise. Then we got back we're on page 57. Now I begin to develop those motifs. So I began by discussing the motif, the introduction of the call to

praise. Then I'm going to develop on page 62, the cause for praise, and then the conclusion on page 64. So you can see we have quite a few pages here, almost five pages where we are reflecting on the introduction and the call to praise. So there are several points I'm making about the call to praise that, I find worthy of reflection. I'm really taking this out of Gunkel. But there are three. First of all, the fact that it is an imperative mood. You're being called upon, and in an imperative mood, told to praise the Lord. That's worth thinking about. Gunkel in his finesse Germanic way, he divides it up into second person, third person, first person. And so you have "you" praise the Lord or "let people" praise the Lord, or "I" will praise the Lord, "Let me" praise the Lord and he's very finessed. But the point is it's in the imperative mood.

I raised the question yesterday with C. S. Lewis is God narcissistic? Does God need to be praised? Is he insecure? Why is God telling us to "praise me"? We'd be offended that if anyone ever said, "praise me, look how great I am." I mean, we don't like these sports athletes who go dancing around and praise me, or look at me. There is something psychologically wrong here. So why is God saying "praise me, praise me"? That's the question C. S. Lewis is raising. And C. S. Lewis addresses it by saying, there are some things that are admirable and it's wrong not to praise. So he likens it to a painting, a great painting. He says, what do we mean when a painting is admirable? We mean by that, it is so great. It's worthy of praise. If you don't praise it, there's something wrong with you. You're dead if you don't see it.

And so therefore you know, it depends. If you're talking to somebody who is rebellious and you say, "praise the Lord," that's one thing that's admonitory, admonishment and correction. Praise the Lord because you're not praising the Lord. Well, I think more often it's more like a cheerleader who is igniting the fire and helping the whole congregation to get involved. The expression. I hate, "to sing like you mean it"? Well, I hate that expression, rather sing because you mean it" and so forth, but we all understand the good intention of that. So in other words, that's where we ended up. We had that on page 58. And so he said about God, He's the object to be admired. And he

likened it to a person who doesn't see it at the end of that sentence, "The incomplete and crippled lives of those who are tone deaf, never heard a sound, have never been in love, never known true friendship, never cared for a good book, never enjoyed the feel of the morning air on the cheeks. They're faint images of people who have never seen God in all of his splendor and could praise him and admire him." They're tone deaf, blind to great art. So I find that I used to be as a bit bored by theology, but in this secular age where there's a defamation of God and neglect of God. I find thinking of God's attributes, totally refreshing and healthy and it's missing, just missing. So thank God for that we can come to church and praise him. And in our daily lives, we can praise him.

L. Psalm 95 [34:14-35:01]

And we've read in the Psalm 95 that we are to praise him in all circumstances. And he says, "Come and praise the Lord." This is on page 58, "Come and praise the Lord." And then verse six, he said, "do not harden your hearts as you did at Meribah, as you did that day at Massah in the wilderness" when they were lacking water and they complained instead of praising God. So instead of complaining, and there's a place for that, but let's make sure we move on beyond the complaint. We should give honest expression to our feelings, but let's move on beyond that and praise the Lord. Okay.

M. Mood of Enthusiasm in Praise [35:01-38:30]

Page 59, another consideration is the mood of enthusiasm. It's not tepid. God likes us hot. You've got to be either hot or cold. And he wants us to be like, Melanie. I think that Melanie she's all there. So there's neither hot nor, she's not lukewarm for this she's all there. That's what God wants. He wants a fervent spirit. Somebody who's all there.

So this is typically Gunkel analyzing everything. The form of the performance illustrates it. It's done with music, singing, song, musical instruments and music accompanies it. And it expresses our enthusiasm. It's performed with movement. They enter before him and his gates. There are actually processions. They clap their hands. They praise the Lord. They lift up your hands. Well, this is a quote, "Praise the Lord, all

you servants of the Lord, who ministered by night in the house of the Lord," that would be the service of the Lord of the Levites, the priests. So that they stand all night and all day and night, they're praising the Lord lifting up their hands in the sanctuary and praising the Lord. He's exhorting them against formalism. It has to be with enthusiasm to please God.

The main words, which are C. 3. the main words, which are accented through their position in the hymns, designate the mood. It's rejoice, exalt, be happy. That is really often the point of the psalm itself is to rejoice and celebrate God. Now it used to be offered up with the sacrifice. The praise went up with a sacrifice, an animal sacrifice, but with the coming of the New Testament, which was before the destruction of the temple and the sacrifice of Christ. Now, and they offer up the sacrifice of praise. So as we offer up our praise, it is like a sacrifice being offered up to God. It's a sweet savor to God, but without the animal. So without the animal we're still carrying on the praise of God today, when we offer up praise to God in prayer. That's a sweet, savor to God. And it's to our good we're expressing it, that we are alive to reality. We're not serving a dead God. Therefore, we're not dead. If God is a living and we praise him, we're going to be fully alive to the reality. We'll be whole people in the midst of it. And hallelujah, that begins and ends the Psalm that gives some expression to enthusiasm. So we are reflecting on this call to praise, the first thing is to note it's an imperative, to do it and to do it with enthusiasm.

N. Who performs it? [38:30-45:40]

The third question is who does this? Who performs it? And it's done by choirs and or the congregation, so that in ancient Israel, they had choirs. They were the Levitical guilds. So you have psalms by the sons of Korah, the Korahite Psalms, the Asaphite psalms. These were different guilds in Israel, Levitical guilds. Some were singers, some were gatekeepers in the temple. They had different functions in the temple so that they, Korahites, were also gatekeepers, I think. They were also temple singers, which was a high honor to be that. And it was the whole congregation. And seemingly when it says,

"give thanks to the Lord" who is saying that? We may assume there was a choir director of some sort. So Gunkel calls attention to Miriam, "Miriam, the prophet, Aaron, his sister took a timbrel in her hand and all the woman followed her with timbrel and dancing and then Miriam sang to them." And they're all singing after the leadership of Miriam who's leading them in this dance of praise. These choirs and congregations are mentioned frequently, and you can seek Gunkel analyzes you have all the verses. He didn't have a computer, yet he just analyzed everything. So I just scanned his book and that's what you have here modified a little bit.

Those who praise him receive all kinds of names of moral honor. He does not want praise, He doesn't want people who live adulterous lives to be singing Amazing Grace. That doesn't please God, he hates it. You have people who are not living right and they could sing gospel songs, and they praise Jesus as a literary genre. These people are on drugs and they're leading young people astray, morally, and they're singing songs of praise and quartets of singing, songs of praise. God doesn't want that. He hates it. It's an abomination to him. That's what the point of this is. So you read, "I am pious one, they should praise the righteous, the upright, the upright in heart, those who fear God, those who love his name, those who love his salvation, those who seek him, those who hide themselves in him." Those are all adjectival expressions, modifiers of those who praise the Lord. So that gives you some insight of how to evaluate what we're hearing in gospel music. I'm sure there's very wonderful people, but they're not all. We should have evaluated it.

I'm troubled when we make praise entertainment and it's theatrical, Psalm 115.1, "Not to us. O Lord, not to us, but to your name be the glory." Yet we celebrate these different singers. We praise these different singers and I have problems with that. "Not to us, not to us, but to your name." You never give praise to the Psalmist. He never calls for praise. He wants God to get all the praise. So I think some of these reflections are well worthwhile that Gunkel is giving to us.

I gave you there Psalm 50, which is a Psalm of Asaph, and it's a prophetic word.

It's calling for praise and sacrifices of praise. God wants it. Not that he needs it, but it's appropriate, it's fitting, it's right. But then after saying, for example, on 14, yes, sacrifice, thank offerings to God, that is, he's answered your prayer. You can see a specific fulfill your vows to the most high that when you were in distress, you knew the appropriate response would be that you would go to the temple and you would tell everybody what God had done for you. You would have a todah sacrifice in which everybody, all your friends and community would eat with you as you gave your thanks to God. "They call on me in the day of trouble. I will deliver you and you will honor me. But to the wicked person, God says, what right have you to recite my laws or take my covenant on your lips? You hate instruction, cast my words behind you. When you see a thief, you join with them. You throw in your lot with adulterers. You use your mouth for evil, you harness your tongue to deceit, and you sit and testify against your brother and slander your own mother's son. When you did these things and I kept silent you thought I was exactly like you, but I now arraign you and set my accusations before you. Considered this, you who forget God, or I will tear you to pieces with no one to rescue. Those who sacrifice thank offerings honor me, and to the blameless I will show my salvation."

And so he doesn't want, the wicked have no right to recite his word. It's hypocritical. Thank God for my salvation in Christ. Who could stand apart from God's grace. How often I've sinned with my mouth and said wrong things. We all have. And yet God's grace is greater than our sins. Let us take heart and be encouraged. He wants all the world to sing. This is what's interesting you see, he wants everyone to praise him -- all the world. Here's his, Gunkel's all the data, all the world. This is on page 61. You got all the world. He gives you all the verses there: the earth, the many islands, the ends of the earth, all the inhabitants of the world, all flesh, all that breaths, the families of nations, all peoples and nations, the kingdoms of the earth, all kings and princes, even the enemies of I am. He wants everyone. So in other words, this motif that the Gentiles should praise him is not a minor motif. You could see all these verses that are calling upon it.

N. Abraham's blessing and ours [45:40-59:04]

So what's going on here? Well, I think what's going on is going back to Genesis 12.1-3 God said to Abraham, separate yourself from your land and from your country and from your people, which Abraham found very hard to do to cut ties with his pagan family and to step out by faith with God alone. He was very slow to do it. As many people are in many cultures, they are slow to step out and separate themselves from their culture, their traditions, their history.

But to become a Christian, you have to step out. Furthermore, for the Christian, there is baptism that separates you when you're baptized and the whole world knows I've identified with the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We're not saved by baptism, but it's a very necessary public proclamation that I belong to the one who died for me and rose again from the dead. I've died to my old life and I'm raised to my new way of life. So that's a very important step in our identification as Christians, where we separate ourselves and we join a new community. That's a decisive moment. In Judaism you're not a Christian unless you're baptized. In Chinese cultures and in Japanese, you're not a Christian, unless you are baptized. It's when you're baptized that's when they will disown you. That's the distinctive mark. I'm just saying that's how it would be. Leave your family a community. Did I really leave my family? Well, I'll tell you, we publicly baptized. I'll tell you whether or not you've left your family you've made your new identification with Christ.

Then he says after separating. Then he says, "I will bless you." Remember what I said about blessing. I'll fill you with the potency for life to reproduce. And as a result, you will be victorious. The two ideas to bless, I will make you fruitful and multiply and you will subdue the earth. So the two ideas are to multiply and be victorious. As I said, when you get to the New Testament and Jesus blesses and breathes on this disciples, he blesses them. He's not blessing them to reproduce physically. He never had children. He never married. He's blessing them to reproduce spiritually. So the church will grow and be victorious. So we need to pray for his blessing on us, that we may reproduce

spiritually as fruit and we may be victorious to establish the kingdom of God, which is a kingdom of love and grace and truth and all that's beautiful and wonderful. Well, that's what he set apart. God's going to bless them.

And then he says to Abraham, "and you will be a blessing." In other words, you're going to make other people fruitful and victorious. "You will be a blessing." How does that come about? What's going to come about. God says, "if they curse you, then I will curse them." There are two different words for curse in the Hebrew here. The one is, if they curse you, the Hebrew word is *qalal*. *Qalal* means "to be light." If they treat you as insignificant as just another human being, just another man, that's what the word "curse" means. They denigrate you and you're no different from anybody else. And that's exactly what they wanted to do with Jesus. They want to get the historical Jesus. They wanted to get away that he's just another human being. Yes. You're a fine person, but he's just another human being. They are cursing Jesus because they're not recognizing who Jesus really is. Just treating him as another human being and that's the curse. That's *qalal*--to treat the person lightly. And God said, whoever does that, I will curse.

Now there is *arar*, that's a different word. That's the opposite of blessing. They are going to end up in death and they're going to be sterile and they're not going to be victorious. That's what I see happening in America. Today, we have treated Jesus indifferently, and the result is we're not, the church is not reproducing the way it should reproduce itself. It's not as victorious as it should be. But in any case, so whoever treats you lightly, insignificantly, I will curse.

"But whoever blesses you," which means in this case recognizes you as the source of blessing. Therefore, whoever blesses you, that is, they want you to increase. Whoever wants you to increase and be victorious, I will bless them and make them be fruitful, be increased and be victorious. That's how it comes about. So what the Psalmist is saying, "Gentiles, bless us. And you will be blessed." That's what it's about. All nations should in effect know that I am.

This is the great one of Psalm 100. Know that the Lord, I am, he himself is God.

And know that that we are his people. We are his, we are the sheep of his pasture. Acknowledge that and enter into his blessing and praise the Lord. That's what we're talking about here. It's really a missionary hymnbook trying to get nations salvation through the mediation of the mediatorial kingdom. Now, today that is realized not in unbelieving Zionism and Jews. That's not how, they've said no to Jesus. They treated him insignificantly. They've cut themselves off. I believe they're going to come back. If I read Romans 11, but presently, that's not the kingdom of God. Who is the seed of Abraham? Who is the one that gives blessing? It's Jesus. He is the son of Abraham. He is the one who is perfect. So for us today in the new dispensation, it means, bless the Lord Jesus Christ. Know who he is, he's the one of salvation. There's no salvation apart from him. So own him. Bless him that he may increase and be victorious and you in turn will be increased and victorious. So who is Christ today? Well, it's us. It's you and me. It's the amazing grace of God.

I think it's worthwhile, look at two verses that make that point to understand who we really are. We are the people of God. He chose us. He's our shepherd. So Galatians chapter three would be one verse. I'd have you look at Galatians three and the end of the chapter. It's good to have a Bible with some book headings on it, to find my way around. Now, chapter three, verse 26. "So in Christ Jesus, you are all called children of God through faith." He's talking to the church at Galatia too, they represent all the church. "For all of you who are baptized into Christ, have clothed yourself with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female for you are all one in Christ Jesus. If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise." You are the people of God, you are Abraham's seed. And all too often, we think it's the Jews who are the Abraham seed physically, but they have been cut off from the seed of Abraham. The spiritual seed of Abraham is you and me. Whoever blesses you as representing Jesus, will be blessed. And you talked about Gideon, the man who led your father to Christ with that Gideon Bible. You see he blessed you and then you multiplied. That's the blessing.

Or again, take another verse of Scripture. First Peter chapter two verses 9 and 10. Now Peter is talking to the church abroad just as Paul was talking to the church at Galatia a Gentile church when he said that. And he said, there is neither Jew nor Greek if you're in Christ. You are the seed of Abraham apart from your ethnic identity. 1 Peter 2.9-10 "To those that are scattered abroad of the church." And many of, most of them Gentiles. And then he says verse nine to them, "But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation. God's special possession that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light." That's why you were called is to give praise to God and as you give praise to God, then others will bless you, and you in turn will be blessed, is the thought.

So all the world should praise the Lord. We'll be looking at the psalm later on. "Shout for joy to God, all the earth, sing the glory of his name," but notice "all the earth, sing the glory of his name, make his praise glorious. Say to God, how awesome are your deeds! So great is your power, that your enemies cringe before you. All the earth bows down to you, they sing praise to you. They sing the praises of your name." So not only the congregation and the Levitical choir sings praise, all the earth sings his praise and all the earth gives praise to him. When you just look at, "Oh Lord my God, how great thou art. And when I look and see the rolling thunder and I see the mountains" and so forth, all of that is giving praise to God. I mean, when I look at the creation is just beyond comprehension and it gives tremendous praise to God. What a God is this that made such art as this and the beauty of it. You know, the computer is just fantastic. We can see all over the earth. You get these pictures from people, the mountains, the rivers, the stream, just now, I just sent out a whole bunch of pictures that just overwhelming with birds singing and the little insects. It's just a whole, it's just beyond comprehension to me. The whole creation is praising God. The people looking at it don't praise him. It is incredible. It's incredible.

And not only that, but the last one is: "I, myself will sing his praise" and Gunkel counts about a hundred forms. He didn't list them one at a time. He didn't list them all. He

didn't give all one hundred. But here's the famous one. "Praise the Lord, my soul, all my inmost being, praise his holy name. Praise the Lord, my soul, and forget not all his benefits." The fact we're here. This is benefit. We owe our very lives to him. We owe our very breath to him. If he takes his breath away, we die. His benefits are everywhere. We go out and have these great dinners and wine and so forth. "Praise the Lord, all my soul, for all your benefits to us."

O. The Cause for Praise: Theology [59:04-1:01:26]

All right, now we come to the main body, the cause for praise and here I'll jump immediately to point C. The theology on page 64. The theology, what is the cause for praise? Now you can write a whole theology out of this. What I want to do is I'm just trying to give you a feel for the Psalter at this point. I certainly can't give you all the content. But, on the other hand, I feel that we have to have a smorgasbord, a feeling for the total book and what the fuel of praise is, what they're praising. So that's what we're doing.

We're going to divide this into ten parts. And the first part I'm making, this is the theology of the people themselves and their theology. As I said, their words of praise becomes God's word to us. So we'll learning theology through their words of praise. So they offered their praise in the temple. It's written in inspired Scripture and today we read their words of praise that was such a sweet, savor to God. We're learning theology in the midst of enthusiastic praise. What a wonderful way, appropriate way to learn theology. So instead of having theology as dry discourse, scientific analysis that you get in systematics. You're learning theology in the enthusiasm of praise. I think that's the authentic, that's how it should be. I'm doing this to some extent, I feel I bastardize this wonderful material by just addressing it in this analytical way. But I think it's helpful to see what the attributes of God are.

So that's the first point and Gunkel makes the point that in the Babylonian and Egypt, parallels, you rarely get pure praise. It's almost always attached to petition, which

gives us the suspicion that there's an underlying motive of being apart from really praising God.

P. Incommunicable Attributes of God [1:01:26-1:03:06]

Well now, 2. page 65, having said that he now sketches a powerful image of God's incommunicable attributes. Now theologians distinguish, I think properly, between God's incommunicable attributes and his communicable attributes. His incommunicable attributes are attributes we cannot share. They cannot be communicated that we participate in them as we have the same attributes. The communicable attributes are those that we also can have by our relationship with God. So the incommunicable attributes would be his aseity, his eternality, his omniscience, knowing all things, all powerful. Those I cannot participate in. I could admire. I can praise them and absolutely necessary, but I'd not cannot participate in that. That's not me, they are incommunicable. On the other hand, his communicable attributes are his grace, mercy, truth, justice. Those are communicable attributes that I can mirror with God. So he makes, rightly so, the theologians all do this, they make a distinction between the incommunicable and the communicable to help us understand God better.

Q. God's Aseity [1:03:06-1:08:26]

Now the incommunicable attributes are, first of all, his aseity, that's in the first paragraph. By aseity, that's a Latin word, the "a" means "from," and the "se" means "self." That means he exists from himself. That is to say, God is not derivative. No one made God. He's not dependent upon anything. Everything depends upon him. So therefore he's from himself and there is something, the human mind cannot understand that. Everything we know has a beginning and an end. But there is an is. What is the is?

The materialist says "matter is." It is eternal. It always has been. The Bible says, God created matter. God is, spirit is, that's a fundamental divide in philosophy. What is, and what is reality? Is matter reality, the whole of reality? And I would argue matter is brilliantly organized by laws, or it wouldn't exist. In other words, there are laws within

the whole creation. Laws assume some intelligence, somebody had a law by which it all operates. So it seems to me at least that's some rational thought about what really matters is that the Bible says everything depends upon him. And to me, it's also rational that whatever is, that it is life, it is truth, it is justice. Everything else, apart from what Jesus is, the son of God, who is the image of God and represents what Jesus is. Everything that is not like Jesus is a delusion. It's a counterfeit. It leads us astray. Christ is the Word who was always there. Best way to say it is from the beginning. But Christ is, the Trinity is. That's real being and everything else is ephemeral. Everything is dependent upon that first cause that's what we're talking about. That's what the psalmists are saying. This is, I'm quoting Gunkel. He has Yahweh or I would say, "I am" quoting from the Psalm. "You remain God forever. And you have been from before the mountains were born, before the earth and the world were brought forth. A thousand years in your sight are like yesterday when they passed by" again, "you founded the earth before time. The heavens are the work of your hands. These will pass away, but you remain. They all fall away like the garment, you change them like a robe, but you remain the same and your years have no end. Lord, how many are your works? The earth is full of your creatures. He spoke and it happened. He commanded and it stood there. They all wait on you, so that you offer food at the right time. You give it to them, they harvest it. You open your hand and they are satisfied with goodness. You hide your face, they cower. You take their breath and they expire and turn back to their dust." Everything depends upon God, but that's great. How could you say it better than in poetry?

What a wonderful, I mean, I am so blessed that God called me to do what I do. I am dealing with the greatest literature ever written, it's totally aesthetically satisfying. It's intellectually challenging and always wonderful. It's like listening to a Bach. You always hear something new in his fugues and whatever. There's no end to it. It's such a spiritual blessing. How privileged we are that we have the word of God like this. And we have truth. What a privilege. Bless the Lord O my soul that we have a class like this. We have

biblical training like this, that we could spread it and enjoy it and learn how to read and administer this word. Bless God for Bill Mounce and so forth.

R. God's Other Attributes [1:08:26-1:09:25]

Closely related to that on the next one is God is eternal. We've already touched about that. And not only eternal and this, you see, I just scanned Gunkel's introduction on all the verses. He's holy and awesome, highly exalted over all the world, majestic and magnificent, powerful beyond measure, great in works and deeds, unending in knowledge and incomparably wonderful. So this is his incommunicable. No one has his power. No one has his wisdom. No one can be omnipresent and so forth. So those are his incommunicable attributes that we're learning through the enthusiastic praise of his people. That's the best way to learn theology I would think.

S. Communicable Attributes – Exod. 34.6 [1:09:25-1:15:46]

Now powerful images of as communicable attributes and his communicable attributes are given, say, for example, in Exodus 34.6. You might want to turn there because those are the five fundamental attributes, Exodus 34.6, This is in the scene of the golden calf. Israel has sinned egregiously. They've changed their glorious God that we've been speaking of into the image of a bull who eats grass, and if you don't mind my saying, it shits. Can you imagine, defecates. And you worship that. How could you possibly do that? How could you possibly change the lovely Lord Jesus Christ and praise people who are adulterers, fornicators, deceitful? How could you substitute and praise people in the place of Jesus? How could you substitute mammon and money that's so unstable? It flees away. Sex appeal, your own pride, how can you praise that compared to Jesus? It's so irrational and wrongheaded to me.

But here's the communicable attributes, Exodus chapter 34.6, and Israel. I got off the background, they had committed the golden calf and substituted this grass eating bull for their glorious God. They in a kind of a voodoo peg in the pagan religions, they imitated fertility of the gods. And so they had a sex orgy. Can you imagine it at the base

of the mountain. And Moses, God is furious. If he weren't, there's something wrong with God. If you don't have moral indignation there is something wrong with you. When you see evil, when you're not indignant against it, you're dead. God has moral indignation. If he didn't, he's not worthy of worship. So he has moral indignation. Moses doesn't have it until he comes down the mountain and he sees it and he smashes the stone tablets. But now what's going to happen? What will happen with God's people, is it just going to die. And God says, we'll start over with you Moses. We'll make a new people out of you, out of the seed of Abraham. Moses says, "No, that's not what you said." And Moses, a very humble man, what an honor, the whole world went back to Moses. No, that can't be it. Then God says, plan B. Well, we'll have an angel of the Lord go before you he'll show you the way. And Moses said, "No, I'm not going to go. I want you, you have to be with me in my presence." And so the question is, how can God be present with this unclean people? And of course they have a sacrificial system. But then Moses says, "Show me your glory." And his glory is his grace that the perfect God can live with an imperfect people. So he says, "Show me your glory." And in Exodus chapter 34.6. "And the Lord passed in front of Moses proclaiming the Lord, the Lord, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness. Maintaining love to thousands, forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin."

So there you have it. His compassion, his bond in love is fine. It includes his rahamim, hannim, erek apaim verob hesed veemet. I can think better in Hebrew sometimes. So let me think in Hebrew here. That the first word is rahamim, which means his mercy. It's the word that derives from the womb. It's what a mother feels toward a helpless child who cannot feed itself, cleanse itself, bathe itself has total compassion, mercy. And hannim, grace that bestows kindness where it's undeserved. He's erek apaim. It means long faced totally patient with the people, not fretting. I'll talk about hesed and emet faithfulness, unfailing love. These are his attributes, and that's why we exist, in spite of our sin. He's gracious. He does not hold his anger against us. He's free because Christ has paid the price for us. And so God is just.

But he goes on to say that, "yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished." How can that be? He's just forgiving all the guilty and now we have the guilty unpunished. The best I understand that is if you don't accept this grace, you are still in your sin and you're guilty. But if you accept his grace and his sacrifice and his forgiveness, then you're forgiven. "Forgive us, our trespasses as we forgive those" and he forgives all of our trespasses, that's his grace to us. However, wicked we may have been, whatever skeletons are in our closet, they've been removed from us as far as the East is from the West, because God is gracious and his grace is greater than our sin. That's why he can live with us and be in our midst. Those are his communicable attributes.

This is Dr. Bruce Waltke in his teaching on the book of Psalms. This is session number seven: Hymns, Cause for Praise, Hymn Theology. [1:15:46]

Psalms

[\[Jump to TOC\]](#)

Session 8: Hymns -- Theology, Hesed, Creation, Kingship and Temple By Dr. Bruce Waltke

This is Dr. Bruce Waltke in his teaching on the book of Psalms. This is session number eight: Hymns -- Theology, Hesed, Creation, Kingship and Temple.

A. Introduction: The Hymn [00:25-3:43]

We've been reflecting on the form of Psalms called a "Hymn." And we noticed its motifs. Its motifs are an introductory Call to Praise. That's the match, I say, to ignite the fire. And then we have the Cause for Praise and that's the fuel that furnishes the fire. Then we have a renewed Call for Praise. I've been reflecting on these motifs. So we've reflected on the Call to Praise. We've reflected on the whole imperative mood that God's telling us to praise him and how we understand that because we would never do that with a human being. We would look down on a human being. We suggested that we say, because it is fitting and right, and we are dead if we don't. It's totally fitting and appropriate. It's for our good to be praising what is praiseworthy and not to praise it is to be like tone deaf, I said, not to hear.

Then we reflected on who actually does the praising. It's all the people of God and Levitical choirs and so forth. Before that we reflected on the enthusiasm with music and clapping and singing. It's not lukewarm. It's fervent praise that pleases God. And then the performance: who does it? We ended with saying, one of the points we made is he doesn't want praise from sinners. That's an abomination to him. Yet I hear a lot of that today. I hope I'm not being judgmental. I don't intend to be judgmental, but I'm just saying what I see in the newspapers and whatnot.

Then we were looking at the Cause for Praise and we jumped into the theology of

praise. We noted that this is a unique way of learning theology. We're learning it in a doxological context, which is appropriate. Namely we are learning it from people who are praising God and as they praising God, they are celebrating his person and his works. Their words to God of praise are coming back to us in the word of God, teaching us theology. So we are learning about God, theology, through the praises of his people to God, not through a Moses and not through a prophet, not through his sage, but we're learning it through the people of God who are pious and honest, and they are celebrating God. Their words to God becomes God's word to us. So in fact, they've become the inspired word of God to us in these words of praise.

B. God's Incommunicable Attributes: Aseity [3:43-7:08]

Then we discussed from there, we began talking about his attributes. We divided that into his incommunicable, those in which we cannot share and his communicable attributes. His incommunicable attributes in which we do not share included first of all his aseity. We talked about his aseity. He is of himself. He derives from no one and everything derives from him. Therefore, our lives derive from him. Everything about us is derivative. We are dependent upon him. This one who has given us this great life is worthy of our praise -- his aseity.

We talked about us communicable attributes of his eternality in his aseity. I made the point something is, you know, Elaine and I have our liturgy every morning and we say in the invocation, "Give thanks to God, Lord open up our lips and so forth, and then give thanks to God and glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit as it was in the beginning, is now and will be evermore." And that's part of our morning liturgy. In addition to the confession of sin, I talked about the other day. And so God is. In contrast to the materialists that says matter is. We said, matter is, the Bible teaches God created everything and that matter itself reflects the creator because it's so finely tuned. It's full of very precise laws. I'll come to this in Psalm 8.

Einstein, as an atheist said, what's incomprehensible is that it's comprehensible. In other words, his logical brilliant mind could understand the laws by which to work. So if

it just is it's incomprehensible, how these laws, this intelligence came to be, if there isn't an intelligent being. That's a profound statement. It's incomprehensible how it can be comprehensible. It has built into it, and Paul will say, the creation shows his eternal nature and his eternal power. You could see it. He says, you have to be blind not to see it. Then God will not judge you for not praising him, but he will withdraw from you. His presence has gone from you, and he will hand you over to what you are naturally, which is an adulterer and a homosexual just hand you over to it, to your sin. He withdraws our hands from his hand from us and we enter into the realm of death.

C. God's Communicable Attributes: mercy, grace, love [7:08-8:46]

So then we were dealing with his communicable attributes on page 65. And we said they were found there at basically its major attributes are found in connection with the golden calf, that horrible sin of turning the glory of God and worshiping a grass eating, defecating bull. Incredible! God has moral indignation. And he's filled with wrath and wants to rid himself of these people. Moses says, "Go with us. I can't go on without you. Show me your glory." And the reason he can go on is because his attributes are also merciful, gracious, long suffering, unfailing love, total fidelity. Those attributes provide for the grace of the sacrificial system, the grace of Jesus Christ so that his grace is greater than all of our sins. Though we commit adultery or whatever else we may have done in life whatever sin we may have committed in life, God forgives and he is with us. Even we who are sinners whoever blesses us will be blessed. That's amazing grace, worthy of all praise.

D. History of Religious approach [8:46-13:04]

Page 66. Another aspect of God worthy of praise is that he is incomparable. Among the gods, there are none who are similar in holiness, power, wisdom and grace. So you have these verses, "who is like you among the gods?" or again, "he is the King of the gods. He's Lord of Lords, God of gods." and so forth, incomparable. What do we make of that? When it says, "who is like you among the gods." Is it teaching there are

other gods. That's what's often said when he says there were other gods and you'd get this commonly: He is King of Kings, God of gods, the Lord of Lords. That seems to imply there are other gods. The very first commandment of the 10 commandments. "You shall have no other god before me" assumes there can be another god. So what did we do that with monotheism?

What happens in comparative religion, they say that Israel at this point had come to the point of henotheism. That is to say, that it began with animism, that these gods were present in all of nature and animals and trees and whatnot. Then they became more abstracted personality and gods of the wind and gods of the rain, a god of the underwater, the storm god, and so forth. You end up with a polytheism that is a mixture of nature and a personal being behind the god in polytheism. The next step is henotheism where you recognize there are other gods, but you worship only one God that's "hen" meaning in Greek "one." There's one God, you worship, but there are other gods. Then, finally, you end up where you dismiss all other gods. You get to Isaiah, and so forth, there are no other gods and you end up in monotheism. So these statements by David and in his psalms represent that stage of religion where Moses was of henotheism. I do not accept that. I do not accept that it is recognize that there really are other gods. As I understand it, we have to distinguish between theological statement and religious command. Theological statement in Deuteronomy 4.39. It says, "there is no other God." The religious reality is that people worship what are no gods. They are gods to the people. They are really gods, but as religious reality. So they round them. There are Baals.

And Calvin was saying, "My mind is manufacturing gods daily. Something else to worship that takes away from him." So we really do worship other gods, but they really don't exist. So theological statement is there are no other gods. That is the clear teaching of Scripture, but the reality is people are worshipping other gods. This was the problem. We who have knowledge know there are no other gods, says Paul to the Corinthians. But those without knowledge are worshipping other gods. We have to be considerate of them because they may be stumbled by the things we do. So I find a better explanation is to

distinguish theological statement from religious command. So that's what I suggest to think about, of what we talk about. Incomparable. He's not comparable to everything else other people can imagine. It's just no comparison to it or what the ancients worshiped, which were idols.

E. Talking about God: figurative language, "as if" [13:04-16:15]

We talk in number 65, about "I am" exalted to his rule in heaven. You have to, as I said earlier, when we talk about God in heaven and on a throne, anything we say about God is figurative. God is spirit. It's another dimension that we have never experienced. We can only talk about it in our experience, as we have known it. How would you describe to an unborn child in the womb light, air, the beauty of the creation. All it's known is water darkness. How do you describe it? You'd have to use metaphor, something, I don't know, what it's like, but you'd have to use something that's very good in the womb that would be good and something that's very bad, but somehow you'd have to use metaphor.

So whenever we talk about God, there is an "as if." So they talk about God, we have to "as if" as their understanding of the universe, which was a tri-part. So they had the heaven above and they had the earth and they had the water under the earth. So they describe God in terms of the world that they were seeing in their day. So they picture God to understand his otherness and his rule over everything, his omniscience over everything is represented in their cosmology as God sitting on a throne in heaven. But it's an "as if." You can't push that, that there really is a throne. Like Khrushchev. "Well, we got up there in the rocket, we looked all around and we didn't see any God up here." He was taking it, literally. Mocking it really, but there are a lot of Christians that can get stumbled by this because we know that we've got rockets going to other planets out there. You have to understand it's figurative within the biblical world. In those figures of speech, it's teaching us about God. So, therefore, I'm suggesting you must not push this too literally, because we're talking about spirit and that's the only way I can understand it. I hope that helps you, it helps me.

So he is most exalted. He is most high. So he says, "I am established his throne in the heavens and his majesty reigns over everything." So it's a way of saying he rules. He's in charge of everything. There's no accidents. Depressive image of this omniscience He looks down on the earth from his heavenly throne, from which the whole world lies at his feet. He sees everything that happens below with his peering eyes. So that's the way of representing his omniscience. It's the truth. That's being represented by this way in that biblical world of representing God.

F. God as Creator and Sustainer: Psalm 104 [16:15-20:50]

He is the creator and preserver of nature. So he not only created everything, he sustains everything. When he withdraws his hand, it would cease to exist. In the New Testament. It is Christ who sustains all things, Colossians 1.

Psalm 104 "All creatures look to you to give them their food in due season. When you give it to them, they gather it up. When you open your hand, they are filled with good things. When you hide your face, they are dismayed. When you take away their breath, they die and return to the dust. When you send forth your spirit, they are created and you renew the face of the earth." So we're saying that God is when a new life comes into the world that's his creation "and you renew it by your spirit." Again, Gunkel says, and I think he's right. "It generally makes no difference in antiquities observation of the world, whether the events belong to our concept of preservation or to the actual creation. Every new event appears as a new creation. It is Yahweh who changes darkness into morning and darkens the day to night, he arranges the stars at daybreak. He calls the stars by name. Snow and ice and especially the rain come from him. He causes the earth to quake. He pours the water down on the earth. He stills the roaring of the rushing flood." In summary, he does great things that are not required and miracles that cannot be counted. And again, he manifests himself in the whole creation." So to picture it, the whole thing is a manifestation of his creation.

"Light is God's coat; the clouds his chariot, wind and flames his messengers. He marches over the high places of the earth. If the earth quakes it is because the Lord

looked at it. If the mountains smoke it is because the Lord touched them. When the change of seasons causes life and death to enter the world. The reason is that the Lord has inhaled and exhaled, his life protecting breath." The Hebrew poet signifies the harmony of the spheres as a song that the heavens sing to honor God."

So he manifests himself in the creation. When you look at the creation, we should see God himself present. "He has dominion over all humanity." I give you the material there. It says, "The hymn loves to describe both sides of the divine act in sharp contrast. "Yahweh kills and brings to life. He takes down to sheol and leads up. Yahweh makes the poor and the rich, he humbles and exalts."

The point is also that if we didn't know it, the incommunicable and communicable attributes have to go together because if God was all powerful and no one can curb him. He could be a despot. But because he's faithful and merciful, he's a benevolent despot if you want to use that word, a benevolent king. On the other hand, if he just had communicable attributes of mercy and grace, they would have no power. They couldn't be effective. But because he's omnipotent, he can exercise his mercy. So you have to have the two together because the faithfulness guarantees us that God is not a despot. On the other hand, that he's all powerful assures us that he's able to carry through his grace and his mercy. So we need them in balance with one another.

G. God's Love and Faithfulness, Hesed, Joseph, Ruth [20:50-26:33]

Number seven is his love and his faithfulness. These are the two primary, the love one is the primary attribute that is celebrated in the perhaps the most in the whole Old Testament and in the book of Psalms. That's the Hebrew word hesed, H E S E D. The first letter you put a little fricative in it. It's hesed. So I remember one day, first year I was teaching Hebrew and I was trying to distinguish between "H" and "H" so I called on, I had attendance back then, called on a student, said, "Here," that's the word "hesed." The word "hesed" means help to the helpless out of whatever it is in the person that's kind, loving. The King James translates it with 13 words and ways. The word entails a relationship. There are two people that are in relationship. They are partners. One person

is in desperate need. The weaker of partner is in desperate need and cannot help himself or herself. They're in need, and can't help themselves. The stronger person who can meet the need steps in and meets that need out of love, kindness, whatever it is. Not out of duress, not out of self-motivation, not out of getting anything out of it. Just out of love. That's why it's translated in the King James by "unfailing love."

So a good illustration of that is Joseph. He for a while had identified with Egypt. He felt he had been abandoned by his family. He married an Egyptian wife. He named his children after Egypt. He began to settle down. Well, I don't have a family back home. They just sold me. So he had begun to identify with Egypt, but when he saw the family again, he saw God's Providence. Now he's fully related to his father. So he says to his brothers, when he's dying, "This is the hesed you shall show me. You will carry my bones to where Abraham, Isaac, up to Schechem, You will bury me in my father's land." He cannot bury himself. He's totally helpless. He's totally dependent upon those who are alive to do what he cannot do. They do it out of love for their brother. That gives you an idea.

Another illustration be Ruth. Ruth is this tremendous story of hesed. She was totally loyal to her deceased Mahlon. He died in Moab. He dies without children. He will die without prosperity or any social memory. She comes back by faith though. Naomi had told her, you have no future here. But no, your people, my people, your God and my God." She trusted God. She went back and eventually this great man, Boaz, marries her. He says to her, when on the bed scene, he said it was her hesed that she returned with Naomi. But your second hesed that you remained loyal to your husband's family. You didn't go after money. You didn't go after sex, young men, you were loyal to the family and you wanted to do the family redeemer. Your second hesed, your second loyalty, to your deceased is greater than your first. And that child was to was given birth in the name of Mahlon but God in his grace, because of Boaz's, great act of kindness. It's Boaz's name that got into the messianic line of the Lord Jesus Christ. But her loyalty was to her deceased husband who could not have children. So she would have children in his name

that's her hesed. So hesed is where you, in a situation that you're utterly helpless. God's hesed to us is the fact why we're here. He's been loyal to Abraham. He made a commitment to Abraham. He made a commitment to Isaac. He made a commitment to Jacob that your seed will bless the earth. And here we are! We are here because of God's hesed. He remained loyal to his covenant promises. That's a guarantee that he will remain loyal to us, even in death, that we will triumph over death because of his hesed. Then we have, so I gave you a lot of verses from Gunkel. I'm not going to read anymore.

H. Use of ancient Near Eastern Myths in the poetry of Psalms [26:33-29:01]

Now I get into something more difficult on page 68. It glorifies God's past deeds at the creation. Here I'm wrestling with that the way it glorifies God in creation is by using ancient Near Eastern myths. The creation is described in the terms of the pagan myths. So, for example, the major myth of the Babylonians was called the Enuma Elish E N U M A E L I S H. When the gods in Elish. It is the creation story. You had a Tiamat, a monster, that was represented by water and Marduk was the great hero. He slaughtered the monster and out of that monster, he created the earth. That's the myth. It's called chaoskampf, that is, it's chaos and there was a battle. And the battle was between the heroic god and this monster that represented chaos. The heroic god defeated the chaos and created the cosmos out of the chaos. It's all in the mythology of personalities. In other words, it's very similar to Genesis one. As I have said, Genesis one, you start off the earth was in darkness and water, it's chaos. It's called actually the Hebrew there is the word for it is Tiamat, tahom rather the depth tahom, which is equal to the Tiamat. But it's totally demythologized it's just there's a tahom, there's a depth, a deep. God created light and overcame the darkness and he overcame the chaotic waters. So God overcame the darkness and the chaos, and he did it by means of light. So it was simply a statement of fact.

I. Poet's Use of Myth in Psalms [29:01-31:46]

But the poets describe it. Not as we have it in Genesis one, which is prose, but

they're poets and they use the personification. They use the pagan myths as a way of showing the greatness of God that he is the one that overcame the chaotic monster, if you please. So it's sort of like Milton in say *Paradise Lost*, he will refer to the Greek mythologies. He will talk about Zeus. He will talk about Jove. He will talk about Jupiter. We all know he doesn't believe that, but it's a way of poets use figurative language to communicate their thought. The Hebrew poets feel secure in using those pagan myths in order to show the greatness of God in creation and it's also sort of a polemic. It wasn't Baal that did this, it wasn't Marduk that did it, it was the Lord, our God. He's the one that overcame the chaos at transformed it. Unless we understand that you know, a lot of scholars use this to show pagan mythology. I'd say, no, this is poetry they use in it. They feel secure. We all know these gods don't exist, but this describes the greatness of our God and the way he created it. So I say they use pagan imagery, such as Marduk and this battle against chaos, Maduk with Tiamat.

It's also used in the Ugaritic texts. And this is found not only throughout the ancient Near East in all their myths, it's a chaotic battle but also in the Ugaritic texts, where the creator god is Baal. He's the god of storm and lightning, as I said yesterday, and he battles in one set of myths. He battles against Yam, which is the sea. So you have the god of lightning and rain and life who is battling against the sea, which is the symbol of chaos. The sea will destroy your crops. It can't exist there. Whereas you need Baal with the rain that gives you your crops. So they picture it as a battle between Baal and the sea. Or in another myth it's Baal against death. And so that's the background.

J. Mythic Language in Psalms 74 and 89 [31:46-35:43]

The other chaotic gods can be a Rahab or a Leviathan. And so you're reading the Bible about Rahab, and most people don't know who Rahab is and who the Leviathan is. They are the gods of chaos in these myths. These mythological allusions occur only in poetry and add vividness and color to the poem. They also function as a polemic against the pagan gods. The sublimities attributed to the pagan gods belong, in fact, to I am. So here you have, for example, Psalm 74, "But God is my King from long ago. He brings

salvation on the earth. It was you who split open the sea by your power." See it isn't simply said, God, let the land appear. It's a battle. He split open the sea by your power. "You broke the heads of the monster in the waters those chaotic forces." He's referring to these myths of the chaotic forces against them. "It was you who crushed the heads of Leviathan and gave it as food to the creatures of desert. It was you who opened the springs and streams. You dried up the ever flowing rivers. The day is yours and yours also the night. You established the sun and moon. It was you who set up all the boundaries of the earth. You made both summer and winter." So it is you who defeated the forces of chaos. And it's put into this living language, but it's poetry. You can't say there's literally a Rahab and a Leviathan. It's a way of representing his overcoming the forces of chaos.

Again, this is from 89, "Who is like you, Lord God Almighty. Your faithfulness surrounds you. You rule over the surging sea when it's waves mount out you still them." See the sea is symbol of chaos. They didn't come through a landscape artists with a sea in the sea in any romantic way, or "take me down to the sea again, to the lonely sea in the sky, give me a tall ship and star to steer it by." They had no romantic notions about the sea. It was chaos and they dreaded the sea. So it represents what is opposed to life. So he says, "You will love the surging sea when it's waves mount up, you still them, you crushed Rahab like one of the slain, with your strong arm you scattered your enemies. The heavens are yours and yours also the earth. You founded the world and all that is in them." Or to give you another comparison, this is a comparison of say one of the texts of the Ugaritic texts. The first line, it talks about the crooked dragon, the mighty one of seven heads. This is Isaiah: "On that day, God will visit with a sword that is that mighty great and powerful, with his sword that is mighty and great and powerful. Leviathan, the evil serpent, even Leviathan. the crooked slithering serpent and slay the monster of the sea." So it uses this kind of language which is why I say Milton or an English poets will refer to Greek mythology. The Hebrew poets refer to pagan mythology in order to illustrate who God is and that he is greater than these pagan gods.

K. Creation, Kingship and Temple (Ps. 93) [35:43-39:12]

Let me give another one, this kind of difficult material, but I think it should be handled as I think it confuses people. Says Levenson at Harvard, "The sea was the great enemy of order, both in Mesopotamia and in Canaan." It's defeat, taming it, overcoming it and that's what you have literally in Genesis one, he overcomes the abyss and the sea. "It's defeat was the essential element in creation and won the victorious, God Kingship. He won the victorious God kingship and the right to a palace or a temple of his own." That was the pagan myths. After the god they worshiped conquered the sea, represented as a god, then that victorious god could build a palace to secure the order or a palace for god was a temple. "So creation, kingship, and temple thus form an indissoluble triad. The containment of the sea is the continuing proof of their eternal validity."

So it's put in Psalm 93. I don't think you can understand this song without a background of that. This indissoluble triad of creation, kingship and temple are at stake. That's how it was in the beginning and in fact, God overcomes the sea today is proof that he maintains, sustains the creation. Here's Psalm 93, "The Lord reigns. He is robed in majesty. The Lord is robed in majesty and armed with strength. Indeed, the world is established firm and secure." In other words, the Lord is all powerful and with his strength, the world was established firm and secure.

Now it talks about your throne. "Your throne was established long ago. You are from all eternity." But now notice what threatens, "the sea has lifted up, O Lord. The sea has lifted up their voice. The sea has lifted up their pounding waves, mighty than the thunder of the waters, mightier than the breakers of the sea, the Lord on high is mighty." And he overcomes all threats and he's called. Notice how it ends. "Your statutes, O Lord stand firm, holiness adorns your house for endless days." There we have creation, kingship, temple, and it is God who did it all. So it's this knowledge of this background that can help us to understand psalms like this.

L. Psalm 29 and a Hymn to Baal [39:12-42:01]

Psalm 29 adopts and adapts a hymn to Baal in all probability. Baal is the god of

storm. Listen to the Psalm, a Psalm of David. "Ascribe to the Lord you heavenly beings, ascribed to the Lord glory and strength. Ascribe to the Lord, the glory due his name. Worship the Lord in the splendor of his holiness. The voice of the Lord is thunder. The voice of the Lord is over the waters. [Think of the Mediterranean] the God of glory thunders in his power, the Lord thunders over the mighty waters. The voice of the Lord is powerful. The voice of the Lord is majestic [that is the thunder]. The voice of the Lord breaks the cedars; the Lord breaks in pieces the cedars of Lebanon." But notice where the storm is going. It's in Lebanon and the country of Lebanon. That's the center of Baal worship. So he sees a storm coming off the Mediterranean. He sees in the storm, the mighty power of God and the clashing crashing thunder and the flashing lightning. All of this is representing the great power of God as he moves across. Then "he makes Lebanon leap like a calf, Syria like a young wild ox. The voice of the Lord strikes with flashes of lightning. The voice of the Lord shakes the desert; the Lord shakes the desert of Kadesh." That is, in other words, the storm has now come off the Mediterranean the storm is now going over the Lebanese mountains. He smashes the proud and mighty cedars of Lebanon. The cedars represent what is mighty and majestic. God just smashes it in this psalm, shatters it entirely.

But now the storm is dying out. Kadesh is on the East side of the ante-Lebanon mountains. "So the Lord shakes the desert of Kadesh, the voice of the Lord, twists the oak and strips the forest bare. And in his temple, all cry glory. The Lord sits enthroned over the flood. The Lord is enthroned as King forever. The Lord gives strength to his people. The Lord blesses his people with peace." So he could see the great power of God in the storm and it occurs in the very heart of Baal country. That's to assure us that this God of power is the God who is with us. That's where it ends the Lord gives strength to his people. So that's a bit more daunting, but yet I felt in a course on Psalms, we should handle some of this difficult material.

M. God and History in Psalms [42:01-43:46]

We now go to page 71, the praise of God who led his people in the past as he

dwells together with people. No, texts are sited here, but it is God with his people, his presence with his people in the Exodus and the conquest and settlement of the land. Gunkel comments that this idea of history, of a God being with his people in the historical process, has no counterpart in Babylonian and Egypt, literature. We can now add, it has no counterpart in Ugarit. In the pagan literature there's no idea of history going anywhere. Their whole idea is to recreate the earth annually, but there's no sense to any meaning of history. There's no beginning. There's no end. There's no climax, no victory of righteousness over evil. There's no metaphysical point to history, no reality behind it. This is where the Bible distinguishes itself. And so the Psalms celebrate the history of Israel, looking to an eschaton when the Lord will reign universally and righteousness will prevail. There's nothing like that in the ancient Near East.

So you have these outward symbols where they use pagan mythology. But as Henri Frankfort said, there's no umbilical cord connecting the theology of the Bible with the pagan literature. It has an outward form, but a very different theology.

This is Dr. Bruce Waltke in his teaching on the book of Psalms. This is session number eight: Hymn -- Theology, Hesed Creation, Kingship and Temple. [43:46]

Psalms

[\[Jump to TOC\]](#)

Session 9: Pagan Imagery, Zion and Psalm 100

By Dr. Bruce Waltke

This is Dr. Bruce Waltke in his teaching on the book of Psalms. This is session number nine: pagan imagery, Zion and Psalm 100.

A. Introduction, Genesis 1 [00:24-6:18]

And we leave the Hymns and the Songs of Praise, and we already reflected upon the Call to Praise. And then we spent a bit of time on Cause for Praise. We've listened to the wonderful theology that doxological way of giving theology as the praises. The people of God that become the word of God to us and teaches us theology in a doxological way, which is, I think, the best way to learn theology in praise to God not something static out there. We've reflected on that.

We ended with where in the Songs of Praise, they use pagan myths to show that God is so much greater and a way of picturing his creation and his overcoming the forces of chaos. That the beginning, as I understand Genesis one, if you read my Genesis commentary, 1.1 is a summary statement that in the beginning God created. Heavens and earth is a collocation, which means the entire organized universe. That's where it begins. That's it. Then you get a disjunct "now, the earth," and I think you may have translated it "had been," or "was." It had been chaotic the exact opposite of the summary statement. It had been, *tohu vebohu*. *Tohu vebohu* means basically it's like hanky panky, Hotsy totsy it was *tohu vebohu* it was a mess. You couldn't live here. It was uninhabited and uninhabitable. There was darkness upon the face of the *tehom* which is the related to the Acadian word, *Tiamat*, same consonants. So there was darkness upon the face of this chaotic situation.

Then I'm not sure what it means, but the spirit of God was hovering over the face

of the water. That's a debate. It could mean either "the spirit of God," or it can mean "the wind of God" was hovering over the face of water. I don't know that I can make a definitive judgment.

In the recreation of Noah in Noah's Ark in Genesis 8, after the chaos has returned in the flood, then it says, "and the wind moved over the face of the water." That can be a strong argument that you have "wind" in Genesis 1.2. But I'm not sure. I'm ambivalent I don't really know for sure one way or the other. Translations go both ways.

And then God steps in and creates the situation. The poets dramatize it from the pagan myths that here was this darkness, abyss, water, and God brought up out of it wonderful light. He triumphed over the darkness. We were talking about this, Cody and I yesterday, that darkness is a given. Darkness has no power. Light will overcome darkness. So that to use an illustration of it, you can have a dark room and a light room. When you open the door, the dark room gets lighter, but the light room doesn't get any darker. See, the only thing that is real is the light and it overcomes darkness. And God is light. Darkness represents just the native state. Without God, there's no light. This is what it is. To me there's some mystery here, but it's picturing God as overcoming the darkness. God is overcoming the chaos, the *tehom*. They picture it in this chaos camp of God, battling against a Rahab or a Leviathan or the Yam or the sea. In Psalm 93, the seas have lifted up. See when God created the earth, he created light, but he didn't remove the darkness. So you have light and dark together. When God overcame the sea with the land, he didn't overcome. He didn't remove the sea. He has the sea, the land with the sea. And so in this in-between, originally it was all sea. It was all dark. Now it's a mixture and you have light and dark and you have sea and land.

In the eschaton to which we're heading, John sees, "and there will be no more sea." See the chaos is totally gone. He sees it was all the light of the lamb. Now we reach a light. There is no darkness. So there is no sea there is no darkness. So this is the movement of history. We start with sea and darkness. We're in an in-between time, which represents a tension between the two. But finally light, that life overcomes the death.

So these poems are reflecting that struggle in terms of the pagan myths, but it's purely literary allusion. They felt comfortable that Israel had enough security in the Mosaic covenant. They knew there were no other gods, and so you could comfortably use it. So when I read Milton and I don't think he means the muses and the Greek gods and so forth, I understand what he's doing. He's a poet. Okay.

B. Baal on Mt. Zaphon, Yahweh Mt. Zion [6:18-11:14]

One other thing, and it may be helpful, I was going to dismiss the Songs of Zion. I just want to make one small point that might help us reading the Psalms is that the major god of Baal, his mountain was Zaphon, Z A P H O N. That's where he lived. Baal dwelled on Mount Zaphon. It's probably Mount Cassius in Northern Syria. It's the highest mountain in the area. It was there that the gods met and the gods dwelt and so forth. I can't get into the whole Ugaritic theology, but you have to know Baal dwelt on Mt. Zaphon and Mt. Zaphon was the dwelling place of the gods. For Israel it's not Mount Zaphon. It is Mount Zion. That's where God dwells. And so they celebrate Mount Zion because God chose it for his city. It was not some nature or something. God just simply chose Mount Zion for his dwelling place, to build his temple and so forth.

So having said that, Levinson says, if you want to read more about it, you can read his Sinai and Zion book. He says, "an acquaintance with the literature of the Bronze Age, Ugarit has proven essential to any understanding of Zion. Baal dwells on Zaphon and Zaphon is referred to as the Holy place. "Holy" means it's set apart to the deity. It isn't you see, the opposite of holy is profane. What does profane mean? Well, profane is the Latin profanum and the "pro" means "before." The "fane" is from the Latin fanum, which means "temple." So the profane is what's in front of the temple, outside of the temple. That's what's profane. The holy is the temple, where God dwells. We're a holy people because God dwells with us. Of course, we're going to be like the God who dwells with us. So that's what we mean by holy in these contexts. It's set apart. Qadosh means set apart and set apart to God, in contrast to all that's outside of God. So it's this holy place.

It's the mountain of, these are terms used for Zaphon. It's referred to as the holy

place because Baal dwells there. Not that he's holy, Baal is not a very good character. And his wife, one of his wives, Anat, I mean, she is she's filled with sex and violence. She's the epitome of sex and violence. In one of her battles she's, slaughtering her victims and she's wading in gore up to her waist. The heads of her enemies are bracelets around her hands. I mean, this is a very violent woman. She was a prostitute, basically and unfaithful woman. That was their goddess. He's not very holy from our term. So when we say holy place, we mean it is set apart to the deity in this kind of a context.

So a holy place, mountain of my heritage, chosen spot, hill of victory, and so forth. So then here's how we describe Sinai, Zion, I mean, "great is the Lord and most worthy of praise in this city of our God, his holy mountain." But he's altogether different than Baal. "Beautiful in its loftiness. The joy of the whole earth, like the heights of Zaphon is Mount Zion, the city of the great King." You could see it's alluding there to Zaphon, it is alluding to the Canaanite mountain and all that the Canaanite mountain was.

And on the next page I illustrate what the that mountain was. I can't get into that much depth. All it was to the Baal worshipper is Zion is to the living God and to Israel. So when you read about Zaphon that's what it is referring to. It's referring to Baal's mountain. It is a polemic against Baal and to helps us understand Mount Zion better. But I'm going to have to drop it there.

C. Psalm 100: Translation [11:14-15:20]

I'm now going to now come to lecture 8. Psalm 100 and we're on page 74. I think you might want to pull that page out. So you have the translation with you as we comment on it. This is the superscript, "this is a psalm for giving grateful praise" and it would have been accompanied with a sacrifice along with it. "Shout to I Am all the earth, serve I Am with rejoicing. Come before him with a joyful shout. Know that I Am he is God. He himself has made us and indeed we are his and the flock he shepherds. Enter into his gates with grateful praise, his courts with praise. Give him grateful praise. Bless his name for I Am is good, his unfailing love endures forever his reliability through all creation."

By the way in our morning liturgy we recite this psalm every morning and so here's how it goes in our liturgy. "Be joyful in the Lord all you lands." Now I put myself up here to be harmed. "Be joyful in the Lord all you lands, serve the Lord with gladness. Come into his presence with a song. Know this, the Lord himself is God. The Lord himself has made us. We are his. Know the Lord himself has made us. We are his, we are his people and the sheep of his pasture. Enter his gates with thanksgiving go into his courts with praise. Be thankful and give thanks to his name because the Lord is good, His faithfulness endures forever. His mercy endures forever, his faithfulness from age to age." So that's what we recite every morning as part of our liturgy, after our confession of sin and our proclamation of praise, then we have that psalm.

So there's a lot in the Anglicanism that I'm enjoying. That's one of them. I like the liturgy. You go four times a day in the liturgy. You're not focused on the three meals a day. You're focused on the four times of worship a day, and you read a different section of Scripture every day. Anglicanism in its pure form is very holy and very wonderful. I don't think we fully, I didn't fully appreciate it until I became a priest at 84 years of age. And I never thought this Baptist minister would have a turn-around collar. Okay.

So we read the Psalm. Let's do it again after I've wrecked it all. Let's read it again. "A Psalm for giving grateful praise. Shout to I am [Yahweh]. Shout to I am all the earth, serve I am with rejoicing. Come before him with a joyful shout. Know that I am He is God. He himself has made us, indeed, we are his people and the flock he shepherds. Enter his gates with grateful praise, his courts with praise. Give him grateful praise, bless his name. For I am is good. His unfailing love endures forever. His reliability throughout generations."

D. Psalm 100: Structure [15:20-17:04]

I'm going to jump down to Roman numeral three to the structure. This is an alternating structure and it has some chiasms within it. The alternating structure is very simple. It has two parts, it has two stanzas, both of which has a call to praise and a cause for praise. So you have in verse one, the call to praise, "Shout to I am all the earth, serve I

am with rejoicing. Come before him with a joyful shout." And then implicitly, we have the cause for praise is that "I am is God and we are his people." Then it repeats it in the second stanza on page 75, you have a second stanza, which is a call to praise. And that is a resolve to praise. "Enter his gates with grateful praise, his courts with praise," verse four. Then a cause for praise in verse five, "for I am is good, his unfailing love."

The imperatives calling us to praise may be a chiasm of seven imperatives in the psalm. You have to shout, serve him with a joyful shout; come before him; know that I am is God and we are his people; enter his courts, give him grateful praise with praise, and bless his name.

E. Chiasm in Psalm 100 [17:04-19:07]

The word where we have in the first, when you have in verse one, if you keep the two and your translation before you, where you have "come before him with a joyful shout." And in verse four, "enter his gates with grateful praise," the verb "come" and "enter" in Hebrew is the exact same word suggesting these two verses match each other.

So you would have "come before him" C., "enter his courts." Then the B would be "serve him with a joyful shout." And the B is, "give him grateful praise with praise." And then maybe "shouts to his name" is equivalent to "bless his name." If that's right, you could see the pivot. The major point of the Psalm, we talked about structure and chiasm and we said a chiasm is like throwing a rock into water. Then it ripples out. So the end ripples match each other and on down. The critical point is where the rock hits the water. That's the X. In this psalm, I'm suggesting the X where the rock hits the water, the main point is, "you know, that I am, our God He is God." You know that we, Israel, the seed of Abraham, as I discussed it, "we are his people." Therefore we today are the church. You should know that we are his true people and the medium of blessing of the earth. That would be the pivot. I'm not going to go further into the rhetoric. We haven't been, I don't think it's that profitable to use our time that way.

F. Exposition of Psalm 100 [19:07-21:45]

Let's move to page 76 and we'll look at the exposition of it. I've already given you the outline of the psalm, namely, two stanzas, very simple to keep in mind, call and cause. I can keep that in my head. Okay. In the superscript we're told it is a psalm. What you're getting here really is, and you could see this is rather dense. You are getting my forthcoming commentary and I just have worked out this psalm. So this is the commentary that will publish maybe two years from now with Jim Houston. We're putting out a third commentary and this is: Psalms as Christian Wisdom and Christian Praise. So the first psalm I did was one of the major praise psalm. This has put to the tune of the old one hundredth. Almost everybody knows this song. So therefore I did it first. So that's why it's a bit more dense. I just have to highlight certain material out of it.

But I start naturally here with a "psalm." I've already been saying that it is a psalm as a song, accompanied with musical instruments. Often with pizzicato of the stringed instrument. I thereupon discuss the value of music, what it does, the emotions. I don't know about you, but I am deeply moved by emotions. That's why we will have an altar call with "Just as I am without one plea," that kind of music. It speaks to the soul. The prophets had to have a stringed instrument that put them into the right spirit and music puts you into the right spirit. I find that before I preach, it's important that we have right hearts to hear the word of God and music prepares your heart to hear the word and our singing together speaks to us. So music will move me to tears and it's part of the emotion, part of worship, part of communication. So almost all these songs, psalms, they're songs with musical accompaniment.

I said, it's for a grateful praise and I said, this is to confess. You're confessing who God is and so forth. I have a detailed discussion, but I don't think I need to go further on it.

G. Psalms 100:1 [21:45-29:41]

I'm going to jump over to page 77 stanza one, the call to praise. Here I just go word by word. We begin with "shout." "Shout to I am." We said that praise is to be done

with enthusiasm. If you meditate on this word "to shout," you realize that this word is used for the blast of the trumpet. If a city was being invaded, this is the word you would use -- a shout, a loud alarm. That's straight off the bat, a loud alarm. It's like, to my mind, a shout at a football game when the team scores and just spontaneous, you've got this great shout for their team. We give a great shout for the team. That's where it starts out to shout for the Lord. So it's total enthusiasm, exuberant. So I developed that I give different uses for I said it's used for battle orders. It's used in the victory shout. It's used in the company of a blast of a trumpet. So, I say, in some ruah refers to shout like that heard when the home team scores a goal. Worship should not be like a funeral and everybody should be involved.

And we give a shout to I am. Here I discuss again, the word name for God. And the name for God is a sentence name. "I am" is abbreviated. It's a sentence name. His name is "I am who I am." When Moses said to God, what is your name? God said, "I am who I am." Actually, remember I talked about the different origins of the name of God when the Yahwistic writer and the priestly writer and so forth. Moses' question really is, if you want to didn't know the name, he would have said, "mi shemka," which means in Hebrew it would be "who is your name?" That's how they would have said it. When you say, "what is your name," Mah shimka it means "what does it really mean?" They're different. So if you give me another name, I'm glad to say to you, I know your name. But what does your name mean? And that's what he's asking. What does your name mean? My name is "I am who I am." And so that entails two things "I am." Jesus in the Gospel of John refers to himself as I am. And when he said before, "Abraham was, I am" that's when they accused him of blasphemy and wanted to kill him because he was identifying himself as the eternal one -- I am.

The other aspect of it is I am who I am. He's not only the eternal one who is always the same, but I am who I am. That he's always becoming, revealing himself in new acts of salvation. So he's unchanging. He is the eternal one, but his acts of history constantly are revealing him, showing us more about him. So it was that through the

golden calf that he revealed to them, he was compassionate, gracious, long suffering. So that in the process of salvation history, he was making himself known to them. In a way it was becoming more clear to them. And so he's always in a sense not changing, becoming.

We know him more clearly because in the Old Testament, we didn't know he was a Trinity. But when we get to the New Testament, we realize that God, revealing himself he's becoming more clear. We now understand that he is a Trinity. It's helpful here for me, the Trinity can be best understood as I triadic cord in music. I can't picture three in one, but I can hear three in one. So I can hear C E G and you see all those notes, C E G. They're all the same substance. They're all equal, but they make a tr-unity. I can understand that. That's how I understand God, to some extent, it's a tri-unity. Take one out you no longer have it. They're all equal and they're all necessary. Yet that's the closest I can get to a Trinity and understand it. So when I get to New Testament, I got C E G. I got, and now I know in the New Testament that the I am is Jesus Christ because the Father wants us to honor the Son. He wants to be known in the Son. He wants us to praise the Son. He wants us to pray in the name of the Son. He wants us to preach in the name of the Son. That's why I'm bothered in church when they talk generically about God and they don't say the name Jesus, because that's how God wants to be known. So we worship today in the name of Jesus. We know he's the Son of God that gives glory to the Father, and that's how we should worship.

So shout to the Lord. I have a ways to go here, cause it's just not me. Your all ahead of me. I'm carrying coals to Newcastle at this point. I'm the choir director of a choir that's way ahead of me. That's so hypocritical critical. Confessions are good for the soul every so often. Okay. "Shout to I am." So I discuss who I am is. Now here we come to this idea of "all the earth." This is what we talked about earlier, how it's "all the earth." This is another way of saying that in the Genesis 1 of those who bless you. And so they are, all the earth, is involved in worshiping the Lord because they identify with the, "know this that I am is God and we are his people." So all the earth should join Israel. God did not choose Israel to exclude people. He chose Israel to include everyone. It is in

his sovereign grace He chose them as the mediatorial kingdom, by which he would spread the knowledge of himself in the world. So that's the mediator of it. That's really what I'm driving at here with all the earth. So we've got through the first stich and Melanie's trying to figure out how I'm going to get through. We've got through the first stich, the first line.

H. Psalm 100:2 [29:41-34:44]

Now I'm at the second line, "serve," "serve the I Am with rejoicing." So here I wrestle with, what does it mean when you are to serve the Lord? There are two ideas here. This word entails that you have a master and that your master is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. It is not that I just believe in God, many people believe in God. I believe in the God, identify that God, as I believe that the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob who was the Father of my Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Son of God. To serve means I recognize him as my master. I'm in his service.

Now it can refer, serving the Lord, to your whole way of life of serving the Lord. So like Joshua will say, "as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." But in the Psalms, it means that you're in the temple with your sacrifice and with your praises and your testimony, you are serving your master. You're working for your master. So in all that, as we talk about doing the work of prayer, fellow brothers and sisters, labor in prayer, it's part of your service. So we have a whole time in a service where we all pray as we did on Sunday morning, we labor in prayer and that's part of working together of serving the Lord together in prayer. Those are the fundamental ideas.

The other idea I'm trying to produce here is since we're mortal, we serve some God. There's always something greater than us. We serve something and to serve the Lord, we have to reject the other gods, whatever else we're serving. You can't serve two masters. So it's a commitment. I like what Brueggemann says. This is on page 79. It's in italics at the end of the first paragraph he says, "to praise is to reject alternative loyalties and false definitions of reality. Praise is relentlessly polemical. The Lord Jesus taught no one can serve two masters either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be

devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve two masters."

So it means that it's devoted loyalty to him. As we offer up in labor in prayer and praise, we serve him as priests in the temple. I think that's what he's driving at here. Serve the Lord, which is part of shout to him. That's serving him.

The next one is "with rejoicing." And again, the major idea here is with rejoicing it is not just simply an inward joy. This word *simha* means almost leaping, jumping it's an outward expression of joy. It denotes the gladness and joy with the whole disposition. Again, next sentence. This joy is not restrained inward disposition of the psyche, but joy expressing itself as spontaneously and in an elementary way, in joyful leaping, stamping of the feet, hand-clapping, dance, music, and joyful shouts. That's how this word is used. Such Dionysian exuberance is found at marriage that's where it's used, wine harvest, reception of victors, coronation of a king and holy days. As these texts show, it refers to joy expressed at festivals not to inward joy. I am participates in this spiritual exuberance. He has no pleasure in formal ritual, religion without exuberance. Isn't that something? That's really something. I've a ways to grow. All right. That is "serve I am with rejoicing." Melanie. I finished the second stich. Now, after the third stich, "come before him with a joyful shout."

I. Psalm 100:2b [34:44-36:49]

Here I discuss, what does that mean? This part of the commentary I'm discussing the ubiquitous, that's the word ubiquitous. God's ubiquitous also his unique presence. The point is God is everywhere. Psalm 139, "where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to heaven, you're there. If I make my bed and sheol, you are there. If I take the wings of the morning light and I light on the far side of the sea, you are there." So on the vertical axis from heaven to hell and on the horizontal axis from rising of the sun to West, where it sets, God's present ubiquitously is the word I want. He's everywhere.

So but he's uniquely present at the temple. That unique presence is where his blessing is. So that though he is universally present. His blessing is not universally present. He is present where we are in praise and worship of him. He inhabits the praises

of Israel. He's enthroned on our praises. God is spirit. So where we are in spirit and we're worshipping him, he is uniquely present with his benedictory presence. And that's his unique presence.

So when we come to Jesus Christ, he's uniquely present. When you touch his garments, we are healed. It's by faith. So when he touches us, we are healed as an illustration of it. So it helps me to understand that he's ubiquitous and at the same time, he is unique with his blessings, for those who come before him with a song and a shout and a blessing.

J. Psalm 100:3 [36:49-50:33]

So now we get the cause and we come to the pivot of the psalm and they are to know two things. They've been invited to come. The nations have been invited to come, "come before him," but they don't enter into his gates until they have two fundamental doctrines. The first fundamental doctrine that they have to know is that the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of the Bible is God. You're not welcome and you don't enter his presence just because there's some kind of deity there. This is a distinct God that you have to know. So "know that he himself is God."

And know that he himself has made us, that we are his, we are his people. We are the sheep of his pasture, that we are the mediatorial kingdom. You can't come to God without the mediatorial kingdom. You can't come to God without Jesus Christ. You can't come to God without the church today. You come to God through the church who is the body of Christ in the world today. You have to know that before you worship. So that's the pivot of the psalm. So I discussed this to know that.

So I say on page 80, before entering the temple complex, the people must confess that I am alone is God and that Israel was his chosen people. But the question arises here: How do they know that? It's interesting because I talked about the recognition formula. Remember yesterday, I was talking about how do I explain that "by my name Yahweh I was not known" when to Moses that was not known. Whereas the patriarch Abraham called upon the name of the Lord. It was a days of Enosh that they began to call upon the

name of Yahweh. How could it be that God says I was not known by that name? I said, what it means is that God hadn't really demonstrated his power yet. So they would know who he really is. So he smashed Egypt that was unlike anything had ever happened. Now you will know who I really am. I'm the God who can defeat death and chaos. And that is all a foretaste of when Jesus conquered death itself and rose from the dead. So you can know God through experience as they did or through the resurrection as they witnessed it.

Or in the Ezekiel they would know God because of the prophecies that Ezekiel gave. In the fall of the temple normally when a god lost his temple, it was no longer king of the hill, if I'm not being too trite here, when he lost his temple, he lost his throne. He became a subordinate deity, or even no deity at all. He would die at that point. So now here is God committed to Mount Zion. We have there the mockers saying, "Sing us one of your songs of Zion," which is in rubble and so forth. So how do we know he's God? And that's why God gave his people these amazing prophecies about the future and against all odds who would have ever dreamed that Cyrus, the uncircumcised pagan king would ever would be the one who would build again Zion and would build the temple. Who could have ever prophesied that? And that was all prophesied ahead of time to confirm our faith in the Lord. But today we don't have, how do we know today? It's the same way as here. It's by the testimony of the people. It's the word of God. So faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God. It's due to the work of the Holy spirit that somehow or another, when we hear the gospel, we know it's the truth. As Paul says to the Thessalonians, "and it came to you as the word of God, as it truly is." It took the spirit of God to enable them to hear it. Somehow or another, by God's grace, someone, we heard that testimony that Christ died for us. And in our hearts, we found a need for him to be our savior. And we trusted him and we came to faith.

Paul said, don't go up to heaven to bring Christ down, don't go into the depths, to bring Christ up. If God did that for every generation, you had a resurrection, history would be going nowhere. That's why Moses said, don't go across the sea to get the covenant, the Sinaitic covenant. Don't go to the depths. The word of God is near you.

You got it now. He committed the book of the law to the people to recite it. He laid it up next to the ark. And every seven years they read it and that word had to carry power to the people. And that's how it works today. For 2000 years, he sustained his church by the word of God, the testimony of the lamb and the willingness of the church to suffer with him, bears testimony to him. There's a mystery to it. You can't control it. It's his grace, but it's their testimony to the world. "Know this," and they expect them to know it. That's the point I'm trying to make here.

And they comment on "know that" this is on page 80. I think that's most of it here. And "that he himself is God." And here Elohim, I discussed the Elohim and I said, the God in the second sentence says, Elohim signifies the quintessence of divine nature and eternal power. The plural form emphasizes that he is thoroughly characterized as such. Elohim is plural. I don't think it's a countable plural as a proof of the Trinity, the plural could be used differently in Hebrew. It means it's the quintessential essence of something. He is the quintessential essence of a divine being all that is not human.

I'm on page 81. Go ahead. So that is in the middle of the page. I talk about God, and I'm trying to give this to you students. I'm trying to give you the basic vocabulary of the Psalter. What does prayer mean? What does praise mean? What does Psalm mean? What does God mean? What does the Lord mean? So defining critical terms here, that just permeate the book of Psalms. "And he himself has made us" on next page, 82. He made them when he formed them, both electing the patriarchs as his family. In other words, he became part, he didn't become part of Abraham's family. He made Abraham part of his family and he took Abraham he so delighted in him. I want you to be my partner forever. And he made Abraham and his offspring who are truly Abraham. Jesus said to the Jews, we'll put it. "You're not Abraham seed. You are the seed of the devil." When he talks about Abraham's seed, he means people like himself who've shared Abraham's faith, who will teach his children in righteousness and so forth. Genesis chapter 18, a man of faith who will depend upon God and will even offer up his only begotten son. That's the kind of person that God can adopt as his family and relate to. So

that's part of it. And then having adopted that family, he promised he would make them into a nation. This is all part, he formed them. He elected them. He chose them and forever, and then we're grafted into it.

And then he formed them into a nation. And the comment here, a nation has four parts. It has a common people. It has a common law. It has a common land, and it has a common ruler. Those are the four things of a nation: people, law constitution of some sort that binds them together, place to live and a rule of government over them. Those to my mind are the four things of a nation. And that's, what's developed in the rest of the Old Testament that the people are now going to be Abraham's offspring. But now it's expanded to Gentiles who will come in as God always intended it to be. So the people are those who are physically Abraham's offspring, and spiritually Abraham's offspring. So they identified with him. Their common law of course, is the covenant that was made at Sinai. That's the standards by which we live. And the change is in the old dispensation, it was on rock and the new dispensation He writes the law on the heart. So it comes from within. It's a new age of spirit that the Spirit has written this law and our hearts. So it's not something we adhere to. It's something where we depend upon God who gives expression to it. So a good common law binds us together. The 10 commandments bind us together. What's fragmented in the United States is we no longer have a common narrative. It used to be the United States was based on the biblical values. We had a common moral law together, out of the Bible. We had a common narrative. But today in our secular world, we no longer have a common law, moral law. We can't hold people together that way. So there's a common law written on our hearts.

There's a common land, but what happens is that if you trace through the theme of land, suddenly in the New Testament, there is no reference. The land is the fourth most frequent word in the Old Testament. It's the fourth most frequent word. In the New Testament, not one reference in the epistles are teaching to the land. You won't find it. The only place that's used is in Galatians four, where Jerusalem about where is it? He sets up the two mountains. So it's negative at any rate. I just realized I'm getting something

way over too deep here. There's no land in the teaching. So what takes its place? It's Christ. The land is your place of security. The land is your place of life. The land is a place of rest, and that's what Christ is. We are in Christ. So I understand it, that Christ is the land, the place where we live and dwell. And that's the land.

Who's the ruler? Well, he's the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. It's Jesus Christ. He is a ruler. That's our nation. That's why Peter would say, "you are a holy nation." We are a common people. We have a common law. We have a common ruler and we have a common place where we dwell and that is in Christ together. So that's why our citizenship is in heaven. Perfect, same thing. Yes, that's perfect. Wonderful. Okay.

And we are indeed, that I'm down on page 82 and we are "indeed his people." Here I talk about the whole earth is his, but he uniquely chose Israel to be as people. I'm not going to, I think I'll just, there's so much there, I'm just going to let it go by so I can move on a bit here.

This is Dr. Bruce Waltke in his teaching on the book of Psalms. This is session number nine: pagan imagery, Zion and Psalm 100. [50:33]

Psalms
Session 10: Psalm 8, a psalm of praise
By Dr. Bruce Waltke

[\[Jump to TOC\]](#)

This is Dr. Bruce Waltke in his teaching on the book of Psalms. This is session number 10: Psalm 8, a psalm of praise.

A. Prayer [00:22-1:44]

That's going to be an exposition of Psalm 8, but before we get into the Psalm, let us prepare our hearts to hear the word of God.

So heavenly father, we, as a class, come into your presence, knowing that you love us so much you died for us. That you chose us is beyond our comprehension. We know that every good and perfect gift comes from you. And even our faith comes from you and the people who brought the word to us for we all came somehow through somebody bringing a word to us. Thank you, that it came to us as the word of truth, the spirit of God spoke to our hearts, convinced us of sin and righteousness and judgment and brought us to the Savior. You are the God who revealed these scriptures and you are the God who gave them to us, who loves us, help us to understand and to present them in a way that honors you. In Christ's name. Amen.

B. Call to Praise and Cause for Praise [1:44-2:42]

All right, we're in that section of approach called the Form Critical approach to the Psalms. One type of Psalm, a very dominant and important type is the hymn, the hymn of praise. We looked at its motifs and the motifs are a call to praise. We thought about the imperative. What does it mean for God to command us to praise? The enthusiasm with which we got to praise, who actually did the praising, choirs, all of Israel and calls upon, as we saw, all the world. But he wants only the moral ones, the ones who live holy lives today by the power of the Holy spirit. He doesn't want the praise of the wicked. It's an abomination to him.

C. Communicable and incommunicable attributes of God [2:42-6:14]

We looked at the cause for praise. There, we had a full on theology. We saw what a wonderful way to learn theology. It's from the people of God who are celebrating the attributes of God, the God of history, giving it back to God and it comes back to us as the word of God. We hear theology in words of praise, which I think is the best way to learn theology. We noticed that it celebrates his incommunicable attributes his aseity, his eternity. And what Hirsch calls the omni-competence: his omnipotence, his omnipresence, his omniscience, all of which we depend upon, but we cannot participate in. They're not communicable to us to participate. But on the other hand, there are his communicable attributes, namely his mercy, his faithfulness, his grace, and love. These two together make our sublime God. For were he just all omni-competent and all powerful without mercy, and grace he could be a despot as the gods of the pagans may be. On the other hand, if he was all grace at mercy, he would not have the power to affect it and bring it about. So it's just this beautiful combination of the incommunicable and the communicable attributes.

We talked about the incomparability of Yahweh. For my mind the solution of an evolution of religion is inappropriate for biblical theology. That is that religion advances from polytheism to the worship of only one God while recognizing other gods to monotheism. I think a better understanding is to distinguish between theological statement that there is no other God and religious statement because of the reality that people worship to delusions and false gods. God is incomparable to everything humans can imagine and that everything they imagine is only an illusion. So we talked about that. We talked about other attributes as well as his love and faithfulness is so forth.

Just said a word that he's the God of creation. We looked at how do we handle that. They use the myths of the world around them. They use them figuratively to show that God is the one who created it. They use the language of myth to show that he is the one that conquered the chaos and he is the true God. We ended with saying a word about the Songs of Zion and how there too its helpful to know about the Ugaritic texts and that

Baal's mountain is Mount Zaphon. And all that Mount Zaphon was in Baal religion, Zion is the invincible mountain. It's where God meets. It's where we meet with God on the mountain. It's where he has victory and so forth.

D. Psalm 100 and the mediatorial kingdom [6:14-10:51]

But after getting a broad view, our method is to look at things more narrowly and so I picked out two psalms of praise to be considered. One is Psalm 100 that we looked at during the last hour and a very famous psalm. We took up some of the famous words and we reflected on that "all the earth" was to celebrate and they would come to God by knowing that the God of Israel is the true God and that his people are the sheep of his pasture. They are the mediators of the kingdom of God on the earth. A tremendous change took place in the New Testament, in the Old Testament for the Gentiles to come to God, they had to come to Abraham. They had to come to Israel. They had to come to the temple. In the oldest dispensation Israel did not go out as missionaries to the world to bring the world to God. The nations came and represented through their emissaries and through their kings, they would come to Jerusalem like the Queen of Sheba did, when she met the King Solomon. In the ancient world ambassadors would come and they would be at Jerusalem and they would see the worship. Israel is saying, join us in worship with the true and living God. But Israel never went to the other nations; that did not occur. They didn't have missionary activity as such. The closest you come to it is with Jonah who went to Nineveh and preached judgment and called the people to repentance. But that is a unique.

When you come to the New Testament, now it changes. Now you have to go into all the world and preach the gospel. We're to tell all peoples about the mediatorial kingdom about the mediator is one God, one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus. It's interesting that in the Gospel of John, that it's when the Greeks come to Philip and say to Philip, "We would see Jesus" that Jesus now knows the hour of his death has come. Prior to that in the Gospel of John, Jesus says, "my hour has not yet come." It's obvious that Jesus is on a timetable. He knows he's headed up to his death. He

says, "my hour is not yet come," but when the Gentiles came and they said, "we would see Jesus." He said, "now my hour is come." How did that signal to our Lord His hour had come? It was time for him to die. The gospel would not go out into all the world until atonement had been made for all the world. So at the beginning of John, John the Baptist says, "Behold, the lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world." So therefore the sacrifice has been made for the whole world. So for the whole world to come to him, there must be an, atonement made for all the peoples. So therefore with that atonement made for all the peoples of the earth, Jesus says, "go into all the world to preach the gospel." So we bring Jesus to the world. They don't have to come to us, though they may, but we have a responsibility of bringing that gospel to all the world. And that's what we were talking about "know that, he is God." There is some change in dispensation at that point.

E. Psalm 8: Contextual Setting [10:51-14:18]

Now we're at Psalm 8, and this is on page 90 of your notes. So let us read this wonderful psalm. This is the first praise psalm in the Psalter. Psalm one and two, are introduction. Psalm one is the wicket gate we said. It's for those who delight in the law of the Lord that are like the tree planted by streams of water. It is those who are righteous because they're delighting in the law, they've been a new creation that they can enter into the Psalms, as we put it, will lead to the celestial city. The second Psalm is a coronation liturgy and introduces us to the main character of the psalm who is the king. So Psalm two is "I have set my king upon Zion, my holy hill," and he's going to rule the entire earth. "Ask of me, my son, I'll give the heathen for your inheritance, the ends of the earth for your possession." That's the introduction. Then immediately we get Psalm three, and this is when David fled from Absalom and it begins, "O Lord, my Lord, how many are my enemies? How many rise up against me? Many are saying, there's no deliverance, no salvation for him in God." And so he's in distress. He just says, "deliver me my God from this distress." That's Psalm 3. We looked at Psalm 4 the other day where it's the distress of a drought and the king is in crisis. Psalm 5 is in distress. Psalm 6 is in distress, Psalm 7

is in distress.

And now we come for the first time to Psalm 8 and we read, "O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth." And now we have a praise for the name of God. So this is the first praise psalm. So it seemed to me appropriate that we consider this very famous psalm as well, this first praise song. What's going to happen now you're going to get 9 and 10 is a lament. 11 is something of a song of Thanksgiving. But with a lot of them 12 and 13, and then you get 14 and it's this psalm that speaks of the depravity of man, "there is none that do good. None that do right before the Lord." We're all sour milk. We've all gone astray. That's 14. It's interesting because 8 and 14 match each other. Eight is how great man can be. "You've put everything under his feet," and 14 is how terrible humanity is. Then 15 through 24, make it so unity again, I'll discuss that later on when I talk about editing the Psalter. But I'm trying to give you a feel for where you are in the Psalms at this point.

F. Psalm 8: Translation [14:18-17:05]

So this is Psalm eight. "LORD." This is Yahweh. The tetragrammaton. We call it the Tetragrammaton because it is the four constants, Y H W H. And we think the vowels are "a," an "e." Y a H W e H. So it is Yahweh but translated normally by LORD. And then, "our Lord" in lowercase, which is the first one is pronounced Adonoi and this one is pronounced Adoni. And it means "my master," "our master." "O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name and all the earth. You who have set your splendor upon the heavens. From the mouth of children and nursing infants, you have laid the foundation of strength on account of your foes, to eliminate the enemy and the avenger. When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is a mere mortal that you are mindful of him, a common human being that you care for him? You made him lack a trifle from heavenly beings, and you crown him with glory and honor. You caused him to rule over the works of your hands. You put everything under his feet, all flocks and herds, even the wild animals, the birds of the air, the fish of the sea, and the one that swims the path of the seas. LORD, our Lord, how

majestic is your name in all the earth."

On page 90, the next page, I guess it's page 90. I have a discussion the translation of this verse, the use of this verse by the writer of Hebrews with reference to Jesus in Hebrews chapter two, where we're told that "he made him a little lower than the angels, you've made him for a little time lower than the angels." It's a little bit too advanced for this point in our studies of the Psalm. But there I'm discussing the differences between the Greek and Hebrew text and what the writer of Hebrews is doing referring to the career of our Lord. I don't want to do that right away. So I'm going to skip that. We're not ready for it.

G. Psalm 8: Structure [17:05-19:41]

All right. I come then to page 91. My major concern here is that we have a basic structure in our mind before we get into the details of the exegesis. So I'm mainly concerned about the rhetoric on top of page nine and namely the structure of the Psalm. This Psalm has what we call an inclusio. An inclusio of its theme that it begins with, "O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name and all the earth." And it ends with, "O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth." So instead of a call for praise, it's a declaration of praise. It's a little different. And one of the things about studying Psalms, it strikes you, this is a really a declaration of praise that all the earth is now praising the Lord. That's a little bit different instead of calling on the earth to praise the Lord. All the earth is praising the name of the Lord is the posture of the psalm. And that's the theme.

Now, the theme is developed in two stanzas. The two stanzas are an alternating parallelism. First of all, he talks about the creation, the order of creation and the splendor of God in creation. Then he moves from that to the order of history, the order of redemption, and how God eliminates the evil from the earth. So it's the splendor of God in the creation and the splendor of God in history and how he eliminates the enemy and the avenger at the end of verse three. Then we come back and again, we have the glory of

God, "when I consider the heavens the work of your fingers, the moon of the stars," and so forth as the greatness of the creation. Then it's the man who rules all over it and brings everything under his dominion. So we go from the order of creation, to the order of redemption and back then to the order of creation, with more detail to the night sky. Then the order of redemption of mankind, bringing everything under the dominion of his feet. So you could see that's basically the structure of the psalm.

H. Exposition of Psalm 8 [19:41-32:43]

I'm going to skip the chiasm and go directly then on page 92 to the exposition. So here I can just go word by word, as I usually do to understand it. We've already discussed LORD, the I am, Yahweh, and I don't need to do that again. Notice it's "our," that all the nations should join them, Israel, as we had in the last psalm, "know that the Lord has made us." So "LORD, our Lord" is the people of God are praising this. You may notice later on in the psalm, we moved from the "our" to the king himself, "when I consider" is the second stanza. So he moves from, the, I am our sovereign, our master. So whatever glory the man has, he is a servant of the Lord.

And he accomplishes his task by his acknowledgement that he serves the Lord in a broad sense that God is the master. We talked about that the last hour. When he says, "how majestic" this is in your page 92, I define the word. It means mighty or splendor and power. It's used of the Red Sea. It's used of his dominion over the storm and sea. It's used of his right hand that shattered the Egyptian pick troops. So this word addir, "how majestic" is, how powerful is your name at defeating your enemies. How majestic is your name because in this psalm he's going to defeat his enemies and bring everything under the feet of his people to rule it all. So addir is the appropriate word for how majestic.

I think you can understand why I became a Hebrew professor. It's when I said I began to get into theology, that I realized everything went back to words. That's when I became absorbed in languages, because I could see that I couldn't handle it accurately or with finesse, unless I knew what words meant. I knew how to work with languages. So that's what I'm doing. You will learn in theology, but it was the garden is on another level

where many people don't want to go. There are a lot of students spit out the Hebrew and they joke about the Hebrew. I think it's partly the professor's fault who doesn't make it clear to them, the value of what their studying and so forth.

Today the name that's his name is majestic. Today I say his name is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. There, I illustrate the Trinity by this C E G chord. He's a unity and his name, we glorify his name and by Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We baptize in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. That is the name by which we are baptized into the triad God, because that is the finished product of his revelation. I think I need not say anymore there.

Now we have some reflection. I did something in a little different way here, instead of just strictly exegesis. I'm reflecting of bit and I'm showing how necessary it is that we praise the name of God. I'm got to say something very radical. If we don't praise God, He will die. That's very radical. Let me explain myself cause you know, I don't really believe that, but it's true at the same time. That's fair enough. I'll explain it. Some philosophers helpfully make a distinction between ontological knowledge and epistemological knowledge. So we make going back in a bit of philosophy, but hang with me, it may be worth your while to understand why I'm saying, "if we don't praise God, he will die." Ontological knowledge is the way things actually are, epistemological knowledge is the way humans know. It's always relative. Ontological knowledge is absolute certain. Epistemological knowledge is always incomplete.

So let me illustrate what I'm talking about. When Elaine and I moved back from Philadelphia from Westminster Seminary, which was a wonderful experience, and I went back to Regent. We had a rented apartment in an apartment house. It was just to just the next block over from the college. There was an apartment on the eighth floor and Elaine could have been on the balcony of this apartment and I could have been in my office and we could have communicated by semaphore. We were that close. It was ideal. Furthermore, it was beautiful. We overlooked English Bay. My sister said, "Bruce your living room is 30 miles by 30 miles." We looked over this mountains and bay and I

watched the clouds. It was beautiful. It was absolutely wonderful. The most amazing part was it was affordable. I mean, we had a limited budget and we could rent this apartment. It wasn't that big, but it was perfect.

There was only one problem with it. They didn't allow animals and Elaine loves our cat. Now we're torn; the perfect apartment, but we have a cat. It was the only one. Our cat was perfect. It didn't scratch. Very clean. Didn't make any noise. The truth is no one would know we had a cat. So we moved in cat and all because nobody would know we had a cat. We thought, of course, we couldn't live with this. But anyway, that's what we did sinners that we are. We moved in with the cat. Well, there was a problem. The cat jumped into the window. Now we had a problem because the landlady may go out and there's a cat in the window. So Elaine clever, as she is, we had a stuffed cat that looked exactly like our cat, a tabby cat. So she put the stuffed cat in the window. And deceptive as we were, sinners that we are, she would move the stuffed cat from window to window. So if the real cat jumped in the window, the landlady wouldn't know that we had a cat. Naturally as Christians, we couldn't live with this. So Elaine says, find a way, she said, that we'll have to give up the cat. It's not right. Okay. Let me have one more chance.

So when it came time to pay the rent to the landlady, I said to her, you know, we have philosophy, some philosophers make a distinction between ontological knowledge and epistemological knowledge. And thankfully she said, what does that mean? So I said, well, ontological knowledge is the way things are. And only God knows. And epistemological knowledge is always relative. And that's how humans know. She said, I don't understand what you are talking about? So I went back to my old philosophy I said, "Well, let us take, there's a tree in the North woods. It's 200 miles removed from all human beings. Nobody knows the tree is there. The tree falls down in a windstorm. So by ontological knowledge, the tree fell down, but only God knows it. Epistemologically the tree didn't fall down because nobody knows it.

She said, "what are you driving at?" I said, "well, take a cat," and she got the point. "Ontologically, yes, we have a cat, but epistemologically we don't have a cat." And

I was out witting, Bill Clinton on this one on what "is" is? And so she got the point that what I was driving at, nobody knows we have a cat. So ontologically yeah, but epistemologically we don't. She said to me, "have you a darn cat?" So you've got the point.

Now you can see what I'm saying. Ontologically, God exists, but what good is it if nobody knows it? You see if nobody knows it, he doesn't exist for any practical purposes. Say, "Oh, I know maybe Jupiter exists." Don't believe it. Maybe Zeus exists, but nobody praises him. He doesn't exist. So suppose we all stop praising God, you see what I mean when I say he would die? He would cease to exist. There's a problem with that however and the problem is it makes God's existence dependent upon me and we know that's all wrong. So I put here the resolution, notice what Jesus says, this is in Luke chapter nineteen, "When he came near the place where the road goes down the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of disciples began joyfully to praise God in loud voices of all the miracles they had seen. Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord. Peace in heaven and glory in the highest. Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, "teacher rebuke your disciples." "I tell you," he replied, "If they kept quiet, the stones will cry out." There will always be praise if humans didn't praise him, the stones will praise him. God cannot die. See he will not, He will always have a people to praise him. He called you and me for his praises. He exists in our praises to him. This is amazing of our dignity and who we are, as we praise the Lord, people know he exists. So, "O LORD, our Lord, how majestic and powerful is your name in all the earth" as they're bringing praises to him. So that is a theological reflection on this theme of the psalm.

Now this theme is developed and it's in the first stanza, splendor in the heavens. And then amazing, and this needs understanding, "from the mouth of children and infants you've ordained strength" and so forth. But the first part is "his splendor in the heavens." There's two parts there and you have, "you set your splendor in the heavens," the order of creation. And now the order of redemption "from the mouth of children and infants, you've laid the foundations of a strong bulwark in order to eliminate your foes, to

eliminate the enemy and the avenger." I say that God's rule over the heavens is immediate, but God's rule over the earth is mediated through his people. It's not immediate. He rules through us. Let's come back to that. First of all, I say, displays his glory in the heavens. Then we're going to come back to the second idea that children eliminate his enemies.

I. Glory in the Heavens (Ps. 8) [32:43-51:03]

First of all, then his glory in the heavens. "You who have set your, 'hod'" means royal splendor of righteous rulers. I point here in a word study, often gloss "glory" used exclusively of a righteous ruler and he has this tremendous splendor of a glorious righteous King. It's normally translated. The preposition "al" is often said to be "above" the heavens and maybe "you have set your glory above the heavens." But the preposition "al" can also mean "upon" the heavens. So I think it's more likely that as you look up in the next one, it's the moon and the stars that reveal his handiwork and his greatness. So I'm more inclined to think they should be translated. "You put your glory upon the heavens." So as you look up to the heavens, you see the splendor, you see this awesomeness of God.

And the heavens are, we call it the sky. But actually in their phenomenological way of looking at it. it was translated "the firmament" in Genesis one is translated "the dome" or "vault" in the modern translations is actually the sky and was looked upon as a transparent crystal dome, holding up the water above it. It is purely phenomenological. That's the way it appears. So in Egypt, for example, it shows the sun in a boat going across the waters above. Interestingly, it's phenomenological. It's a way of speaking about God and understanding things. Shamash, the sun god, or one of the representations of him, he sits on his throne and he sits on the flood. And we saw that in Psalm 29, God sits above the flood. The flood is the imagined waters up there that we're talking about. So anyway, "his glory is upon the heavens" that dome that's up there using their kind of phenomenological visualization of the world.

I thought, well, let's reflect upon that because if that was true in David's world,

how much more true is our world with the Hubble telescope that is utterly beyond all comprehension. I talked there about the size of things. I mean, it's just beyond all comprehension, how the glory of God to me is our galaxy is what, a hundred thousand light years across. So going at the speed of the light, 186,000 miles a second would take you 100,000 years to get across our galaxy. Then we learn now with the Hubble telescope, there are more galaxies than there are sand on our seashores. There are billions of galaxies. That's beyond all comprehension.

I went to the, what do you call it, where you have astronomy? No, not the observatory. It's, it'll come to me, where they show stars and they teach you about astronomy and so forth. I went to the one in New York and there, they showed a galaxy. It was in the shape of a crab between the two legs of the crab as it were, there was a space of 700,000 light years, seven times the size of our galaxy. There are billions of them. I mean, it just absolutely addles your mind, the size of this whole thing. The truth is, and here's where the problem comes for many people, that Jupiter is six times larger than the Earth. So if you are on Jupiter, the earth would be six times smaller in brightness. From the edge of our galaxy, a hundred thousand light years. Oh, from the edge of our planets with Pluto, for example, and so forth for from the edge of our planetary system, the size of the earth is the size of a pixel on a TV screen. It's that small. And from the edge of our galaxy, it couldn't even be seen with the Hubble telescope, it's that small and seemingly that insignificant. Then you stop to think, and we'll raise the question, what is our little houses? They're micro organisms, and what are we on the scale of that, what's it all amount to? And many people feel that we're just nothing, which denies what we know.

As I view it, the earth is a stage. And on this stage, a drama is being played out between right and wrong, justice and injustice, truth and falsehood Christ and Satan, the church and the world. The great spiritual issues are being played out on this earth and I think nowhere else. That gets tremendous significance. You don't need a big stage. If compared to the whole world, it's just this almost infinitesimal, but on that stage has played out truth. And that's how I understand the earth. This is the stage within the whole

cosmos, where the spiritual struggle is being played out. And we're part of that play and who are we?

"What is man, that you're mindful?" Well, that's what he's going to say. We rule the whole thing. We're going to conquer evil. We're going to conquer injustice. We're going to conquer delusions and lies. That's what we do in this play on this infinitesimally small planet Earth. So it's very significant, not in size, but in truth. So I list some of that.

I've thought I have a few pictures in here of these galaxies. And yeah, these are some galaxies that the Hubble telescope has seen. I just thought I'd add them. They're beautiful really in their own way. I mean, we live in a marvelous age that we can see these things.

The second thing I've reflected on is not only the size of the earth, but the speed of everything. So I began with speed of the earth. That the equator is rotating at a thousand miles per hour. What is it? 25,000 miles per hour. We are traveling at a thousand miles per hour. The galaxy is spinning around the center of the galaxy at 120 kilometers per hour. No, no. I skipped one the earth, the orbit of the earth. We are hurdling around the sun as 66,000 miles per hour to complete the circuit in one year takes, you have to go at 66,000 miles per hour. I think the satellites go at 18,000. So we're going more than three times the speed of a satellite. And then the sun is revolving at the same time.

And finally, space is expanding. And this is the great mystery of astronomy. That space is expanding at 1.8, the speed of light. It is the speed of light. 186,000 miles per second expanded at about 360,000 miles per second. Who can comprehend that? It's just overwhelming how "your splendor upon the heavens." We have more knowledge of that splendor than anybody could before us had. That's why, because it's expanding so fast that's why I think it's, this is a whole discussion. But I don't think the Bible dates the Earth. I think the problem is the fossil record. As I understand Genesis one, the earth is already here when you begin. I don't think he could talk from the Bible about a younger or an older Earth. You can't prove it any which way. So I'm very open to the idea that the Earth is 13.9 billion years old, or 14 billion years old because when I pick up Genesis, the

Earth is already here, but it's in chaos. That's how I understand that chapter. So therefore it's not an issue for me. But that's why I accept that we're so many million years old, but that's why I can understand with the speed of space. The quasar, for example, is 24 billion light years away. How did it get so far with this much older than the big bang theory. The reason is the universe is expanding at this tremendous rate of speed. The big question today is where's the energy coming from to push out space and how can we comprehend space within something that's not space? This whole thing is beyond comprehension for me, but all of that, I think that's where we are. So the whole thing to me is proof of God. I give you some quotes here from Einstein, where as I said, "what is incomprehensible is that it is comprehensible."

This is out of my Old Testament theology, where I'm discussing this a bit. On the basis of the hypothesis of the big bang, which almost everyone accepts. And on the basis, if you wish to work with it of evolution, some secular and Christian scientists have abducted the anthropic cosmological principle. According to this principle, physical qualities, such as a strong nuclear force constant, a gravitational force constant, the expansion rate of the universe, the average distance between the stars and the values of other physical qualities had to be so precise to affect through evolution, a thinking creature who could reflect upon their origins. The point, if you accept the big bang, which I do, evolution, which is I think not to be discussed here. And never mind that's a whole discussion. If you were to accept that everything had to be so precise to bring it to existence a human being, a thinking creature that's the only point that I wish to make. Everything had to be so precise. So according to the best explanation is that there was an intent and design from the beginning. Noble Laureate professor Steven Weinberg though a skeptic, notes life as we know it would be impossible if any one of several physical quantities had slightly, different values. Where they were off just a bit, we wouldn't be from just a physical viewpoint. Roger Penrose, professor of mathematics at Oxford University and Wolf prize winner for his analytical description of the big bang finds these quantities so fine tuned for life that an intelligent creator must have chosen them. For him

it's irrefutable. The only way that you can explain it. It's so precise. One concept that requires fine tuning has to do with the energy of the big bang, Weinberg quantifies the tuning of a one part in 10 to the 120th power. It had to be that is a 10 with 120 zeros. It had to be that precise for us to be here.

Michael Turner, a widely quoted astrophysicist from the University of Chicago describes that tuning with a simile. The precision is as if one could throw a dart across the entire universe and hit a bullseye, one millimeter in diameter on the other side. That would be the possibility. If you were a hundred thousand miles away and you could throw this dart and it would hit a bullseye with that was one millimeter thick. So just a few things here that, you know, before the Hubble telescope, the size of the proton is one eight, three six larger than the electron. Were that a fraction, different, the proton larger than the electron matter would not exist as we know it. It's that precise. The sun has to be exactly 93 million miles away, but further away we freeze too close we burn up. Whether the earth closer to the center of the cosmos, we would be destroyed by radiation. We are just in the exactly the right spot. We're also in the right spot to observe elsewhere. There's too much light. Here we have enough darkness that we could see this sky. There is so much, that's incredible to me. This is one of the strengths of Hugh Ross' book, "Reasons to Believe." He also points out he did his major at Cornell in astrophysics. And what I didn't know until I read the book, that the earth would spin at two and a half cycles. No, it would spin one cycle, every two and a half hours. The reason is 24 hours is the moon is going in the opposite direction. The moon is a brake that keeps us from rotating faster. Can you imagine if we had a circle around every two and a half hours, but the moon slows it down. It's all perfect.

Water expands. So that fascinates me. It's the only matter that expands. If it didn't expand, we'd become an ice cube. The Earth's reflectivity has to be perfect. That is to say, the light that hits the Earth there's a certain amount that it absorbs. It's a certain amount that it reflects out into space. If that is not precise, photosynthesis does not take place. Life would not exist. "When I consider your splendor, you have set your splendor upon

the heavens." So Aristotle said, "Should a man live underground and converse with the works of art and mechanism. And afterwards be brought out up unto the day to see the several glories of the heavens and earth. He would immediately pronounce them of the work of such a being as we define God to be." So Aristotle is saying, if anyone knows anything about mechanics and art, and they had been in a cave, they had studied human art and human mechanics, and then they stepped up out here. It would be so much more glorious than any human could have achieved. And he said that you would pronounce whoever did this God.

But Paul gives a theological element to it. He says, "the wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of people who suppress the truth by their wickedness. Since what may be known about God is plain to them because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world, God's invisible qualities, his eternal power and defined nature have been clearly seen being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse." So for Paul, it takes on a theological dimension of a moral imperative.

J. From the mouth of babes [51:03-57:50]

Well, now having spoken about the greatness of God and having spoken as the Earth as a stage, how does God eliminate the evil? And we read "from the mouths of babes and sucklings [nursing babes]. You have laid the foundation of the strength to eliminate your foes and to eliminate the enemy and the avenger." Good explanation. Yeah. I read that many times trying to figure out what work is that all about. This reminds me of my father. He thought that he could keep his mind from atrophying by memorizing Scripture. So he would memorize large portions of Scripture in his late nineties even. And so he would go along and he'd quote, Hebrews 11, one of his favorite chapters. He would quote, large portions of John. He just loved the Scriptures and so he memorized it. Part for selfish reasons, but just really for God. So he came to Psalm 8. I remember it from the King James of course, "O LORD, our Lord, how excellent is your name in all the earth. You who have set your set your glory upon the heavens. From the

mouths of babes, you've established strength, to eliminate the enemy and the avenger" or whatever it is there. "When I consider your heavens the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars you have set in place. What is man, that you are mindful of him, the son of man, that you visited him and you've put all things under your feet and so forth. So my dad would recite it and he would say, "O LORD, our Lord, how excellent is your name in all the earth. You have set your glory upon the heavens. Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings, you've ordained strength. When I consider your heavens the moon and the stars." And when he was finished, I said, but dad, you eliminated verse 2b, "to eliminate the foe and the avenger." That's it? Yeah, I know, but I don't know what that means. So one way to solve it is just not recite it.

So I'm going to do my best to make it clear now what this is talking about "from the mouths of children and babes." First of all, the exegesis. I think it should be, these are figures of speech. I think it should be clear that a mouth cannot lay the foundation. It must be a metonymy. What he's talking about, the mouth refers to the petitions and praises of the psalm. So it's through their petitions and praises that you eliminate the foe. You see, so the mouth obviously has to be a figure of speech because the mouth cannot build a bulwark or eliminate people.

Then more than that it's children and nursing babies. So how can nursing babies give petitions and praises? It must be a metaphor for people who are not stronger or greater and they're just like little nursing like babies. So it's from the petition and praises of people who are no more than the most weak that you could think of, the most weak person. So I think Luther is right here. Luther rightly interpret the children and nursing babies as a figure, I would say a metaphor, a hyperbole purposely to describe the kingdom of God's unique character of humility. That "unless you should become like a little child you cannot enter the kingdom of God." So from people who are not depending upon themselves, they are not claiming any strength in themselves. All of their strength is in the Lord and it's their petitions and their praises.

Then strength is probably another metonymy for a citadel, a place of protection.

So that it's like, so even the gates of hell cannot prevail against it. It's a place of strength. That's why the NRSV, new RSV, I think has "bulwark" or "protection." So the strength is it cannot be defeated and it will triumph. So it's really compounding figure speech upon figure of speech to get across the point very tersely. This is poetry. In poetry you have to expect terseness and figures of speech. And this is very terse. So mouth is petitions and praises, babes and nursing babes is the weakness of those who offer up human weakness in faith. They are strong and they eliminate the foe and the self-avenger. To me, that makes wonderful sense. The avenger is the faithless who do not petition God to avenge the wrong. They are strong in themselves and so they avenge themselves. Whereas the church doesn't avenge itself, it depends upon God and lives in faith that God will right the wrongs and so forth.

So I have reflections. The psalm assumes a hero, a protagonist in spiritual battle against an enemy and antagonists. The protagonists praise I am. This is from, so through the praise of children and infants, you have established a stronghold against your enemies, to silence the foe and the avenger. The antagonists are those who do not praise, but avenge themselves instead of trusting God. So we're engaged in a battle, a spiritual battle, a faith versus force. We're in a spiritual battle and God is going to be the Victor. We are going to win through faith and that's the struggle, faith and unbelief. We are being thrown at us the darts of unbelief today. Satan is strong, but we know Christ is stronger.

K. Psalm 149 [57:50-1:01:03]

Here's Psalm 149. "Sing to the Lord a new song. His praise in the assembly of saints. Let Israel rejoice in their maker, let the people of Zion be glad in their King. Let them praise his name with dancing and make music to him with tambourine and harp for the Lord delights in his people. He crowns the humble with salvation. Let the saints rejoice in this honor and sing for joy on their bed. May the praise of God be in their mouths and a double edged sword in their hands to inflict vengeance on the nations and punishments on the peoples. To bind their kings with fetters that nobles with shackles of iron, to carry out the sentence written against them. This is the glory of all the saints."

Notice the "double edge sword." Well, their praise is in the mouth and a double edged sword is in their hands. We'll talk about this later. It is not that God's people don't use means they do use means. They don't avenge themselves. But in the Old Testament, they did have swords. There was a use of the sword. But I'll talk about that more when I get to Psalm 3, then how faith and means go together, take your worth our while. These kinds of things but we have other types of battles over here, battling gainful employment, right? Highly gainful employment. Here's a highly talented, skilled international lawyer that does transactions with international companies, but now all work is dead and he doesn't have work. Yeah. And Bill, the young guy, his business is literally teetering on collapse, because of the economy. So there's a struggle, there's a fight that's going on. But there's other types of battles on physical. Yeah. They're dealing with circumstances, right. That's a big challenge out there today. People needed encouragement, you know, where do you turn? Right. In these kind of situations too, that's where we have to meet them with praise on our lips and faith in our hearts. God is faithful.

L. Psalm 8: Stanza 2 [1:01:03-1:05:03]

We turn to the second stanza the glory in the heavens of the splendor and the mortal's rule over the earth. The second stanza is an alternating parallel. It reinforces and expands the faith first. The nation celebration, of I am as created and rule is now down from, and here's the changes from "our" people to "I," "when I consider." He's talked about the heavens and now specifically to the moon and stars are housed in the heavens, and now from the elimination of the enemy to the rule over the earth.

So, in the first part, it's the prayers of the people of the meek. Now it's the Lord who stoops down and visits them and to take care of the mortal. How majestic is elaborated upon in the first stanza and the order of creation, majestic splendor upon the heavens and in the order of redemption, majestic splendor through answered prayer. In the second stanza, the majesty of the name of the Lord is his, majestic splendor of the moon and the stars and in the order of redemption, it's the majestic splendor to his caring for the meek.

So in the first stanza they're in prayer. In the second stanza, God is caring for them, He's visiting them, He's remembering them and He's making them ruler. So it's a kind of a parallelism that gives you two viewpoints. They're in prayer and he's visiting them and helping them.

Well, let's look, then we have the three parts here in the second stanza. We have this glory in the heavens at night. Then we have, he stoops to help the mortals, that's in verses three and four. In verses five and the next verses, after that, he crowns the mortal to rule, the next quatrain, crowns the mortal to rule. Then we're told what the mortal rules.

So first of all, we have the crowning of the mortal. Then we have the rule of the mortal. And then we have what the mortal rules in these following quatrains.

First of all, the glory of the heavens in the night sky, "when I consider your heavens the work of your fingers, the moon of the stars, which you have set in place." Says Speiser about consider, "When I consider" when man gazes up at the unlimitable spans, the expansive heavens studded with stars, the difference between God and man is revealed in all its magnitude and the whole contradictory quality of that difference is made manifest. "When I consider" and you look the night sky and you realize this is totally different than what we are. "Your heavens, the work of your fingers" notice God is the owner. It's the work of his fingers. He owns it by creation. It's his product. And what it says, "you set it in place." It means it's permanent; it's firm. But now this great God over the whole creation, He stoops down to help mere mortals. So he raises the question, "what is a mere mortal?" The Hebrew I've got to give that. "What is a mere mortal that you are mindful of him, a common human being that you care for him."

M. Four Words for “man” [1:05:03-1:13:00]

We go word by word. They're all four words for “man” in Hebrew that are translated that refer to what we call the mankind in general. The more on one word is “enosh,” which speaks of man in his weakness. That is when Seth gave birth to Enosh, which is in human weakness that's when man began to call upon the name of the Lord.

Now you'll understand why they began to call upon the name of the Lord, because it represented, he recognizes the weakness of man that's "enosh."

"Adam" refers to human being generically. "Ish" I said, we had in Psalm 1 is the individual. And then the "gibor" is the strong man. So you have to be aware of these four words. This case, the gibor is sufficient and the enosh is weak. So that's why he uses it. "What is this weak man that you are mindful of him?" "The mindful, the essence of God's remembrance." says Brevard Childs at Yale, "lies in his acting towards someone because of a previous commitment. That is to say that you remember him. I understand that to mean. He remembers that he commissioned man to rule the earth. So he is mindful of him because that's what he commanded the man to do is rule his creation."

And then he says, "what is the son of man?" And that's a whole discussion, but I think it's simply means "human being." That's where we get off on the book of Hebrews and I don't want to get into that at this point. Says Job, "if even the moon is not bright and the stars are not pure in his eyes, how much less a mortal [enosh] who is but a maggot, a human being, ben adam [same word as here] who is only a worm." Let it go with that.

Now we come to "you are mindful of him, you care for him." And this is where we get the idea. He stoops down to meet the petitions of his people. The Hebrew word is paqad. It means "to visit" in the sense to take careful note of one's situation and to act appropriately. It does not mean as the old King James said "to visit" that "you visit man." The visit would mean to me to come to visits, to come into someone's presence. That's not what it means. The NIV sometimes renders the verb "to come to the aid of." When God committed to his human image the rule of creation, he did not abandon them. Implicitly, by his taking careful note of his vice regent's situation acting appropriately, he visits with salvation those who in childlike meekness depend upon him. He told us to rule, and those who depend upon him, he visits. He understands the situation and he comes to enable them to do what they were commissioned to do.

Reflect a bit on this. What is man? How do we think about man? And how you think about yourself is fundamental to your being. And that's what I'm raising here. Says

Emil Brunner, “the most powerful of all spiritual forces is man's view of himself. If you think of yourself as an animal, you will behave broodishly. How do you think of yourself? The way in which he understands his nature and his destiny. In other words, if you understand you're the creation of God and your destiny is heaven, that's going to totally alter everything you think about and what you want to do here, how you should behave. So your understanding of who you are is fundamental to your whole behavior and theology. "Indeed, it is the one force which determines all the others, which influence human life." I think it's overstated. I think it's what you think about God is all together important, but I think he's making a point that is altogether important. So how do we think of ourselves? What is man? And it's interesting without revelation, thoughtful people tend to denigrate themselves. For Aristotle he defined man as a political animal. The more I look at history, I understand, in other words, what distinguishes humans. We engage in trying to persuade one another of a position. I don't think animals do that. They just kill one another, but we are political animals that are trying to get a consensus of some kind of rule that's how he defined it. But it was an animal, a political animal.

For Edmund Burke, we're a religious animal. So I give you these different definitions. So for, well, I began with Schopenhauer. He's the pessimistic philosopher and I began with him. Schopenhauer was one time sitting on a park bench. He was a pessimistic philosopher, hair all disheveled, suit all crumpled up, one shoe off and a park attendant said to him, “who are you?” He said, “I would to God, I knew.” He had no idea who he was. Apart from revelation he had no idea. Then I'm talking about Aristotle a political animal. For Edmund Burke, he's a religious animal. For Carlisle he's a tool producing animal. For Benjamin Franklin he's a tool using animal. But they all define them as an animal and various definitions. So you get that. And for the Gilbert doubtless with Sullivan's approval, he said, in one of his famous songs, "he's nature's sole mistake." The sole mistake. That's Gilbert, doubtless with Sullivan's approval. For Robert Louis Stevenson, “he's a devil, but weakly fettered by some generous beliefs.” Very negative view, "but fettered by some generous beliefs." That was his view. For E. O. Wilson we've

lost our dignity, man has lost his dignity. We began to lose our dignity when we lost our address at the Copernican revolution. We don't know where we are. We lost more dignity when Freud discovered we're not even masters in our own houses, we're governed by this id that he proposed. So we're not even that. And we lost all dignity when IBM's Big Blue won out over our chess champion Kasparov some years ago. So we have lost all dignity. So we went from an animal to a devil weakly fettered, and now we have no dignity whatsoever. They are outstanding thinkers and that's how they think.

N. Crowning Mortals [1:13:00-1:18:09]

That's not what David says, "you've crowned him with glory and honor." What a different viewpoint and how that's going to change the way you live with that viewpoint. You're meant to rule everything. I like what C. S. Lewis said at the crowning of queen Elizabeth, back in 1952, he said the placing of that huge and heavy crown upon her young and inexperienced head is symbolic of all humanity that God has crowned us with a crown to rule. We're inexperienced and we're young and incapable. The end of that is we need God to enable us to rule. So Martin, in his book, *The God Design*, he says, if you think on a scale of one to ten and God is a ten and man, and the brute is a number of one at scale brute animal one. God is ten, man is an eight or nine. A little lower than angels, but we see Jesus crowned with glory and honor above the angels in the book of Hebrews. When you put this psalm against these worldly philosophers, it begins to shine in all of its glory for me. So, I put some of that data in there for you.

Now He crowned the mortals to rule all the earth and here we have two parts. The mortals are crowned with splendor and they're commissioned to rule. So you've made him lack a trifle from heavenly beings.

Now "the heavenly beings" is debatable. The Hebrew word here is Elohim and many translations have it: "You made him a little lower than God." But Elohim can mean "heavenly beings." When Samuel came up out of the ground and these psychics, the witch of En Dor, and she said, I see an Elohim, a divine being coming up out of the ground. It can mean divine being.

What's interesting at witch of En Dor's story is that the witch sees, but she hears nothing and Saul hears, but he doesn't see anything which tells you he's in a para-psychological state, a spiritual state of some sort. It's not physical because one can see, the other one can't, one could hear the other can't. And according to the Misnah those who were with Saul, they neither saw nor heard anything. So we're in a different spiritual realm and that sort of a story. Anyway, you've made them go back and so the Elohim can mean "heavenly beings." This is not a conclusive argument, but you would think since he's saying "you have made him," you would expect it to say, "you have made him a little lower than yourself." Why does it change from second person to third person, for example? So the Septuagint on who are these heavenly beings translated it "angels." And I think that's what happens in Hebrews. I think it's a good translation. I think that's the thought you've made him a little lower than heavenly beings.

Also, this Psalm is thinking about Genesis one, but that's going to take me too far field. So we will contend with the psalm if I do that. Okay. So I give you the citation from the 1 Samuel passage. And then he says, "and you crowned him with glory." That "glory" means social weight. "And with honor," and I'll drop it there.

Now the mortals who have been now crowned, they are now commissioned to rule all the earth. He crowned them and now comes the commission to rule the earth. "You made them rulers over the work of your hands. You put everything under their feet." This is a paraphrase of when God said rule over the work of your hands is a paraphrase of "and let them rule over the fish" and everything. When it says, "put under their feet," that's equal to the prose "subdue." When it says "everything," it includes the serpent and the dragon. You are to put everything under your feet, including the monsters, the serpent, the dragon, the Satan, everything evil, put everything under his feet.

O. Theological Reflections [1:18:09-1:24:36]

Theological reflections, then that, well, I add at the end there, the verbs of subdue, a rule of over put them under your feet, imply the mortal must struggle to win dominion over the creatures, over the horse to pull the chariot, over the oxen to plow the field, over

the flocks to give milk and fleece. So to put it under their feet and to use it implies a struggle. Go to work, go to work and work. That's right. And to put it under your feet and put everything, and we'll talk more about what humankind rules.

Theological reflection. This is, I say, an elaboration, a poetic elaboration, of the cultural mandate in Genesis one, where God created the man and told him to subdue everything, to bring everything onto his dominion. This is now putting that into poetry. So it's a reflection of the cultural mandate. There are two parts to the cultural mandate as I would see it. One is to subdue the physical world, the fish, the oxen, everything, as I said, the oxen to plow and the horse to pull and so forth. But I think it also includes the spiritual world because in Genesis three, we meet the serpent and they should have brought the serpent under their feet. But what happened is the serpent brought them under his feet. It was a spiritual war that they lost because "we are fighting not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers" and the enemies, spiritual enemies fighting us are stronger than our own spirits apart from God. They lost the battle because they did it in their own strength. We cannot conquer in our own strength. That's the point. We have to depend upon God.

So in the physical realm, it's utterly amazing what we have achieved. I mean, it is astounding so I just list some of the fields look at communication. I mean, I communicate Bill far more than I do with students all over the world. Look what we're doing with Biblical Training here. He is going to send this now over computers, I guess, whatever, all over the world. What an amazing achievement we can now preach the gospel readily. This is wonderful. We have instantaneous contact everywhere. That's a marvelous achievement. I talk about energy. I mean the harnessing of the water to produce the electricity. And now the harnessing of the atom, that tremendous energy that we can now harvest, harness and that lights up our cities for thousands of homes. I mean, a hundred years ago, they didn't have this. Well, they're just beginning to have it with electricity. Or with medicine, we have eliminated polio. We've extended human life, significantly with our medicine. Or with travel, we travel at the speed of sound. It's just a hundred years

ago, you read the book, on the Wright brothers, just a little over a hundred years put in the air 30 feet. Now, if you go to the Smithsonian, I think if you ever get there after I'm sure you do go to the Smithsonian and the flight museum, have you been there? In the same room, you have the Wright brothers and you have this Apollo spacecraft all in a period of 70 years. What man can achieve is phenomenal in communication and energy and medicine.

But the spiritual realm is an utter failure. Every day, everything we produce, that's good turns against us. So now in our communication under the internet, there is pornography that's destroying families, destroying youth. So you can begin when you open it up, you have prostitutes in Russia offering themselves to you. It's just the evil that's coming across on it and destroying homes and destroying people. I'm amazed at how many lies I read. Often from the extreme right. They often just make stuff up and also from the left, but it's just full of lies. You always have to check it out. Is this true or not true? So it's full of evil. You talk about energy. Well, the atomic bomb, we harness the energy, but look, what it can do. It can annihilate the human race. As I was saying the other night, explode a hydrogen bomb off the coast of Florida, it will set a tsunami way, 400 feet high over the entire state. That's horrible. We live in fear as a result. Medicine, we've done wonderful cures, but we fear biological warfare. We can annihilate the human race through our chemicals and our knowledge of chemicals. Everything turns against us. Our travel. We can put them on rockets, but we could put a hydrogen bomb on the end of the rocket. We're concerned about North Korea, with what they'll do with the bad man. So the result is physically, we have done the mandate, but spiritually, we have failed miserably. So all of our good boomerangs against us, I think that's worth our reflection.

P. Ruled Creatures [1:24:36-1:26:52]

Now we have on the middle of page 102, the ruled creatures. "All flocks and herds and the animals of the wild, birds in the sky, fish in the sea. And the one that swims the path of the sea." I noticed with the land creatures, all flocks and herds and so forth, all the animals of the wild. So in other words, it includes the clean and the unclean. The animals

of the wild are the unclean. The flocks and the herds are clean. So it is a merism, all domesticated and wild. But then it moves to "the birds in the sky" and birds and fish went together in creation. But now note what happens here. In other words, all flocks and herds they produce life. The animals of the wild they produce death. Now, birds in the sky, fish in the sea that's life they produce. But the one that swims the path of the seas, I think is Leviathan, the symbol of evil. He matches the animals of the death, of the wild and death. So it's a way of saying we are to rule over the forces of life and the forces of death. And essentially all the others are plural. But the one that swims the path as sea is singular. I talk about air and water creatures. [Student Question] I think that, yeah, I think they referred to the great sea monsters by that reference to that Leviathan. But I think it comes out of Greek mythology, I mean Canaanite mythology. The Leviathan is a representative of, he's chaos and evil.

Q. Inclusio [1:26:52-1:28:12]

The theme is restated. So the inclusion, "I am, how majestic is your name" since the psalms' boundary and sounds its theme and the rest of the psalm develops that theme and two stanzas, but notice how God is majestic in all the earth. He's majestic directly in creation, but he's majestic in the order of redemption mediatorially through his people. So therefore, yeah, he's majestic through us because it seems as though he's praising man, but in truth, man is his agent and that's who we are. We are here to bring all things under our feet, both life and death, good and evil. And we will win because our God will not fail. Well, that's Psalm 8. That's a great psalm of praise.

This is Dr. Bruce Waltke in his teaching on the book of Psalms. This is session number 10: Psalm 8, a psalm of praise. [End 1:28:12]

Psalms
Session 11: Petitionary Psalms, Psalm 92
By Dr. Bruce Waltke

[\[Jump to TOC\]](#)

This is Dr. Bruce Waltke in his teaching on the book of Psalms. This is session number 11, Petitionary Psalms, Psalm 92.

A. Opening Prayer [00:22-3:29]

So let's begin with prayer. Father, thank you that you asked us to come boldly into your presence. We stand amazed at your grace, that we who are in ourselves, so sinful, we sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you, we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We have not loved you with a whole heart. We are truly sorry. And we humbly repent. We ask you to have mercy on us and to forgive us all our sins, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Strengthen us in all goodness, by the power of the Holy Spirit, keep us in the way of eternal life. And with that prayer, we can come boldly into your presence because we know we are forgiven and we know that the Holy Spirit is with us. By your grace you pronounced us righteous with the white robes in Jesus and by the Spirit you are transforming us into his image. We thank you for the means of grace that you've given to us, prayer, the church and your Holy Scriptures among others. And so Lord, we are particularly thankful in this course for the Holy Scriptures. For they represent your very presence with us, breathed out by your Holy Spirit. Thank you for the Spirit that emboldens and disseminates your Word. Thank you for Bill Mounce and for Biblical Training and for this opportunity to minister your Word. We come with true thanksgiving or on our lips and at the same time, a true sense of our inadequacy in ourselves. And we ask you to give us the faith to trust your enablement and empowerment. We pray this

because you taught us to pray in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. In his name we pray. Amen.

B. Review: Historical Approach [3:29-7:47]

All right. We're in, I think, about up to the 10th lecture in this course to introduce us to the book of Psalms. Our approach is, our aim is, that we might understand the book better that we may enter more accurately into the mind of the Psalmist. So we have from the history of the study of the Psalms, we have chosen 10 approaches to the study. Our aim is not to teach the theology of the Psalms as such, though we certainly do that. Our aim is not specifically to address the spiritual life. Those are the two main aims of the church. Our aim is to interpret Scripture as best we can from where we are. And we have concluded, there are five approaches to the Psalms that begin to open them up in more depth and more clarity for us. We've considered one approach was the historical approach. There is the form critical approach. There's the liturgical approach, rhetorical approach, and looking at it, what are sometimes called redaction criticism of how it's all edited and put together.

We spent a day on the historical approach and we learned from that, and I defended, the Davidic authorship. But the point was that the "I" of the Psalm is the king and that we can think of the book of Psalms as a Royal Hymnbook. It's all about the King. The King is praying and they're praying for the king so that we saw in the Pilgrimage Psalms when they go to get up to the temple, what did they pray for? They pray for the anointed one, that is, for the King. So that though Gunkel had identified 10 Royal Psalms because they mentioned the king, but it just permeates the Psalter. When you understand it as the king in prayer, and he hands it over to the director of music, so that we all begin to sing with the king. This lays a solid foundation for the New Testament interpretation of the Psalms that they speak of our Lord Jesus Christ, because he's the son of David. So they are a picture of his career and of his prayers. I'm convinced that our Jesus Christ had memorized the book of Psalms. They were constantly upon his lips, even upon the cross when he says, "my God, my God, why have you forsaken me"

that's Psalm 22. "Into your hands I commit my spirit" is from the Psalms. So all the way through it's just part of his vocabulary. He said that they spoke of him to the disciples on the Emmaus Road. And he said, why didn't you understand that the sufferings and the glory that followed the sufferings were speaking of me, but their eyes had to be opened to it. And so we're trying to establish it exegetically, but ultimately it's the work of the Spirit when we're really able to see our Lord Jesus Christ in the Psalms. So I think he could see the value of that historical approach. It just gives you a totally new insight at least it was for me into the Psalter.

C. Review: Form Critical Approach: Psalms of Praise [7:47-15:39]

The second approach is, that was the traditional approach was by David and put it into life of David, but it wasn't really, well in the early church it did, they spoke of, they saw it as typology of Christ. They did see it in Christ. The Form Critical approach that throughout history, the people who have handled the word of God recognized there were different kinds of psalms, but it was never really done in a scientific way really looking at all the psalms and thinking about what their forms were. Really Gunkel did the work on this. I'm not one who can judge his own spiritual life, but some of the things he says are very problematic, let's put it that way. But he certainly opened my eyes that the Psalms fall into distinct types. It's a very good way to approach the entire Psalter is to understand that they fall into different categories, different groups.

He identified five different types. He identified Psalms of Praise, and these were the Hymns. He isolated from that, the Royal Psalms. That was another type for him Royal Psalms were 10 psalms. Then there were the Lament, Complaint or Petition Psalms that we're going to be looking at today. And there were Communal Laments for him. And there were Songs of Thanksgiving.

After I had read Gunkel when I taught a course at Dallas, it was one of the Bible exposition courses. I was reading through as much literature as I could. I was reading through Gunkel. I was reading at the same time, the book of Chronicles, and to my amazement I read 1 Chronicles, 16.4 where David appointed the Levites to minister at the

temple. Lehasikir, which I would translate "to petition," the hadot "to give thanks," to the Hallel "to give praise." So there were three of the forms that Gunkel had analyzed empirically just out of the text. Here the Chronicler, the inspired historian is saying there were three kinds of psalms: petition, praise and thanksgiving. The Royal Psalms I had concluded was an illegitimate category because that not just the 10 psalms that mentioned the king, as I said earlier. So it has biblical warranty to think of the psalms in these three categories.

Yesterday, in particular, we were looking at hymns of praise, or hymns, and our methodology is having to identify the form of the hymns, then I would narrow myself down to one or two specific psalms that fell into that category to give us a taste of that kind of a psalm. So broadly speaking, what we looked at was the hymns. We consider such things as their motifs. They have certain elements to them, and it's very simple with the hymn: it's a call to praise and there's a cause for praise and there is a concluding, usually a hallelujah, a new call to praise. So we looked at these motifs and then we examined them more closely. We were thinking about the call to praise. And we raised such things as God is so narcissistically as to tell us to praise him and we can be offended by that. So we thought about, well, how do we understand that sort of call to praise and other elements we considered. In the cause for praise, that's where we really learn the theology of the Psalms and in their call praise and their doxology is to praise. They numerate the sublime attributes of God, his incommunicable attributes. His communicable attributes and his incommunicable attributes being his aseity, that is, from himself he is dependent upon nothing. Everything is dependent upon him and we ourselves are dependent upon him as we saw. Our very breath is dependent upon him. He's eternal. He's omniscient, he's omnipresent. They're giving voice to this in praise to God.

And we noticed that therefore it becomes a doxological theology, namely that their praise to God comes back to us, their words to God, come back to us as the word of God, to us. So we're learning theology through their words of praise to God, teaching just

celebrating God and what they know about God. God uses it as part of this inspired scripture and speaks with us. It's a wonderful way to learn theology.

Then having considered the motifs and thought about them and other things we thought about the performance, who actually is singing these psalms. And we went through that and we noticed, among other things, that God wants only, He wants hymns only from those who are righteous, which are those who depend upon him and show that dependence upon him in being like him and showing love to other people. Psalms on the lips of sinners is an abomination to him. I think I sometimes hear in some gospel music, and the lives of the people who are singing it, I'm not the judge, but I wonder about how pleasing that is to God, or is it an abomination to him? I think we ought to be circumspect about those we listen to who are singing gospel songs and so forth. But he wants it from the lips of the pious. So we talked about performance and you could see the value of this kind of investigation.

We're now up to the second major type, which is, no, then what happens is we said there were two kinds praise. There were praises of God that celebrate his attributes and celebrate his, what the theologians call Heils Geschichte which means "salvation history" and not only salvation history, but the interpreted salvation history. It deals with the creation. It deals with the Exodus. It deals with the Conquest and the Settlement of the land. What's interesting is there's not much reference to history after the time of David. It's really that period of the Exodus and the Conquest that they celebrate in the historical record.

D. Review: Thanksgiving Psalms [15:39-18:37]

So you have these general songs of praise, and then you have what is known as Thanksgiving Psalms. And these are where God acted specifically in the life of the Psalmist, he had prayed for something, maybe even made a promise of a sacrificial, offering, a vow, a word and sacrifice to God. And God answered the prayer. These become specific. And we call these, somewhat of a misnomer, we call them Thanksgiving Psalms. In NIV, we call them Grateful Praise because, the Hebrew word

thanksgiving is not equivalent to the English word "Thanksgiving." We said that in English, Thanksgiving this is when I go up to you and I say, "thank you." There's nothing like that in Hebrew. Thanksgiving is that I tell everybody else about you and I celebrate you. I praise publicly. Thanksgiving is something public, not private. So it is grateful praise that we tell others what God has done for us, his salvation for us and that's Psalms of Grateful Praise. And that case we hadn't yet done a Psalm of Grateful Praise. For the hymns we did two psalms. We did first of all, Psalm 100. And that was in the first hour where you have, in the Book of Common Prayer reads, "Be joyful in the Lord all you lands." And we thought about that. What does it mean "by the nations"? "Be joyful in the Lord all you lands, serve the Lord with gladness, come before him with the song, know this, that the Lord himself is God, he himself has made us. We are his, we are his people, the sheep of his pasture." And then having made that confession that God, the God of Israel, is the Lord, having made that confession, and that the mediatorial kingdom is the people of God that we are his people and that you celebrate our God with us. Having made those two confessions, knowing that, then it says, "Now enter his courts with praise and be thankful and call upon his name for the Lord is good, His mercy is everlasting, His faithfulness endures from age to age." So we looked at Psalm 100. And also we took another hour to look at the great hymn of Psalm 8, O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth."

E. Psalm 92: a Psalm of Grateful Praise [18:37-19:40]

We begin today with a Psalm of Grateful Praise. And this is now on page. Let's see here. I got it. Page 105. We're going to look at Psalm 92, and we'll spend a bit of time on that. I suggest you either have a Bible in front of you, or you have my translation in front of you, so you can constantly look back because what we do here is go through the Psalm now, word by word and meditate. In other words, we're told in Psalm 1 "to meditate upon the law of the Lord" and what we're doing now, we are meditating on the word of God and we meditate on it, word by word as we go through it.

F. Psalm 92: a translation [19:40-25:56]

Okay, let's begin then with the translation, "A Psalm." We said "a psalm" means it is a song sung to the accompaniment of a stringed instrument. So we're told it's a song. So it was originally, it was to be sung and it was sung along with a musical accompaniment. In this particular case, it was for the Sabbath day. So this would have been sung at, well, we'll talk about a little bit more according to the Talmud, it was sung with a particular offering in the temple and it was for the Sabbath day. There's no reason to think this is not part of the original text that it belongs already in the first temple period when they were singing this song in the temple on the first, on the Sabbath, the seventh day of the week. "It is good to give grateful praise to I Am, to sing praise to your name Most High, to proclaim in the morning your unfailing love, and your reliability during the night, upon the 10 string lute, upon the soft sounds with the lyre. Surely you, I Am cause me to rejoice in your deeds. I shout cries of joy for the works of your hands. How great are your works, I Am! Your thoughts are exceedingly [literally, deep or profound] A brutish person does not know, a fool does not understand this. When the wicked flourished like grass and all evil doers blossomed, it led to their being exterminated forever. For you are on high forever I Am. For look your enemies I Am, for look, your enemies perish, all evil doers are scattered. You exalted my horn, like a wild ox, which I rubbed with rich olive oil, and my eyes gazed in triumph at those who tried to ambush me. My ears will hear of the destruction of the wicked who would attack me. A righteous person flourishes like a palm tree. He will grow like a cedar of Lebanon planted into the house of I Am, in the courts of our God they flourish. They will still thrive in old age. They will be full of sap and thick with leaves. Proclaiming that I Am is upright, my rock in whom there is no injustice."

Professor Houston and I are writing a third, commentary, a historical commentary, in which he traces through the voice of the church throughout church history for 2000 years. And I try to give the voice of the Psalmist. This is one of the Psalms that we're going to be treating in our third volume. This first volume was on the Psalms as Christian

Worship. We weren't expecting to write any more, but God seemed to be pleased to use it. So we put out a second volume, the Psalms as Christian Lament. And now we're going to put out a third volume, the Psalms as Christian Wisdom and Christian Worship. This is a Psalm of Praise, a thanksgiving song. So last fall, I worked on this psalm as part of the commentary. So that's where the notes are coming from. The reason I mentioned that you may have noticed there were some little different translations and those translations are going to be in the commentary and I'll defend those translations in the commentary. But you know that actually, as I say to students, all translations are faithful and adequate. None is perfect. By faithful, I mean they all try to be true to the original text. They're adequate, all of them are adequate in the sense that you understand the message. In other words, adequate means someone, a student one time asked me "Did anybody understand the prophets?" And I answered, "Well enough to kill them." They communicated something. It's adequate. So adequate means, it's enough for us to communicate and talk with one another, but no translation is perfect. And we're always, as I say, the memory of the church gets sharper with age due to the excavations and archeological artifacts and our knowledge of the Semitic languages that were never available to Luther and Calvin. We have a much more precise knowledge of God's word.

It's a responsibility of a person like me who's called to be a professor, I didn't even know seminaries existed when it started out, that are incumbent upon me to stay current with what's going on in scholarship and make sure I'm reflecting that in my commentary work. But that's what I do. I'm a little toe in the shoe and we need somebody doing this and so that's what God called me to do in his vineyard. So I kind of root around in the basics of the whole thing. So we'll defend it there.

G. Psalm 92 as Poetry: Parallelism and Figures of Speech [25:56-29:10]

Now we are going on page 106, I talk about the form of the psalm and you have to understand it's poetry. We said there were three things that characterize poetry. One is the fundamental thing is parallelism. You say a line, and then you say a related line to it. Every verse is in the form of a parallelism. So "it is good" verse one "is good to give

grateful praise." The parallel to that, is "to sing praise to I Am", parallel to that is "to your name, which is I am, Most High." You could see it's a related statement, but it's not the same. If you think about it. He's talking to the congregation. "It is good to give grateful praise to I Am." He's talking about I Am. And then suddenly he switches "to sing your name Most High," and you could see the change that he's in the congregation in the liturgy, and he's addressing the congregation and God is part of the congregation. And then he addresses specifically Yahweh whose name means "I am," the eternal one. And so, and it says to I Am, and then it is your name. And then the key to the Psalm is going to be in the central line of verse eight "for you are on high forever I Am." And he signals that out right at the very beginning, Most High. And anyway, that's parallelism that was my point there.

It's full of figures of speech. It's very imaginative. Another characteristic of poetry is it's full of figures of speech. You have to be aware of it. So, for example, in the psalm, the wicked flourish like grass, but the righteous flourish like palm trees and the cedars of Lebanon. See how powerful that could be. The grass grows quickly and quickly dies, but the palm tree and the cedars of Lebanon they grow tall and they seem to live forever. So, it's filled with that kind of figurative language that calls upon us to reflect upon these figures of speech. Suddenly when you think, if you reflect on it, that's a helpful contrast at least for me. So it's poetry and it's very terse. So the verses are like snapshots, like a slideshow, it's not like prose, which is like a movie picture. You have to think about how these verses are related to one another and how the stanzas are related to one another. So it's in poetry and it's worthwhile recognizing that.

H. Psalm 92 as a Psalm of Grateful Praise [29:10-33:32]

Secondly, it's a Psalm. We already talked about that. More specifically, it's a song of grateful praise. It seems to have kind of two introductions to it. First of all, he's seems to be talking to the congregation and talking generally, "it is good to give grateful praise to I Am." And instead of a call to praise, he makes a declaration that it is good to praise. Then he gives to proclaim, to general attributes, your unfailing love and your reliability in

verse 2. But it becomes specific in verse 4. He talks about now the "I", and he's going to praise and he's going to praise God for a specific thing. "Surely you, I Am caused me to rejoice in your deeds. I shout cries of joy for the works of your hands." Again, the parallelism, you have "deeds" what God does, and "the works" is what is his hands produce.

But he's going to shout cries of joy for the works of your hands. In this particular case, in verses 10 and 11, he tells us what God did. Verse 10, "You exalted my horn, like a wild ox, which I rubbed with rich olive oil, and my eyes gazed in triumph at those who tried to ambush me, and my ears will hear of the destruction of the wicked who attacked me." So there was a specific illustration where he was being attacked by the enemy. He doesn't specify it, but he was in a crisis. He's now likened to a wild ox with horns. God had exalted his horn above his enemies and he triumphed over them. It's very terse, but you can get the picture. Who is exalted? Who's horns are "like a wild ox and the horns are rubbed with rich olive oil. And I gazed in triumph at those who tried to ambush me." This is not just any ordinary individual. It's very fitting for a warrior, for a king. It would be fit, it's not said to be by David, but certainly about a king it seems to me, who's gone to battle and he's been victorious. Now he returns to the temple and he composes a psalm for all the people to sing. It's going to address a particular problem as we'll see, the particular problem is: how do you understand the prosperity of the wicked? And that's what he's addressing in verse 7. He says, "a brutish person doesn't know, a fool does not understand it, when the wicked flourish like grass, and all evil doers blossom, it led to their being exterminated forever." It was God's whole plan. So that's a song of grateful praise. I talked on page 106, these two forms of the introduction. And then on page 107 on the top of the page, I talked about us being a narrative that recounts the saving acts, "my eyes gazed in triumphant at those who tried to ambush me."

And what he does is eventually, he goes from this particular triumph in verses 10 and 11 to a universal truth that God, when the wicked prosper, it's part of the plan that's

going to lead to their extermination. It's going to lead to the universal, the victory over evil will lead to the universal prosperity of the righteous with which the psalm ends.

I. Psalm 92: Setting in Life -- temple and church [33:32-38:08]

I take it that the number four on page 107, that I'm using here the German words because that's what's used in the academic literature, the setting in life, I take it is the temple. And that this playing of music and so forth all seems to be, in verse 2 and 3 to proclaim in the morning, he's proclaiming it and he's doing it upon a 10-string lute. Where does that take place? It seems to me pretty clear. This is taking place in the temple and it's taking place in the temple on the Sabbath day, on the seventh day of the week. It's being sung in conjunction with some sacrifice at the same time. So we're now entering into a more liturgical approach and our understanding of the psalm. I give you some bibliography there. So the psalm's content points to its temple setting. It's addressed to the congregation verse 1A and then addresses God. And then notice in verse 13, what happens? He assumes he's part of a community, verse 13 "planted in the house of I Am, in the courts of," and now note, "our God they flourish." So now the individual who conquered is part of a community and the whole community is joining with them in the prayer. So all of that makes the most sense to me. If I imagine myself in the temple with the king, with the righteous who are celebrating together with him in the courts of the Lord. He refers, I say, to temple instruments. For the Sabbath day, it's somewhat debatable, but according to the Mishnah, part of the Talmud, the Levitical choir, and the second temple, cantored a psalm each day of the week and successively on Sunday, they sang Psalm 24, on Monday 48, Tuesday 82, and so forth that you could see, 92 is the seventh day when they would sing this song. But that's the Jewish tradition. There's no reason for that.

Page 108 on to number three. I agree with Alter there's no reason to think this doesn't go back to the first temple. Now, Alter will not say David, we don't know, but he's saying this can go back before the exile, when they had a temple and the first temple. So we're looking at a hymn that the church has sung for well over 2,500 years. We're not

reading something that hasn't been known. This has been part, I'm sure the disciples sang it, Jesus site sang it, Chrysostom sang it, all the great church fathers throughout the Carolingian period and all the way through, they were singing this psalm and reflecting upon it, and which is part of a catholic church, a universal church. I think it's wonderful to think of ourselves of the community of saints for over 2,500 years. And we're still singing this psalm, which is a proof of God's unfailing love. He preserves his people. But of all the difficulties that church has been through and betrayed from within, attacked from without, liberalism is rotting some aspects, we're still here and we will be here. God will not be defeated.

The last word is not death. The last word is life. The last word, isn't a shovel of dirt in our face. The last word is a triumphant resurrected body. That's the promise of God and he has a terrific track record to prove it. Okay. And I also noticed by way of anticipation that, we've already said, that it's a Royal Psalm. It's not by King David or I assume it would probably have had a superscription, I don't know, but it's by some godly king.

J. Psalm 92 and the Eschaton [38:08-40:56]

It's eschatological, that is to say, it's looking forward to the ultimate triumph of the righteous and their ultimate being like trees. Immortality has not yet really been brought to light. We'll see this later; immortality is brought to light in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. The best of the Old Testament can do is they can liken it to a tree. It represents the tree as full of sap within and thick with leaves vibrant without, and that's where it leaves the image with the very living longevity of a tree. So it's on the trajectory to eternal life, but we haven't reached the full clarity of day as in the New Testament anymore, when we get the full clarity of the Trinity until the New Testament. So it infers it, but doesn't quite explicitly state it in this psalm among some of the things.

But in any case, this type of Christ and the ultimate triumph is when he conquers death, that's the ultimate triumph. But it was so interpreted by the Jewish interpreters which surprised me. This is the Targum. The Targum is an Aramaic translation, a little bit

from before the time of Jesus. It's a paraphrase in that they don't try to be word for word. It's very interpretive. Look how they interpret the crucial line "for you are on high forever, I Am." Here's what they say, this is in the Targum, this is their translation, "but you are high and supreme in this age, O Lord, and you are high and supreme in the age to come." It was forever and therefore it's not only this age, but in the age to come. They inferred that I think very legitimately. So it's also looking to the eschaton.

Again, commenting on the Sabbath: "this is the Psalm for the future for the day that is completely Shabbat for all eternity." So they understood it as a reference to the future and eternity when we enter our final rest. That's in the oldest Jewish interpretation that we have, and you could see the New Testament is coming out of that kind of a context and refers it with all truth to the precious savior, Jesus Christ.

J. Psalm 92: Triumph of the King, Rhetorical elements [40:56-53:45]

So I say, and number three, the historic King in his report of victory typified Jesus Christ, and his victory over Satan, sin and death. The universal covenant community identifies itself with this King.

I'm going to skip the setting in the book and jump to page 109. I'll just notice a few things by way of rhetoric. Rhetoric is how it's put together. The idea of rhetoric is that you can enter into the message of the psalm. So they use all kinds of structures and different aesthetic devices, and also to help us dig into the psalm. It seems to have a chiasmic structure. It begins with praise and it ends with praise. In fact, it uses the same words. It begins with praise, with the Psalmist calling upon the congregation to praise. So you have in verse 2, "to proclaim in the morning, your unfailing love" and all the way through, "I will rejoice in your deeds." So the first four verses are about praise. The last four verses, verses 12 through 15, also deal with the flourishing of the righteous. The point of it is they're flourishing and the reason they're flourishing is that they might bring praise to God. So you have at the end, proclaiming the righteous, the King and his people they're all proclaiming that I Am is upright, he's without a flaw. He's absolutely just. So it begins with praise. It ends with praise. The king praises I am, verses 1 through 4 and the

righteous and the people praise I Am at the end in verses 12 through 15.

In verses, this should be 5 and 6 he praises God for God's great work and profound thoughts. That's verse five. That's "how great are your works and your calculated plans behind it." That's what God did, the thoughts are considered calculated thoughts. It isn't something on the spur of the moment. The prosperity of the wicked for the moment was all part of God's plan. So he says, "for God's great works and profound thoughts" and parallel to that is the king rejoices in his victory that are the great works. In other words, what is the great work he has a mind? Well generally, but more specifically, it was his work of victory.

Notice the verse 7 and verse 9, all evil doers are eliminated, all evil doers are perish. Compare verse 7 and verse 9, and see the similarity. You might just look at the way it's laid out on the page. I'm not looking at the translation. Notice both are a tri-colon. We talked about that in poetry, tri-colon. There are three lines there. Only seven and nine have three lines. Notice the similarity, verse 7B "all evil doers." Notice verse 9, "all evil doers." In verse 7, all evil doers they blossom and they perish. Now all evil doers are scattered. So you have verse 7, all evil, verse going back to my notes on page 109 C and a C' are "all evil doers perish" and you could see they balance off to one another.

So what's the pivot. It's a central line all by itself. Only four words in the Hebrew text. The center of line is "for you are on high forever I Am." It's about God. He is overall. He's on high in space and forever in time. He's over all in space and he's forever in time. He is the exalted one behind it all. Now that central line is crucial because elsewhere it's the king who eliminates the enemy. It's very careful to word that the king is the one whom God is using to destroy the enemy, but he wants to make it clear that behind the whole thing is God's plan and He's on high and He's in it and He's impregnable and he will be victorious. So the result of that, you could see then, so I develop all of that and the lines that follow.

Page 110, I tried to show a chiastic structure from praise to praise from works to victory evil doers perish, evil doers perish. And then the pivot God on high is exalted.

What I'm really doing here is I'm giving you lenses by which to read the Psalms. I don't think the average English reader is aware of chiasm. He doesn't expect it, isn't aware. We're used to linear thinking ABCD E and narrative like that. That's what we're used to. We're not use to this way of thinking, but this is normative throughout the ancient Near East in poetry. This is chiasm and then alternating structures. It doesn't go along linearly as we expect in English.

This, as I said, there is a catch word with the proclaiming of praise in verse 2, an *inclusio* rather. By *inclusio* we mean a beginning and the end, we saw it in spades in Psalm 8. "O, LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name and all the earth." That's the first verse. "O, LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth." That's the last verse. We call that an *inclusio*, an envelope. It makes it a package. So this proclaiming praise, proclaiming praise is on the ends of it. And the center of it is the praise "you are on high forever, O, I Am." I won't develop the catch words as it is a little bit too difficult.

So then there are with that center line, we're now in a position to say there are two stanzas around the central line. Two large units verses 1 through 7 and verses 9 through 16. I don't think it's an accident that there are seven verses in the half, 1 through 7, 9 to 16. And you could see the symmetry of this whole thing, the balance of it. Once you begin to enter with the lenses of rhetoric, you begin to see how the poem, we call it poetics, which means how it's put together. So we study now, and this is a fairly new approach within academia. We are now within academia studying how things poetic, how they put together. It was a fairly new discipline. In the older commentaries you are not going to read what I just shared with you. I'm coming to it because I've been helped by some more recent scholarship to begin to look at the psalms in this way.

So when I went to Harvard, for example, this was unknown. I knew all source criticism. I knew where the documents were, but I really didn't know how to put it all together necessarily. But as I say, we're all in more refinement. It isn't that we were wrong. It was just that we can do better as academia goes along, the better part of

academics. It bothers me that the church is anti-intellectual. The church basically looks down upon this kind of scholarship and they're missing out on the richness. I think they're doing violence to God's word. So they joke about academia and academia is so important for our understanding better the word of God. You don't hear that very often, but it's true.

Okay. Now there are two stanzas and it's interesting to two halves. It's interesting that the first half falls into, if I could use stanzas of four verses and then three verses. You notice the praise in verses 1 through 4, and then "how awesome I Am your works" and so forth. God's plan is in three verses 5 through 7. Then you turn around and though it's a separate page, then you get three verses of what God did matching the three of 5 through 7. Now three verses 9 through 11, are three, and then you get four verses of praise at the end. So you've got three, four make seven, four, three, make seven, three, four seven. And the name of I Am is used seven times. Three in the first half, three in the second half and once on the center line. Is that accidental? I don't think so. Not when you get used to these poets, they're brilliant. This is just brilliant, wonderful. For me, it's so aesthetic and exciting and it entices me to learn more. I just love feeding on it, thinking about it. It's a way of meditating on God's word. It's a delight.

I made a mistake in the translation, so you won't see the 7 and that is in verse 13. It should be "planted in the house of I Am." Then it will work, but I've made a mistake there. Okay.

Now, so what do we have then let's look at the psalm and what we're doing here is we're looking at our suit, our jacket, whatever it is, we're looking at it before we put it on so that we feel comfortable in it. Make sure. So here's the outline of the psalm. Then the logic of the psalm is we begin with this introduction. We have first tireless praise for God's word day and night. Tireless praise, for God's work. It falls as I said into two halves, the first introduction, corporate praise for I Am's sublimities. And the second introduction of personal praise for God's work. Notice the first introduction. Notice how that develops. Look at verse one, two and three. "Yes, it is good to give grateful praise" that's a word "to I Am," and then comes the music to "sing praise to your name." So one

is verbal, words, and the other one is in a song. You've got music. So I'm thinking about parallelism. I say in parallelism, you think what's similar and what's different. The one is to give grateful praise. The second one is to sing it. Notice what happens then in verse two, you'll have the words. In verse three, you have the music. So verse two, modifies 1A and verse three, modifies 1B. So you have, "it is good to give grateful praise to I Am." What is that? "To proclaim in the morning, your unfailing love and your reliability during the night." Those are the words we are proclaiming. But then to sing it in verse three, "upon the 10-string lute, upon the soft sounds with the lyre." He develops the words, and then he develops the music. It's worth our while to meditate on what's going on here that we now do it.

K. Merism and Meditating on Psalm 92 – tireless praise [53:45-58:55]

Then we call that figure of speech in verse two, morning and night, we call that a merism, M E R I S M, which means it's like day and night, which would mean all the time, summer and winter, springtime and harvest and so forth. These are called merisms. Merismus is the full word, M E R I S M U S. Merismus, which has the statement of opposites, which means totality. That's why I headed the section "Tireless praise." This would be done in the temple where they had priests ministering day and night. This psalm would be sung day and night, continuously, all the time in tireless praise. So you could say we're meditating upon the Psalms. We're meditating, now on what's going on and thinking about them. You don't rush through it. This is not a quick read. Now we have the greatness of God's work and thoughts. We have that in a summary statement in verse 5, "how great are your works!" What he does, and then the thoughts behind them. What he's saying is God's thoughts are deep. They're not accessible to everybody. When something is deep, it means it's inaccessible. The fool cannot access this truth, and that's what it's going to say. The brutish don't understand, fools don't get it. God deliberately conceals it from the fool. He can't see it. And God deliberately hides it from the person who has no faith and no dependence upon him. They don't have the Spirit to understand it.

Question: Bruce, do you think that that is sort of indicative of today, you know,

even in the church where there's a reluctance or a lack of desire to really go deep and let somebody else do this, present them something. I think so. And I think that much preaching today is therapy preaching, and then not really interested in deep doctrine. I don't know if I'm answering your question, but I think that's part of it. Frankly, as you see, this kind of study takes real work. It takes time and the average pastor doesn't have time for it. That's part of the problem. I think we need to free pastors up so they have more time because we expect the pastor to do everything. And it takes time to reflect upon God's word. But I write commentaries in order to help the pastor who have, I mean, they're for my mind, the pastor is the Marine. He's out there on the battlefield all the time, confronting all kinds of problems. So I have great respect for the pastor, but I do think we need more solid exposition of God's word and so forth. But that's what God called me to do is help pastors to understand better. Where I go to church, the priest of my church asked me to teach a Sunday school class. I have to at this age, I'm asking myself, how can I best use my time? I think I can best use my time writing for all pastors rather than teaching Sunday school class. So this class is good. It's necessary, but I'm not convinced that's the best use of my time. Those are, we all have to face priorities.

Okay. So the greatness of God's word summary statement. Then he begins "how" he said, "how great and how profound." Then he develops that, that fools don't understand it. What he is teaching is: the wicked prosper to be eliminated. So he grabs the wicked prosper, but all evil doers are going to be eliminated. The center line as we have seen is God is on high forever. Then he develops after the center line, in the second stanza he goes back to that, all evildoers will be eliminated. He says, God's enemies will perish. He's going to do it through his king as the king is victorious over evil doers.

L. Righteous Flourish [58:55-1:00:10]

And the last stanza is the righteous flourish in the temple, proclaiming God's justice. The righteous flourish at the temple. They flourish in old age, proclaiming God's justice forever bringing praise to God. As I said yesterday in the lecture, God elected us to give him praise. We made the startling statement that if we didn't give praise, God

would die. We've made the comment that God couldn't die. But if nobody knows there's a God, he doesn't exist. If nobody talks him and that's what the press is trying to do, they're trying to kill God because they never talk about God. Everything is secular. If you don't talk about God, you don't give him any praise, He's not known and for all practical purposes, if he's not known, he ceases to exist. We pointed out that that can't be because God doesn't depend upon us. He elects us. It was the stones would cry out, but he's not going to use stones. He's going to elect his people. There's always someone here to give him praise so that all know that he is there. The point of it all is we are here to praise God to make him known and that God is alive in the community. That's our responsibility.

M. Exposition of Psalm 92:1-4 [1:00:10-1:02:38]

Okay. Now that was all part of preliminary. Now we're ready to work. Now we're ready to look at the psalm. I'll do this real fast. All right. Well, we've already covered the, some of the main points I think. So we have the Psalm. We don't have to say more about that, thankfully. Page 112, and here we talked about the introduction. The tireless praise for God and the two introductions. I don't need to say more about that. I do think it would be useful to comment on the word. "It is good," and to reflect, what do we mean, when it is good? There are two aspects to it. It deals with substance and it deals with style. It signifies, I say, beneficial and substance by which I mean, what is good advances and enriches life. Praising God advances life, as we've seen it and enriches life, and we're fully alive to what's going on. It's beautiful in style. It is attractive. Those are the two ideas of good: it's substantive in substance to advance life and benefit life and it is attractive and pleasing. I'm hoping that as I work with the psalm you find it attractive and pleasing as well as enriching your life and it is good. So I hope that we are validating that is being claimed here by God's grace.

I'll skip the rest of it and then will elaborate on the words of praise. We've already commented on much of that on page 114, the elaboration of the music of praise. We already touched on that. And then on verse 4, and now we come to his own introduction. I don't think we need to make much comment there, we commented on that.

N. Exposition of Psalm 92:5-7 [1:02:38-1:09:06]

And now we're on page 115. This deals with verses 5 through 7, the greatness of God's works and thoughts. I think basically we've commented upon much of what is there. Now you have it all in writing and you could go back and look at it as you'd want to reflect upon it. So we won't spend more time on that. And page 116 talking about the deep and profound. I just read one sentence there. And 116, "As the wicked," this is the second line on page 116 "As the wicked go to great depths to hide their plans from I Am [That's Isaiah 29.15]. God goes to great depths to hide his plans from fools." So they don't understand because they don't have a heart to understand. Says Paul, "All the depths of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God, how unsearchable are his judgments and his paths beyond tracing out." That lays the foundations for the psalm. Back to page 116, the fools do not understand. Basically, this psalm is dealing with the problem of evil and why do the wicked prosper. They prosper in order that God might triumph and demonstrate his power and triumph over them. Without contrast, we wouldn't, we don't understand, but God shows himself with all of his power, with all of his holiness, by allowing the wicked to prosper for a moment and then to shatter it. Without that contrast, we wouldn't know the greatness of God. That's part of his thoughts and his plans. The wicked don't realize that they're being set up to be destroyed. The psalmist is by his own experience of his own victory over the enemy. Of course, that's a type of Christ's victory, as we've been saying. We could pause ... yeah, that's exactly right.

Just think about the bad things that good people go through as well. That's the end when we get, when we get the petition section, most psalms are lament more than any other, which is to say the lament, distress, difficulty is normative for the righteous. It is normative to be in difficulty for the glory of God that he might triumph and that we might be developed spiritually. Then we will go and say that the Hebrew definition of thanksgiving which will say the works of the Lord. That's right. We'll proclaim his praise and we will celebrate that righteousness triumphs because I get so weary at the evil and it just weighs you down. This assures me, God will smash all of this pretension, delusion,

wickedness, lying, deceit. As we've talked last night coveting all of that evil and junk, it's all going to be smashed. God will get all of the glory. That's why we need the difficulties of life. So God will get the glory. As he brings us through the stresses and traumas of life. That's all part of his profound thoughts. The believer understands that, the pious, the dependent understand. The fool can't understand it, doesn't believe it. So we have the fools don't understand and then we have in verse 7, the flourishing of the wicked is to be led to their extermination.

Just one point on page 118 "led to the being exterminated." This is at the end of verse 7, their being led to being exterminated. The word "exterminated," this shamad is Hebrew and is always used of a human agent. That it is always by humans that they are banned and put aside. All the way through God is using a human agent, and it is the king. That's why the center line is so important that behind it all is the Lord is on high. He's superintending it all. It's all part of his great works and his profound thoughts that are behind the whole thing.

I think what we should do is take a break here, Bill. Alright, well, I think we should take a break. I'll tell you what, I've changed my mind let's continue with this. It's all on there. Let's continue. Bill, we're going to continue. Oh yeah. I've got to finish the psalm. I'm going to change my mind. I got to finish the psalm. You know how hard that is in post-production to handle. It's not hard at all. That's why we have two cameras. Okay.

O. Psalm 92 Second Stanza [1:09:06-1:13:49]

We're into the second stanza. I figured we should finish this psalm. So let's finish this up. Okay. This is an unusual class. All right. We're on page 119. And all evil doers are eliminated and God's enemies perish. We talked about that. I just want to talk about the words "scattered" on the end of verse 9, "all evil doers are scattered." This is now on page 120 of your notes. And "scattered" means they're all broken apart, I give you different ways the word is used. One of the ways it is used is when the cubs of the lioness are scattered. What's the point of that? The cubs of the lioness are scattered. I think the

point is when a community of cubs is broken up, it cannot reproduce itself. So also when the community of evildoers is scattered, it cannot reproduce its thoughts, words, and deeds to the next generation. I think that's the point. It's broken up so it can't reproduce. It has no future.

Then two under the stanza is the king's victories over his adversaries. We talk first of all, about the king's great strength. Then the king sees and hears the rout of his enemies. This is in verse 10, his great strength. "You exalted my horn, like a wild ox." God is behind him. But then note, he participates enthusiastically "in which I rubbed with rich olive oil." In other words, God exalted him, but he enthusiastically embraces his calling in risking his life. So I rubbed my horns to make them clean and more effective. That was on page 121. And it's interesting in verse 12, when he says, "my eyes gazed in triumph at those who tried to ambush me, my ears will hear of their destruction." Notice he sees it immediately, that he's been victorious, but the idea that it will continue, the reputation of this victory will continue into the future "My ears will hear" which assumes others are now declaring it and recounting this great victory that he has. So he saw it, but he anticipates in the future, he's going to hear others talking about it. I think that's the picture of Christ at his resurrection. He experienced it. It's interesting, he himself heard others talking about it and we are still talking about it everywhere in the world, forever as Psalm 22. What a victory!

Now we're up to 12 through 15 on page 122. And after the destruction of the wicked, the righteous now are flourishing. After the victory of Christ, we too can flourish. So we have in 12 through 15, the righteous flourish, and they proclaim I Am is upright. The flourishing and praise of the righteous occurs in conjunction with the king's eliminating wrong doers. The righteous flourish in the temple.

P. Palm and Cedar Tree Metaphors [1:13:49-1:19:27]

Then A. under that we're told in verse 13, "they flourish like a palm tree, they grow like the cedar of Lebanon." So we're left, this is evocative language. What do you

think when you hear a simile that wicked are like grass that comes up overnight, they perish and the righteous are like palm trees that grow to be about 90 to 160 feet tall. What is it? 60 to 90 feet, seven stories high and the cedar of Lebanon, the highest tree in that world, 120 feet high, like a 12 story building.

So what do you think about I'd be interested, what do you think about? What does that evoke? This kind of imagery is evocative. So we ask ourselves, what does that evoke in our imagination to think of ourselves as palm trees and cedars of Lebanon? So I suggest what it means to me. It means of regal stature. We're a royal priesthood, these trees that tower over all the other trees. In a sense they rule and they're stately and they're extreme value that date palm tree produces anywhere from 300 to 600 pounds of fruit. The cedar tree was highly, highly prized. The kings of Israel and of Judah sold their souls so they could build their houses out of cedar wood. This was most of the highly prized tree. So it's of great, great value. Those are some of the ideas that I have about the tree.

I've put down four things. Page 123, they are stately and regal in appearance. The palm trees sustains human life. They provided food in the form of dates and it's sap could be used as sweetness for baking wine. When it has attained it's full size, it bears from 300 to 400 and in some instances, even as many as 600 pounds of fruit from it. Another point we're going to develop it demands, both trees demand, an abundant supply of water and so do the righteous. We demand an abundance supply of spiritual food to prosper. When people neglect the house of God for their work, they shrivel. They don't have the right food. Neglect our daily time in the Word and we shrivel. We need constant spiritual food and so forth.

And its longevity that these trees live, and we'll see that. The palm tree lives to be about 200 years of age. The cedar of Lebanon is so fertile that seeds that are 5,000 years old, still germinate. Can you imagine that? I think that's all involved in this for me in this imagery. Of course, here's the value of reading a book like Images of the Bible by Ryken and Longman. That's a very valuable book to have in your library, the Images of the Bible. They give you a lot of this data to enrich it. Notice that it says he or she, the

righteous they grow. And that means to increase. It's used of the increases of riches and entails an increase here of righteousness in life. The increase is so great that they become, and this should be like the cedars of Lebanon. I give you the data which may be over 120 feet tall, excels in beauty, height, value, fertility, and longevity. I give you some of that data out of the out of the dictionary. This is our note 144. It's The Dictionary of Biblical Imagery and I commend that book to you library. So the A. in verse 13, that is, they flourish like the palm tree and the cedar tree. Now we're told they're planted in the temple. What are we talking about? They're planted in the courts of the LORD. The palm tree but it's imagery.

Q. Temple and Garden [1:19:27-1:27:05]

But do palm trees normally grow in the temple and the cedar of Lebanon grow in the temple? What are we talking about? And I think he's liking to the garden of Eden, the paradisiacal garden, where in the paradise, in the beginning. That the first temple is the garden of Eden. The temple is where God dwells. And the first temple was a garden where he walked with Adam and Eve in the garden. It was a mountain. It says so in Ezekiel 28, that Satan was on the mountain of God. The text assumes it because there was a river that flowed through the garden. And it was such a rich, abundant supply of water that after it went through the garden, it broke apart into four headwaters and four rivers that are pictured in that story as fructifying the entire earth. So you have this water coming through the garden. I think this is how the temple is being pictured as a garden. I gave you in Psalm 1, if you look at page 125, I show you a temple from how it was pictured in an Assyrian relief from Ashurbanipal. On the top of the mountain, you see the temple, you see the pillars of the temple. In front of it, you see a little pavilion and that is the king inside of it. The King is in prayer. Then notice at the corner of the temple, there is a river as flowing down through a garden at a 45 degree angle. Off the river are streams of water, as in Psalm 1, canals of water. It is watering the entire area around the temple. It looks to me like those are palm trees growing in the garden. I think that is the picture in the Psalmist's mind of the temple. It's this imagery, and this is his picture, like a garden of

Eden of a river flowing through it and streams of water coming off it.

We are like trees in the garden. In other words, the trees are flourishing literally. They're flourishing because they're being supplied with abundant supply of water coming out of the temple. It's a picture of us that we flourish in the presence of God at the temple of God. We are being supplied, as a Psalm 1 "and his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law he meditates day and night, and he will become like a channel of water." And so, in other words, we are in this temple garden and we're planted in an abundant supply of water. It's a picture of our spiritual life. We find our spiritual guide and the temple of the Lord, where we hear the word of God. We sing the praises of God. It's our source of life. Therefore we flourish in the garden.

What's interesting is that the palm tree and the cedar tree cannot grow together. Normally the palm tree is in the hot area and you see it on the oasis and it gets its water from deep roots in the oasis and it towers in the midst of this arid scenery there as the palm tree, as I picture it in the oasis. It's hot, it's low country. The cedar of Lebanon is on at high mountains and it's cold. They are diversely opposite. Yet both are in the temple of the Lord. Does that not speak of the ecumenism of the church? Of all sorts of people make up the righteous in the temple of the Lord, all drinking from the same fountain. This marvelous imagery in the temple of the Lord, thriving and prospering.

Those are some of the ideas that I'm developing here for you. I give you the data about the water from the other passages of Scripture. Then finally in verses 14 and 15, they flourish in old age and proclaim God is upright. First of all, the righteous flourish in old age and that's where I give you the data of the length of life of these trees. They still thrive in old age and they will be full of sap a figure of internal health and well-being. Thick with leaves is a figure of external health and vitality like that of Moses and so forth. And what are they doing then? B they are proclaiming I Am is upright and just. That's what they're proclaiming. I do comment on the word, "proclaiming that I Am is upright" and page 128. I comment on the word "upright." Literally, I suggest that the data tells me it means to be straight without a curve or a bend. It means to be level without a

bump. In other words, it's absolutely straight, it's flawless is the idea to be upright is to be flawless without a bump, without a curve, without a bend. That's God that's behind the whole thing. So figuratively, it means faultlessly just and moral, according to Torah ethics, I'll let the rest of the comments stand there.

And then I talk about, there should be a space here on page 128, and it's in italics but needs a space. You see "my rock" and I comment on the figure of the rock, my rock. It means it's imperviously solid. You can't break it. It's solid, absolutely solid. Therefore, it speaks of safety, security, salvation. You can't penetrate it. You're perfectly secure with this rock who's my savior.

Well, that's the psalm. Now we've finished it. You could see this is proclamation psalm and the poetry and the theology of it. I hope you, I read that and I bless God He called me to do this. [1:27:05]

Psalms

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Session 12: Petitionary Psalms, Lament, enemy

By Dr. Bruce Waltke

This is Dr. Bruce Waltke in his teaching on the book of Psalms. This is session number 12: Petition Psalms, Lament, enemy, and motifs.

A. Review: 4 Types of Psalms [00:23-3:12]

We're learning different approaches to the Psalms from the Historical Approach. We're in the Forum Critical Approach. We noted there are three principle kinds of Psalms. There are Hymns, Praise of God in general, Grateful Songs of Praise, and Petition Psalms. There's a form of psalm that Gunkel didn't discuss that I think is important and that Mowinckel picks up on and that is Instruction Psalms that periodically the editor's threw in a psalm that exhort to be abiding in the law of the Lord. They threw in the first psalm, as an introduction that this psalm is for those, this book is for those, who meditate in the word of God. So there really is another kind, and that is Instruction Psalm. So in my mind, there are actually four kinds of Psalms: there's Praise Psalms, there's Grateful Praise for specific acts, there's Petition Psalms, and there are Instruction Psalms. The Chronicler didn't mention the Instruction Psalms, and it could well be, they were added later. I don't know, it's speculation. So we talked about one dominant type and that is the Hymn. And we also exegeted a psalm just now Psalm 92, which is a Psalm of Grateful Praise. Now on page 130 of your notes, and let's see a huge section of your syllabus, and I'm going to have to go through it in briefly really because there's a mass of material here. Basically, what I've done is that Gunkel, being this German scholar so much detail, I simply scanned a lot of his work and it will give you so much detail about the Psalms. But I feel it's important in a course where you're introducing the Psalms that

you get a broad view, you get a taste of the Psalms. I think that the Hymns gives you a good taste of that genre within the Psalter. The petitions are the dominant sound within the Psalms. What I do is, from Gunkel, I just list all these psalms and then I try to think about them. Basically, I'm just basically giving you Gunkel's detailed work and I could just kind of skim through it with you.

B. Overview of Petition Psalms [3:12-5:04]

This lecture too, on the Petition Psalms, I've divided into three main sections. The first one is part one, which is the introduction, which covers most of the basic material. Part two on page 162, I take up a major problem within the Petition Psalms and that is the problem where the Psalmist prays that God will punish the enemy. These are called Imprecatory Psalms. They are inconsistent with Jesus' teaching about turning the other cheek and they're asking God to bring judgment on the wicked. You do not get that in the New Testament, I'll say more about that. It's problematic for many Christian people that the Psalmist should say, "God bash their teeth," "take their babies and smash them on the rocks" and so forth. Christians back off from that. It's an issue that needs to be addressed and I'm going to address it. That's on page 162 part two: Imprecatory Psalms. So I've given that a distinctive section. I wish I had added a third section at the end of the chapter, which would be on the theology of the Psalms. I touched the theology of Petition Psalms, and I'd just like to summarize at the end, part three, that's not in your notes, just some fundamental ideas about the theology and what we can get out of the Petition Psalms.

C. Introductory Matters, Petition Psalms [5:04-8:09]

But now, first of all, some introductory matters. First of all, as a matter of how do you refer to this genre. What's the name of it? And then I'm going to actually look at the Individual Lament psalms, Roman numeral two. After using Gunkel and I liken him to taking a flower and just ripping it all apart. You're like a botanist looking at all the details and in the process you lose the flower. But maybe after we understand the stamina and

the leaves and the roots and all, we'll have a better appreciation for the flower. So that's how I kind of feel we're doing it. We're just ripping the whole thing apart. We kind of no longer have the aroma of the flower or the beauty of the flower, but we'll put it, hopefully you'll put it back together again and enjoy the fragrance of it.

But we're going to go now after the Individual Laments on page 140, I'll talk briefly about Communal Laments, where the whole nation is in difficulty. There's a mixture between the individual and the community, and Gunkel called it mixed. He had trouble understanding that because he didn't understand a royal interpretation. If you understand the "I" as the king, you can understand the mixture with the "we" and the people because they're in corporate solidarity with one another. But there are some that are just Community Laments. That's on page 140. A major motif of the Petition Psalms is the mention of the enemy and so I thought it'd be worth our while to mention the enemy on page 141. You see the top of the page, Roman numeral four. So after we have the nomenclature and we have the Roman number two, the Individual Lament and the Community lament, I thought it worth our while to have a whole section on the enemy. So that's Roman numeral four. Then finally on page 145, I discuss the motifs of the Petition Psalms that's just as in the Praise Psalms have call for praise and cause for praise and then have a renewed, usually renewed call for praise, that's their motifs, the Petition Psalms have distinct elements too in this botanical analysis of part. But they have an address. They have a lament. They have a petition and they have praise at the end of them. And they're all worth reflecting on. So we'll consider the motifs of the Petition Psalm.

D. Outline of Individual Laments [8:09-10:30]

So that's where we're going with the Individual Lament Psalms. We're going to be looking at in this chapter. We'll be looking first of all, at the Individual Lament Psalms, then Communal, then we'll reflect on the enemy and then we'll reflect on their motifs. So those are the broad views and we'll probably get lost in route, but there's so much detail here. But hopefully we'll keep our heads above the water and I can keep us all breathing

through it. We're about to take a deep plunge into the Psalter at this point.

All right, under the Individual Laments, what we're going to be setting, discussing, is first of all, very quickly, what the Psalm's identification is in capital A., The identification stands for the identification of the Psalms. What Psalms are we talking about? A second question we're going to address that Gunkel addresses is: who is the individual, the "I." And in his day it was thought the "I" was not an individual, but it was a whole community that referred to itself as "I," and not an individual. So we have B. the identification of the individual. Then on page 131 we're going to be talking about the life setting, where did these psalms originate? And that will be on page 131 C. So after we have the nomenclature and we have the identification, after we have the identification of Psalms, the identification of who the "I" is, we thereupon discuss various life settings from which they emerge. We'll be talking about that, some eight different settings that we find. So that's kind of the outline of the Individual Lament. And that's going to take us quite a ways all the way over to page 140 with the Communal Lament, but what's with the Communal Lament. I think it was page 140.

D. 5 Elements of the Petition Psalms [10:30-21:53]

First of all, then let's talk about what Psalms are we talking about? There are some about 50 Psalms, a third of the Psalter. By the way of the third, I think 47 of them mentioned the enemy. So you could see only three of them, one of which was Psalm 4, didn't mention the enemy. It was a different kind of a crisis. The crisis was not an enemy; the crisis was a drought as we saw. So I think it's worth our while to note that this is a large number. So I write the Lament or Petition. O, first of all, nomenclature. Remember I said, the five elements were: address, complaint or the lament, a petition and praise at the end. So therefore it can be named after one of these motifs that run through all of these Psalms. Actually lament can be divided between actually lamenting a situation, that's for example, lamenting your sin, a Penitential Psalm versus a complaint that you're protesting. This is not right. This is injustice. So it goes beyond a lament, but it's a complaint. So there's sometimes called Lament Psalm and sometimes they're called

Complaint Psalms. So you have this kind of different terminology because of these different motifs that are found in this kind of a psalm. Well, I think the literature goes both ways on this, between the lament or complaint and petition. So I may find, you may find me switching and round myself, according to what I feel at the moment. But I've think I've given it the title Petition Psalms. So you have Praise Psalms and Petition Psalms.

But then Roman number two, the Individual Laments and the A. Under that is the identification and the dominant kind of Psalm that we have in the Psalter. It's the largest genre of Psalm. It's about 50 out of 150. I made comment on this in the last hour quoting from R. W. L. Mobley, he notes that quote "the predominance of laments at the very heart of Israel's prayers means that the problems that give rise to lament are not something marginal or unusual, but rather are central to the life of faith. Moreover, they show that the experience of anguish and puzzlement in the life of faith is not a sign of deficient faith, something to be outgrown or put behind one, but rather is intrinsic to the very nature of faith." So the difficulties and distresses of life is at the heart of our faith. It's the triumph of God in our distress. It's here that I discussed this notion that we discussed yesterday, that it is absolutely essential that there was a gap between virtue and its rewards for if God rewarded our virtue immediately, we would use God. We would worship him for who he is, but simply for our own self-gratification, instead of our being his servant, he would become our servant. That's how we would use God.

I think it's worth a while here to pause on that because Moses is dealing with that with the people of Israel, that their prosperity is the invidious enemy of their spiritual life that as Agur said, "don't give me too much for if I have too much, I will say, who is the Lord?" I don't need Him anymore. It's when we are in need and in distress that we need God. This gapping enables us not to confound worship and morality with pleasure because otherwise, if he rewarded us immediately, it will be all for our pleasure and not for our spiritual good.

So take a look at Deuteronomy 8, where God has taught, giving us the example of

how he deals with us. He says in chapter eight and verse one, "Be careful to follow every command I'm giving you today so that you may live and increase and may enter and possess the land the Lord promised on oath to your ancestors. Now, remember how the Lord, your God led you all the way in the wilderness these 40 years. He did that to humble you, to make you dependent upon him and not self-sufficient. He did it to humble you and to test you [to know what you're really about] in order to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commands. He humbled you, causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna. And it was something unique. You couldn't go back to traditions. It was your own experience, which neither you nor your ancestors has known. To teach you that man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord." "So he humbled you, tested you in that wilderness, where there was deprivation. So you would know to depend upon God. That means to obey God and depend upon his word and live according to his word." He warns the people that prosperity can be the invidious enemy of their lives. In verse 10, "When you have eaten and are satisfied, praise the Lord, your God for the good land he has given you. Be careful [this is when you prosper] that you do not forget the Lord, your God failing to observe his commands, his laws and his decrees that I'm giving you this day [And this is our depravity] otherwise, when you eat and are satisfied, when you build fine houses and settle down, and when your herds and flocks grow large and your silver and gold increase, and all you have is multiplied, then your hearts will become proud. And you will forget the Lord your God who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. He led you through the vast and dreadful wilderness that thirsty waterless land with venomous snakes and scorpions. He brought you out of the rock. He gave you manna to eat in the wilderness, something your ancestors had never known, to humble and test you so that in the end, it may go well with you." Here's the danger, "you may say to yourself, my power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me. But remember the Lord your God for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your ancestors, as it is this day." It's a

danger that we will forget God, and that we will be self-confident, self-assured. As I say, we will use God for our pleasure. Hence there is a gap where we must go through suffering to build our character.

So I write on page 130, the gap between virtue and its reward is essential to the spiritual life. Were prayers answered immediately, the petitioner would confound pleasure with morality. We would selfishly use God by gapping virtue and its rewards, the spiritual life is developed.

Here's Paul, "more than that, we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that sufferings produce endurance and endurance produces character and character produces hope, and hope does not put us shame because God's love has been poured out into our hearts. So the Holy spirit who has been given to us." So it's a way of God saving us. And if we turn and learn to be dependent upon him, and this, I suggest, is at the very heart of the book of Psalms. In all of these psalms, they triumph in praise as we'll see. They never lament without praise. It's always in the context of what we know of our God. That is the difference with Job. Job complained without any praise to God, he just found fault with God and God was displeased and rebuked him. At the end Job had to repent of his pride of putting God in the dock of having answered to him. So, there's a big difference.

So, in other words, what we're learning is that complaint is normative and even protest is normative, but always to be pleasing to God with praise. Never losing confidence in him, being confident that he is doing a good work in us, through it all. And that takes faith. Without faith, it is impossible to please God. So it develops our spiritual life. That's the A.

E. Identification of the "I" [21:53-23:27]

The B. Is the identification of the "I". The point here is clearly, now Gunkel, doesn't understand the "I" as the king often, but he does argue persuasively that it is an individual. He writes, "It was the gravest mistake that Psalm research in general, could have made when they completely misunderstood such lively individual poetry and

universally related the "I" of the complaint songs to the community without an understanding it referred to the individual." He's addressing the academia of his time. He says, "it's so natural. It's even self-evident." And on page 131, "This is true in other religions and other poetry." In the superscript, it's a complaint song. For example, of 102 of the one suffering when he is despised and pours out of his concern. The speaker D. is often differentiated from the rest of the community. For example, "you have removed my friends from me." And then he gives the data. He sees it as the king, clearly speaking in Psalm 18 and so forth. So, it is the "I." And in the "I" what he's missing is the king.

F. Types of Distress & the Temple Setting [23:27-29:52]

Then that leads us to the life setting from which they arose and in what kind of distresses do they find themselves? Some of the psalms were written for the temple. We'll see that on page 132, and some psalms were written and composed at some distance from the temple. They were not all composed immediately for the temple. They all came to be used at the temple, but they were composed quite far away from the temple.

Even the enemies are removed from the sanctuary. So the temple on page 132 and at a distance from the temple is on page 132. Some psalms you could see number three there sung at a considerable distance from the sanctuary. And then the enemies are far removed sometimes from the immediate area. Number four portrayal of enemies removed from the sanctuary.

Some Psalms are composed on the sick bed, Psalm 34. Page 134, also on page 135, that number six, usually the situation is a matter of life and death situations. It's a critical moment of life and death. Number seven is sometimes it's composed because of sin. You're aware of sin in your life and you're either your consciousness is bothering you, or you're in deep distress. Number eight, page 138 deals with other kinds of internal distresses that we can look at. And then nine is the enemies is a situation of enemies and these may go together and that demands a separate discussion that's on page 140. So that's the eight, there are nine points.

And the first point, well, the first part we didn't mention is he mentions that it's not

always easy to identify the situation because they use figurative language that leaves it open to all sorts of applications. That's number one. So going back then to page 131, having gotten a broad view of these nine points, but eight situations. So the first point Gunkel is making, it's not easy to recognize all the time what the setting is because of the general expression and metaphors. Although when I put brackets in, I've been giving you mostly this gigantic work by Gunkel which is recognized by all scholarship as foundational data. Most can be easily fitted into Davidic sufferings at the hands of, and David had three principle times of suffering: at the hands of Saul and at the hands of Absalom. So several of the psalms arise out of the enemy of Saul and the enemy of Absalom. There are others like Doeg the Edomite and so forth.

Now we begin with several psalms passages their place, the prayer in the temple, that's where they were set. So for example, Psalm 5, "but I, by your great grace may enter your house and bow down in worship before you, before your holy temple." Obviously the king is praying at the temple. That's the setting. Again, he'll say in Psalm 28, "Look, when I raised my hands toward your holy sanctuary." They may be offered in the morning at dawn sacrifice. As in Psalm 5 again, "In the morning, Lord, you hear my voice, in the morning. I lay my request before you and wait expectantly." The time of prayer is asking God to judge the situation and make a decision. The morning in the ancient Near East was the time of judgment. They held court with the morning sun in the light. It was symbolic. So in the light of the sun, everything could be exposed. And that was time when you held court in the morning. In fact, in the Mesopotamian religion Shamash, the sun, is the judge god, because he brings everything into the light of day. So he's in the morning. Now he's looking to God as a judge to look on his situation, consider it, make a judgment and deliver me, that sort of a thing.

They were also offered in the evening. As for example, Psalm 141, "May my prayer be set before you like incense, may the lifting up of my hands be like the evening sacrifice." So probably he's praying in the evening in that particular case. In Psalm 4 remember the end of the Psalm is "I will go to sleep, for you, O Lord, make me dwell in

safety." The Psalm is an evening prayer as he's going to bed and in this drought and in this crisis. He goes to sleep without an answer, but trusting the Lord, and that was Psalm 4.

G. Psalm 42/43 and the Sanctuary [29:52-35:31]

But some Psalms of number three on page 132, they're sung at a considerable distance from the sanctuary. May he's held captive by an adversary. This would be Psalm 42 and 43. Psalm. 42 and 43 are one psalm. There is a refrain that runs through twice in Psalm 42 and at the end of 43. 42 is the addressing lament and 43 is the petition. And the petition was picked off for a separate prayer, but it's really one psalm. 42 and 43 is one psalm. So it starts, "As a deer pants for streams of water. So my soul pants for you, my God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God, when can I go and meet with God? My tears have been my food day and night. While people say to me all day long, where is your God? These things I remember as I pour out my soul, I used to go to the house of God under the protection of the Almighty One, with shouts of joy and praise among the festival throng. Why my soul are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me. Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him my Savior and my God. My soul is downcast within me. Therefore, I will remember you from the land of the Jordan, the heights of Hermon-- from Mount Mizar." So in other words he's in the north country for some have reasoned he's being held captive. He's longing to go to Jerusalem to be in the presence of God and worship at the temple. There in the high Jordan where there are water falls, "Deep calls to deep in the roar of your waterfalls; all your waves and breakers have swept over me. By day the Lord directs his love at night his song is with me--a prayer to the God of my life. I say to God my Rock, "'Why have you forgotten me? Why must I go about mourning, oppressed by the enemy?'" My bones suffer mortal agony as my foes taunt me, saying to me all day long, 'Where is your God?' Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God." That is Psalm 42 and you can see the lament in this psalm. Now 43, the petition: "Vindicate me, my God, and plead my cause against an unfaithful nation.

Rescue me from those who are deceitful and wicked. You are God my stronghold. Why have you rejected me? Why must I go about mourning, oppressed by the enemy? Send me your light and your faithful care, let them lead me; let them bring me to your holy mountain, to the place where you dwell. Then I will go to the altar of God, to God, my joy and my delight. I will praise you with the lyre. O God, my God. Why my soul are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him my Savior and my God." Obviously, he's not at the temple. He's longing to get to the temple, but he sings this psalm in a form of exile longing to get back to the temple. Well, that's also true of other psalms that are listed here. We've read that there are certain songs I think, and of course, we should read. And that's one of the great psalms we have.

And number four have not developed the portrayal of the enemies are removed from the sanctuary. What happens here with Gunkel and what I did here was, you can see the data. For example, this is the data portrayal of the enemies removed from the sanctuary. We hear that opponents surround him, footnote 158. "There are other psalms where you hear that the foes surround him. They seek him out. They lie in wait for him." There's the data for it. 159 in the footnote. "They gloat over his misfortune." There's the data. "They taunt and laugh at him." 161. "When we hear these things, we are not led to worship service setting, but to a situation of life outside where the one suffering is separated from Yahweh's help" and so forth. So, in other words, Gunkel has massed all this data, and it's there in your footnotes. As you go through this and you read it, you should get a pretty broad view of the Psalter and a feeling for its content.

H. Life and Death situations and Penitential Psalms [35:31-37:35]

Number six, the setting, the life and death situations. Gunkel says, "These prayers do not treat everyday occurrences. Rather, they treat the terrible decision between life and death. Relationship between the enemies and the one praying, also concerns who will live and who will die" and so forth. That's number six.

Number seven, setting the page 136. They are Penitential sometimes. Sometimes it's a sickness, the penitential is in sickness. There, I gave a whole Psalm, Psalm 38, but I

won't take time to read the whole psalm, but you have it there in your notes. They also, these Penitential Psalms not only sickness, that they also call attention to the brevity of life. One of the Psalms I hope we can touch is Psalm 90, which touches on the brevity of life.

Number eight, there were all kinds of internal distresses and desires, namely, a desire to be with God. And it's all kind of heavy thoughts. I develop them on page 139. This distress and fate of his people that desert him page 140. And in some songs he seems to be on trial is another setting on page 140. But the best I can do here is just kind of give a survey of a feeling. If you're familiar with Psalter, I think you would identify that this is really the warp and woof of the Psalter. Page 140, we have Community Laments and there you have the Community Laments and what are involved on the bottom of the page.

I. The Enemy [37:35-56:48]

Now we come to page 141 and we talk about the enemies. Here we'll talk about the extensive use of terms. There are many ways of referring to the enemy. Then most of these terms B. are going to be defined them in moral terms. Then we're going to talk about, C. the description of the enemies. Then I'm going to show you, remarkably what Mowinckel and Gunkel think because they reject David and they reject the historical the king. What Mowinckel does, but Gunkel does, it's amazing how he can with all this data totally misinterpret it, which takes me back to hermeneutics on the first day. His pre-understanding leads him to a totally wrong interpretation of the book of Psalms. It's just utterly amazing to me that you can get all this data. So, I'm going to just give you Mowinckel's interpretation. There are two great scholars, everybody has to cite in academia, Gunkel and Mowinckel. Mowinckel is a Norwegian scholar and he was a student of Gunkel. I'll just quote them. And it just amazes me.

But anyway, let's talk about the enemies and here under A. we have the extensive list of terms for the enemy. In addition to simply calling as "enemies" and without, I put it in the footnote, so as not to overwhelm us. There are all the different words for the enemy and all the references that Gunkel has so carefully identified. It's a mass of data.

So, in B, on page 141 is the extensive use of moral terms for the enemy. It might be worth while reading that, to get a feeling for who the enemy is. You know what you have under the B. You know, we think of the enemy as like military enemy. So, you just looked at that lying witnesses. Yeah. That was very interesting to bring it out in those various designations. He's not politically correct. He calls a spade, a spade. I put in here, the Hebrew words that are there, but you can skip all that you don't get. They do evil, they're villains, they're impudent, they're arrogant, they're haughty, they're violent, crooked, strong, lying witnesses, evil persons, men of violence, deceitful and shifting. He labels them in moral terms like that. The enemy is, we're in a spiritual war.

I said yesterday that the earth looks so small, but this is the stage within the entire universe, even though you can't see it from the end of our galaxy with a Hubble telescope, it's just a little stage. And on this stage, we have the war between justice and injustice between truth and err between virtue and vice. We're in this struggle between Christ and Satan. You don't need a big universe for that, we're the stage and we're the actors on that stage. God chose us to be the actors on the path of faith, hope, and love virtues versus self-confidence, selfishness, and despair. Only in this world, we're in a great spiritual warfare. When we get to the New Testament, it makes it even clearer. We're wrestling, not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers. We're fighting against spiritual forces. But that is not as clear in the Old Testament. It's made clear in the New that behind these evil men, the enemy, is Satan and the forces of evil.

C. he describes the enemy and several ways. He's described the portrayal as on the battlefield that they're a military enemy. There they too they are imaged as hunters. The righteous are like hunted animals. And three, he uses animal zoomorphic, animal imagery for the enemy. They are lions, bulls and dogs. Four, their crooked ways, their secret opinions and the disdainful words are grouped together here. Their ways, their opinions and their words, that's number four. And number five, they are opposed to God, okay. Going back then on the battlefield and you could see there were a number of these. They were likened, and they are, an attacking troop. He is surrounded by an enemy army.

While arrows are shot at him. The enemies run against them as they would against an overthrown wall correspondently with his sword in the enemy's hand is often mentioned, or their bows and arrows. I think that this is literal for the king as he's engaged in a literal battle, for his is a carnal kingdom. He's establishing a physical carnal kingdom. Ours is a more spiritual kingdom. We're not a political nation. We are a spiritual nation. "You are the chosen people." Peter says to the church, "you are the holy nation." And we are a spiritual temple. That's all 1 Peter 2.9 and 10. We talked about that the other day.

An image, however, that's being used of the hunters, and he's a hunted animal. The opponents lay secret nets before the pious, like those, that one lays in the animals' pathways. Then you see 176, all the Psalms, they dig graves in the path so that the unsuspecting will fall into them. All kind of traps to destroy you. 177, while they chase him, like one would chase a wild animal on a hunt. And 178 gives you all the mass of material that Gunkel is giving us here to help us to see the psalm.

These lectures are new to me, by the way, I've never taught this this way. I just, I just finished Gunkel two months ago in preparation for this course. So, this is not something I've heard, this is new for me to teach it this broadly and with this kind of depth. We're doing some psalms I've never done before because of the commentary that I'm writing. So, it's been a growing experience for me. It's been good.

The zoomorphic imagery is the animal images, other passages, speak of the enemy as they would about wild beasts which allows the Psalmist fear of them to be recognized. This should be there. Oh, they bear. That should be "bare." They bare their teeth. They tear open their mouth and they yearn to feed on his flesh. They are lions that threaten the one praying as well as enraged bulls or biting dogs. May God crushed their bite and shatter their teeth. We'll see that if we have time in Psalm 3.

Then they're crooked ways and secret opinions and Gunkel summarizes all the Psalms for us again, where you'll find that motif. He spent years in the Psalms. He is the master of the data. So, we're very privileged to have all of this put before us that this is really, and this is in depth. I'm just cutting the surface when you come to all these Psalms

and all these verses that's plowing deep on a broader level. So, we're very fortunate to have his work. I still think we're plundering the Egyptians, but anyway. They're opposed to God. Number five.

Now on page 144, who is the enemy? Here's Mowinckel. He interprets the workers of evil, the doers of evil, the evil doers, as we saw in Psalm 92, you know, "all who do evil," he interprets that expression to mean all who cast spells. In other words, in a magical way, they are, with their words, they're casting a spell, and that's what's going to destroy them. They are the ones who are magicians. These are magicians who can cast spells to destroy the enemy that destroyed the psalmist, they're magicians. Nobody has followed that, but he spends a lot of time on that.

Here's Gunkel, he speaks of the Psalmist as having primitive feelings and what he means by that is he's psychotic and somewhat neurotic and maybe has paranoia. I should have pulled it him more extensively than I did. This is Gunkel directly, "Originally, they were royal, but were later adopted metaphorically for the common citizen." So he's saying in the first temple, they had originated orally and it was for the king, but what we actually have is for the second temple. This military imagery is a metaphor for the people who are living in the second temple. They are sick, literally sick, but he also suggested they may be psychologically sick. "This would be especially true," he says, "for the statements about war, taking them literally forbids one to interchange them with reference to another type." But he thinks they're a metaphor. "The fact is that the one, those praying are not the great politicians, but common private citizens. The model used for these utterances should be sought in the royal complaint songs that are imitated by the individual complaints songs." I think I'll go on as the common citizen in his view is sick. "In the process the individual complaint songs lose their literal meaning and become images and symbols." He cites Psalm 1 to 91 on page 145. I think it's a wrong exegesis. There's no reference to demonic powers there.

But now C. I'm quoting that this is him. Well, this is summarizing it. The prayer, there should be a hyphen between the Y and the E the prayer. The one praying, the pray-

er is physically sick and his viewpoint is sometimes pathologically and erotically. This is what Gunkel calls primitive feelings. "The first thing one should realize," he's talk about enemies "is the one praying characteristically sees himself surrounded by a world of enemies. This world cannot be explained solely on the basis of the passionate exaggeration of the one suffering. One comes closer to understanding them when one proceeds from the original cause of the complaint song, extreme illness and terrifying mortal danger." I didn't pull the whole thing but, in other words, then, because he's psychologically sick, he imagines these are not real enemies for Gunkel. He imagines his enemies. In other words, he has paranoia. Imagine he's not really surrounded by an enemy, but he feels so alone as a person may feel. That's the way he views it. So, the Psalmist is not psychologically well.

Question: why do you think if he goes with that interpretation given the history that he undoubtedly knows of Israel? Why he would apparently... I'm not hearing you clearly. Why do you think that he would make that interpretation given the fact that he undoubtedly he knows the history of Israel? He knows the suffering that happened, whether he interprets it to be a king or not to think that that the sufferings are not real? Why do you think he goes there even given all this data? Is there some, does he tell us in his exegesis why he goes there?

No, it's not that. They said the whole thing is because, well, that's why I'm saying it was so important for the lecture that they are by the king and that they are by David. Now he recognizes that they originated with the royal context, but he draws the conclusion that they really, and this is, we discussed this in another lecture, it goes back to a whole presuppositional base here that this material dates to the second temple. He denies that it's a king. He says, originally it was a king at war. That's what it was there, but that's not what we have. It's incredible. So that this is for the people in the second temple. He came to that out of a higher criticism from the time of Wellhausen as a whole background. But he's convinced that this is second temple when they don't have a king. So, this is the individual. So now what's wrong with the individual. He starts with the

presupposition, he's physically sick. Okay. So, if a person is physically sick, then who are his enemies? He draws a conclusion they're in his head. It's incredible. Why would you spend all this detail about the righteous if they're psychotic, neurotic or paranoia? Why would you do all this? This astounds me, to come to this kind of conclusion that this is a person who's physically sick. He imagines all this, which is not mental wellbeing.

So, the enemy is no longer. What happens is the enemy is no longer all these moral terms. What happens is that really the pious and we'll see this, the pious are the poor and the wicked are the rich. We end up in a class warfare. It's incredible what happens. This goes on in later literature, cause he's assumed the pious is poor. It's assumed that the rich are wicked. So therefore, the pious are also fighting against the psalmists. Those pious are fighting against the rich and we end up with a class warfare. I mean, this is such a bastardization of the Psalter I can scarcely stand it. This is scholarship, so-called.

So, let me just here he comes. So that the Penitential Psalms, how do you explain that they are an instinctive, egotistical feeling, So it's egotistical. That I'm not important. The conflict, he says is due to class warfare, the pious support, and it's against the rich. So, religious contrast for the pious are convinced the rich are wicked and so forth. So to my mind, it's like the Mona Lisa as I said the first day. And the whole problem is I don't think he has a right I think his heart, I'll even come to this, something is wrong with your heart. In my mind, that's pre-understanding. That's why my first lecture was on hermeneutics and spiritual understanding. It is critical to the interpretation of the Psalms. And we'll discuss that.

J. 5 Motifs of Petition Psalms [56:48-59:16]

Now we'll go to the motifs that we have. This is on page 145 in I hope to get a broad view of the Psalter and a broad view is going to take into account these enemies. But now we're looking at the Petition Psalms, and we are looking here at, we looked at the moral terms. We looked at the various life settings from which they arose, which I found them valuable. Then we looked at who these enemies are as part of the life settings.

He's with enemies all around him as part of this life setting. And now we're looking at the motifs of this kind of a psalm, and there are five motifs. There's the address that's on page 146. There is the lament that's on page 147. There is petition, we discussed that on page 148, and then you have to go a long ways to page 186. We come to confidence, the fourth motif -- confidence. I think that's on page, No, it must be page 156. Yeah. On page 156. We're going to get Melanie through the syllabus here. And finally, the conclusion of the Psalm we discuss on page 160.

All right, first of all, the motif for the address. So we have the address, lament, and I don't like the order that Gunkel used here. I frankly, we would order it this way, but I followed his introduction. You have address, lament, confidence, petition. In other words, the confidence normally comes in between the lament and the petition. So that one prays with confidence and with faith. Then it will end up with a conclusion that we'll look at.

K. Address and Lament motifs [59:16-1:02:35]

So let's reflect on each of those, first of all, the address or the summons to God. And that's just some basically information. I don't think I need to develop that further on page 146 reflections on the address to God. Page 147, we have the lament or the complaint. The only point I want to make in the lecture is point number four, that there are three common sub-motifs to the complaint that are worthwhile. The first one is that God appears to be absent as in the famous Psalm 22. But, for example, you will read, "I've been cast out from before your eyes" footnote 123, gives you the verse. "The Lord will not hear me" is the way you feel. "Why O Lord do you stand in the distance? Why do you hide yourself in times of distress?" Psalm 10.1. "My God, my God, Why have you forsaken me" Psalm 22.1. So, there's the data that the Psalmist feels abandoned by God as we do. There were times when you pray, it seems like you, it seems to me sometimes, it's like Lewis says, you knocked on the door and the door never opens. You knock until your knuckles are bloody raw. It's as though, and when you examine it, and it doesn't but when you examine it more closely, it seems to be double bolted. When you look upstairs, it is as though the lights are out. Nobody's at home. That is not an abnormal spiritual

experience. That's why the Psalms are so popular because they're honest. We can identify with these emotions and these feelings because he gives expression to them. He's able to bring us back to a posture of faith in the midst of it.

He not only feels God is absent, but he feels the enemy is too strong. There are too many of them. Sometimes when I look at the news media and I look at my world, I must admit, the enemy seems too strong. You wonder how in the world can this ever be righted? How in the world can this ever be changed? We identify with that. The enemy is just too strong, but the Spirit that is in us is greater than the spirit that is against us. Ultimately God will not be defeated. That's what the Psalms are about. We will overcome. Thirdly, I cannot cope and I'm at the point of death. I can't go on anymore. I need your intervention. So, I think those points are worth mentioning. In the lament section here.

L. Petition Motif [1:02:35-1:10:11]

Now we come to the heart of it and this is the major part of our notes. What did it go all the way from 148 to 156? So something like that as we think about the petition. So what we're going to talk about here is that this is the most significant part. Number one, they usually have a general prayer for God simply to hear. He's coming before the court of God in prayer is asking for judgment and to intervene and he's asking for God to hear his case. So he can present the case before him. To look, and he uses some pretty strong language sometimes. The main point is that God will have compassion and help me or deliver me. And I want to come back to that.

The fourth point that is on page 149 is the specific observable references. We can skip that entirely. Number five in the petition, he's seeking justice before the judge's bench. And number six, he introduces his petition. Number seven, it talks about two unique specific situations or three. You have to distinguish between confessional petitions and protest petition. So, I'll come back to that. Well, and number eight, he talks about wishes. We can skip that. Number nine petitions and wishes directed against the enemy. We're going to handle that in a whole separate section in the imprecatory psalms.

This is on page 152. Number 10 on page 154, is he debunks Mowinckel's view of magic.

He, number 11, he takes up on reproachful questions, "How long, O Lord" and so forth. The number 12 is the rationale for divine intervention. But let's go back to page 148, and kind of where we're going. So, number one, it is the most significant aspect. Number two, he's asking God to hear his case, hear his prayer and look. He feels sometimes God is asleep, wake up and see what's happening here. And it's very, very dramatic. The main part is that God will help him and deliver him. Or a very crucial idea is deliver. That's a crucial word "deliver me," and you will have the word translated, deliver, save rescue. This goes back to the name for Jesus. Yasha, yasha, hoshia has two ideas to it. The first idea, and maybe you'd be better off, all this is written down. Maybe it'd be better instead of trying to read and listen to me, it might be better off just listening and know it's in the notes here and then you can go back to it. The two ideas to yasha, the first idea is that there will be a military intervention that God will intervene. The second idea that's always present is it has a juridical notion as well because it's right. So, when he asked to be delivered, he's asking God to intervene and rescue him. The second idea always present with it is because it is right. Those are the basic ideas that are in these notes here. I try to argue the case following Sawyer's argument.

There is one point though on page 149, that we should make comment that we pray God to rescue us from our situation, because it's just, but then I add to that, the responsibility to deliver for the cause of justice fell directly upon the king and above all upon I Am. If God fails to help the innocent sufferer, the afflicted is put to shame, but now note, the wronged party, however, has responsibility to cry out as in the case of rape. If a woman is raped and she doesn't cry out, she's partly guilty. So therefore, you have to cry out when you are in this situation. This is why the Psalmists frequently emphasizes that they have raised their voice in response and I Am is counted upon to uphold the course of justice. So we'll let it go with that. Maybe I said that too strongly, but when you're making a judgment about rape, it has to be shown that the woman cried out to be delivered. But I don't want to get into that whole law. That's a much bigger discussion,

but the point is, when you are in distress, you have a responsibility to cry out and there's something wrong if you don't cry out. Let's let it go with that and that's what I'm making the point in that paragraph.

Number seven particular situations that I think are worth commenting on: the particular situations can be a confessional petition that your confessing and you're a petitioning that God will forgive you. So we have, these are some of them: forgive all my sin, but that out my wickedness, forgive me, O Lord, forgive me; do not snatch me up with my sins; do not be angry with me forever; do not preserve my wicked deeds. These are all confessions. So, if you're suffering and you think it's for your sin, then we come to God. We petition him, confident He will forgive us. In the New Testament we learned the basis for that is the atonement of Christ. So, we never stay in sin. If God didn't forgive us, we would be solidified in sin there would be no deliverance. If the prodigal doesn't have a home to go to, he has no hope, but we always have a home to go to when we have been prodigal. There is always salvation and that's where these penitential psalms come in, that you have there.

M. Protest Motif [1:10:11-1:12:05]

But there are other Psalms that are protest. They know they are innocent. That's the second group. Here you have some of their words, test me, examine, this is literal, my kidneys and my heart. The kidneys are the seat of emotions. I'll let you figure out why that is. He urges the divine judge to vindicate me. The one praying beseeches I Am to recognize his innocence and not to leave him to fall to the fate of sinners. So these are protests psalms, and these are difficult because, who can say I am innocent and we all know that we are sinful, but you cannot live in ambiguity to have confidence. You have to know either you're forgiven or you're innocent. If you're innocent, you can pray it is right that I be delivered. You see unless you have that confidence that you're innocent. It's difficult to pray deliver me, which has that juridical aspect to it, because it's right. Now, David will pray and he will say, forgive my hidden sins. Paul says, I don't judge myself, but I know my hidden sins are forgiven. And if I know of a sin, then I must confess it and

then I need a Penitential Psalm. But if I know I don't have any guilt and I know I'm walking with the Lord and I'm trusting him to cleanse me from all my sin, then I can say, I'm innocent and God do what's right by me in this situation.

N. Confidence Section [1:12:05-1:20:01]

The third thing is that he petitions God for a conversion and protection against sin. I'll let it go with that. I'm going to leave now the petition section and we're on page 156, the confidence section. Then you have expressions, the confidence is based on who God is number one. It's based on what God has done for the Psalmist. As I said, this is page 157. God has a great track record, we'll see that when we do Psalm 22 on page 158. We have the reasons for confidence. All of this is rich material. There's so much material here, but the reasons for confidence is because of who God is. He's holy, righteous, just, and the reason is that his own personal experience for confidence, that God has delivered him in the past. The third, so the first reason for confidence is God's being. The second is his personal experience and what God has done and I would extend it beyond that. Third on page 159, he has confidence because he knows who he is. He knows his election. He knows he's the king. So, the first reason for confidence, I know who God is. My second reason for confidence is I know what God has done. I should have done that, I think that could be done better than in the notes, but that's how I want to put it now. I know what God has done, His great works in history, His mighty acts. The third, he knows who he is, that he has a glory bestowed upon him and I have confidence because I know who I am. I'm a child of God by the promises of God.

Fourth, he knows the godless find no place with I Am. Then he discusses rationale for innocence and so forth. I'm going to skip that. Then we have some thoughts about the conclusion. And the only point I want to make here about in the conclusion is on page 161. This is so we looked at the address. We looked at the lament and all of that. We looked at the petitions and all of that. We looked at the confidence, and now we're at the conclusion. Often they end with absolute certainty, God answered their prayer. That's what we're raising here, the data first. And then the explanation for the data. Here's the

data. I trust your grace. I am like a green olive tree in the house of I Am. I trust I Am's grace forever and ever. You bless the righteous O Lord with salvation and protect him like a shield. You crown him with favor. The Lord is my shield that protects me, the help of the honest heart, the Lord judges, the righteous He repays, the one who curses every day and so forth. They end up with absolute confidence in several of them, not all, but many of them. Psalm 4, he ended up going to sleep absolutely confident.

What's the explanation for this transformation? Some say that there was a priestly oracle, as in the case of Hannah, a priest said, God had answered your prayer. And that's what gave them that sort of confidence. That's one explanation. I don't buy that because I think that would have been indicated in the text. There's no indication of that. So, I don't go back to Hannah for an explanation. I think it's the psychology of faith that they are assured in their heart. I think it's the psychology of faith.

I think Gunkel is right here "In the prayer itself, a wonderful metamorphosis is completely completed, unconsciously and unintentionally often quite suddenly the feeling of uncertainty and reservation is dissolved by the happy awareness of protection and being hidden in the hand of a protective higher power." That's Gunkel. Certainty breaks through doubt and questioning from the fear comes confidence and from the anxiety and timidity comes the courage of rejoicing in the future. Desires and wishes become internal assets and possessions.

From this experience, Luther writes to Melanchthon, "I have prayed for you. I have felt the Amen in my heart. From this experience, Calvin formulated the rule of prayer in the midst of misgivings, fear and wavering we should force ourselves to pray until we find illumination, which calms us. If our hearts waver and are disturbed, we may not give up until faith proceeds victoriously from the battle."

I don't fully agree. I believe we should pray for confidence and that we end with confidence, but not all the psalms end that way that's the problem I have. But not all in Psalms end with the certainty of being heard. Maybe I should think this again. I'm not saying this too well. I don't think we are obliged to pray through until we receive that

certainty. I just don't see that running through all the psalms. That's an area I need to think more about, I want to think more about what I'm saying here, scrub it. Yeah. That's a good thing. I love video. So, I was in a court of law don't listen to it. As in a court of law don't listen to that. Remove that from your verdict. So, I'm saying this, I don't feel comfortable with what I'm saying. Something's wrong. So, I don't have confidence in what I'm saying. Yeah.

This is Dr. Bruce Waltke in his teaching on the book of Psalms. This is session number 12, Petition Psalms, lament, enemy and motifs. [1:20:01]

Psalms

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Session 13: Imprecatory Psalms

By Dr. Bruce Waltke

This is Dr. Bruce Waltke and his teaching on the book of Psalms. This is session number 13, Imprecatory Psalms.

A. Opening Prayer [00:15-1:52]

Prayer: We have behind us, of course, the Holy Scriptures, but we have the church fathers and the wonderful saints throughout the ages and teachers. We're on the cusp of history where the heirs of the wonderful music of a Beethoven, Bach, all of that. We thank you that we are the heirs of all these ages. Thank we are the heir, that other teachers that went before us. And thank you that you've given us the grace to discern what's good and what's bad and help us to be discerning in all these things. Help us to hold fast to that which is good and to spew out what was just bad. Give us that discrimination. Give us grace in the way we speak. Give us love in the way we think. Give us joy in you and praise for you. Bless us then for this hour, give us the graces we need to study your word appropriately and beneficially. In Jesus name we pray. Amen.

B. Review: Approaches [1:52-9:51]

All right. We've been looking at different approaches to the Psalms. And when now in the Form Critical Approach. Yesterday, we looked at Praise Psalms. We began the morning session with a Praise Psalm 92, a Thanksgiving Psalm, Psalm 92. Then we've jumped into this massive material on the Petition Psalms and we saw that it's the dominant note. Most Psalms are Petition or Lament Psalms. It's worthwhile that we noticed that that is not abnormal. Nor do we ever grow out of it and go beyond it. We'll be there and lament to our dying breath, trusting God, even in death. But it is part of our maturation, spiritual development, our salvation, but above all, it's there for the praise of

God, where he demonstrates through us the triumph over death, sin, death, and the devil. So, through a despair, he triumphs over evil and he chose us for that purpose that we might praise him as the living God. That's the triumphant God. And how privileged that we should be elected to this position.

We've reflected on different aspects of the Petition Psalms. So, one thing we reflected on was the situations in which the psalmist may find himself. So, he may find himself at the temple and he prepares the psalm for his lament at the temple, but not always, he's sometimes removed from the temple. But even then, he's looking forward to get back to the temple where he can worship God. So, he's oriented to the source of the spiritual life at the temple, where the water flows freely that nourishes the palm tree and the cedar of Lebanon to speak of the righteous.

So, we looked at those different situations, and then one of the situations is the enemy. So, we spent time thinking about who the enemy is and we noticed all, basically these extensive moral terms, that the enemy is really a spiritual enemy. He's the enemy of God's people; he's opposed to the kingdom of God. So, it's really a spiritual warfare. We ended with on the enemy with Gunkel's I think bad interpretation because Gunkel sees it as having been written during the second, that these were the Psalms were for people, in the second temple. There's no king. There's no political enemy. He thinks that the Psalmist is sick. So therefore, who is the enemy of the sick person. He draws the conclusion it's more imaginary. He talks about primitive feelings by which he means he's ruled by his emotions and not by the best of rational thought, so to speak.

And the result of that is that the persecuted, the enemy, is really the persecuted one that is in trouble in a way, it seems to me. So, it's just astounding to me that he could draw that conclusion. Fortunately, he hasn't been followed because now we recognize that really, they're not imitated, although some still think they're from the second temple period, they do not think that it's imitative of a king in the first temple period. So that was the enemy.

Then we consider different motifs, that's where we ended. We ended up with

different motifs, namely the address. The important point there is, that it is sin, when you're in distress, not to turn to God. You either turn to God or you turn to something else. And that takes us back to Psalm 4 where it is a sin to depend upon anybody, but God. It's a denial of faith. So we didn't reflect on that the last hour, but it's important point that in distress we had as the salmon returns to its original spawning grounds at death, as say the bird flies South in winter toward the sun and the warmth, so the saint intuitively turns to God for his salvation or her salvation. So, I would add that to the address. We didn't comment on that.

Then the major section is the petition itself. Then there is the way we looked at the lament and then we looked at the petitions and without redoing all of that, we said, the major petition is that you will be delivered. We commented that that is both a divine intervention to rescue us out of a situation and it's a juridical concept that God does it because it's right for us. And we reflected more on that, that the Psalms, some Psalms are penitential, and sometimes there's a protest of innocence.

In the Psalter, the Psalmist is never in ambiguity about whether he's right with God or he's wrong with God. If he's wrong with God, then he prays that God will forgive him. He will also pray God will protect him from wrong and save him. So, he stays in a right relationship with God. Therefore, the other side of it is protests that I am innocent. Therefore, it's right that God should intervene and save me and he can have confidence in that situation. Those are some of the highlights of things we discussed in that hour. Then we looked at the confidence section and some of the reasons he has a confidence. He has confidence because of who God is holy, righteous and just. He has confidence because he knows who he is and he knows he's a king or he's on the side of God and we know who we are. So, he can have confidence. Not only do we know God's attributes, we know our history that we have been here, God's people have been here from the garden of Eden, and we're still here and so forth. So those are some of the things we looked at.

We didn't do anything with Communal Lament. We'll skip that. I'm going to be looking at a communal lament psalm later on with Psalm 44. And then we were going to

do theology. I said part three would be theology and I didn't do anything with the theology of the Psalms. As I recall, I said, I would be doing something with that. Maybe though I'll go do that after the problem of the Imprecatory Psalms.

C. Introduction to the Imprecatory Psalms [9:51-11:50]

So we've looked at Petition Psalms broadly, and now on page 164 of your notes, the Imprecatory Psalms, what's called Imprecatory Psalms. It's really a misnomer. They're not calling down curses on the enemy. They're praying that God will avenge them for the wrong being done to them by the enemy. As we noted in the last hour there were about 50 Petition Psalms. These psalms, normally almost all of them, but almost all of them are petitioning God for deliverance, from their distress. About 35 of them go beyond the positive of deliverance to the other side of it, to punish the enemy. It's those Psalms that we are now concerned about this whole motif that God will avenge, punish, the enemy.

So, I define it on page 164 it's one in which the Psalmist prays that God will avenge the wrongs done to him, by the enemy, by punishing the enemy. I wouldn't call them prayers for revenge. That's to judge their spirit. I believe I would rather say to avenge because the issue is justice. So, to right the wrong, to avenge them and justice demands that evil be paid back. I would rather define it that way. Obviously, these Psalms present a problem for the Christian who lives in light of the Sermon on the Mount. The Sermon on the Mount is given to the disciples for the kingdom of God. It is not given to the state.

D. Distinction between the ethics of the church and state [11:50-15:42]

There's a big mistake that comes out of the of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of all men of liberalism and they try to take the ethics of the Sermon on the Mount and apply it to the state. So, the state will turn the other cheek. The state will not use the sword. The ethics of the church and the state are very distinct. The ethics of the church is the cross where you die for your enemy. The ethics of the state is a sword, Romans chapter 12. He gave the state the sword to avenge the wrongs. It leads to mass

confusion if you don't make a distinction between the church and the state and the different forms of ethics that we're dealing with here.

So, and the psalmists didn't have that distinction in the Old Testament because it was a theocratic state. So, therefore you did not separate the kingdom of God from the kingdom of Israel. They were coextensive with one another and you didn't make that kind of distinction that we get with the church being a spiritual body, and we're no longer a political organization. We live together with the state and we depend upon the state to right the wrongs. We don't take it into our own hands. We expect the state to uphold justice. That's Romans 12 and 13. That's the responsibility of the state to uphold justice. But the church is persecuted. So, the question is, how does the church respond to this kind of persecution? Do we respond as they did in the Old Testament and pray, God will punish our enemies. That doesn't seem to jive with the Sermon on the Mount, to me, where God said, where Jesus says, if they slap you on the right cheek, turn to them, the other also. He says also do not resist the evil. He says pray for those who persecute you. He means persecute by saying, God bash their babies against the rocks. He means pray for them for their salvation. The prayer of himself on the cross is forgive them they don't know what they're doing, which they don't really. I think they're fools and blind. That's the prayer of Steven while stoning him to death, forgive them for what they do. So, it's hard to put together, turn the other cheek and pray for them and love your enemy. "It was said that you should love your neighbor and hate your enemy. I say to you, love your enemy and pray for them that persecute you," which should be our response. So that's the problem that we're having.

Now, when I face a problem like that, what I normally do is I try to think my way through all kinds of solutions, how can I solve this and with, as a solution to me as biblically, right. That's what I'm going to try to do in the rest of this lectures is to try to find a solution, how we as Christians think about harmonizing the Old Testament with the New Testament and how we should think about using the Psalms and understanding

these 30, this motif within these songs for ourselves as Christians. So that's trying to set up the problem.

E. Unacceptable Solutions [15:42-22:35]

First of all, unacceptable solutions are that I give their names there. They say, they're not really prayers that prophecies that God, instead of saying, "may the Lord punish them," they say "the Lord will punish them." They read it as a prophecy, a promise, that this is what's going to happen. So, they don't read them as petitions. That's one solution to the problem. I give the references there. This something that those who hold to that within the history of Christian doctrine. The reason for that is that in the Hebrew language, you can't really distinguish very often between what we call a jussive, which is a command form, "may he punish" versus what we call a specific future, "He will punish." It's amazing ambiguity in the language, but very often the translator has to make a judgment, whether it is a wish or a statement of fact. That's the kind of thing you grapple with when I wrote my Hebrew grammar. A reason I wrote the grammar as I was preparing myself for writing commentaries and I realized so much grammatical work had to be done before I got into a commentary. I just sat down and wrote a grammar and that gave me the background for it. So, I call it an Introduction, but it's a typical German introduction.

Okay. So, and any case, but there are some forms that are clearly jussive that without getting technical, but there are some forms, where there's no ambiguity. So this solution is not satisfying because I know there are jussives in it, and I think the translators by in large, I think in this case, I think they all, they have it almost 99% correct, are truly petitions wishing that God would do this and praying that God would do it.

Page 165, another solution is that they're just plainly that they're not right, they're non-Christian and we should reject them. This goes the whole gamut from the devilish and they're wrong. All the way through to they're not really quite sanctified. I give you the gradations of saying, it's really not right. As some say, they're really wrong and some say, they're partially wrong, but you still end up they're wrong when you are all finished.

So I give you some extreme statements. This one is by Kittel, *The Scientific Study of the Old Testament*. He says, "they're by mean spirited individuals who thought only of a thirst after conquest and revenge." It is a pretty strong statement. Now, even more surprising is C. S. Lewis who has trouble with these Psalms. I quote him. "Even more devilish in one verse is the otherwise beautiful 137, where blessing is pronounced on anyone who will snatch up a Babylonian baby and beat its brains out against the pavement. They are indeed devilish, but we must also think of those who made them so." That's not a very high view of inspiration for me. I have a lot of respect for C S Lewis. He's one of the great apologists of the church, but he doesn't have to me a solid enough view of Scripture. I could never write that that they are devilish and it's wrong. I just finished reading a book by Allister Hunter, *An Introduction to the Psalms*, and he says, I'll give you these quotes a lot of these psalms and he begins it by saying, "if you have stomach for it." He's an absolute liberal in this book.

More moderate is that you have on the statement by a Beardsley. I'll give you the statement there. "David is in the twilight spiritually." Well, it seems to me that in something like this we ought not to use a metaphor. You ought to be a bit more clear what you mean by "twilight." That can be interpreted different ways, but it could mean you're still in the dark and it's still not right. I wouldn't want that. Or, this is John Bright, "it's God's holy committed man, yet a man who was estranged from God's spirit." Now, if he's estranged from God's spirit, then he's certainly not speaking in God's spirit. He's effectually saying they're not inspired of God because he really doesn't have the spirit of God when he's saying this. So, he's a man for God, but he's speaking in the human spirit, which is a way of saying they are wrong. A nice way of saying it, but it's still wrong. I can't go there.

This is now from Albert Barnes. These are very, very conservative. "What actually occurred in the mind of the Psalmist and are preserved for us is an illustration of human nature, partially sanctified." So, this whole kind of moderate way of saying it, it's really not sanctified. It's not really of the Holy Spirit. We're in a twilight zone here. That's not

the decisive enough for me. I'm pretty clear cut in my thinking and I don't like fudging around. I don't like the twilights and partially. Let's say, are they right? Are they wrong? Are they profitable for doctrine, or are they not profitable for doctrine? Are they edifying or are they not edifying? That's I want to cut clean. So, I'm not going there.

F. Response to Unacceptable Approaches that they are wrong [22:35-28:55]

My objections are as theological tenuous, it's a bad doctrine of inspiration. There was no indication in the Psalms themselves that the Spirit censored this portion of Scripture. In fact, there's no indication in the Bible that the Spirit of God is censoring them. In other words, God can change dispensations. For example, with Peter, when he says, eat the unclean foods, and that's a tremendous change that's taken about. But you don't get anything clearly saying this is not of God, whether that's number two. That needs a little bit more clarification. In fact, they're all part of this destroying the enemy is really part of the Holy War motif in the Old Testament of destroying the enemy. God commissioned them to go to war and they had an obligation to go to war, to establish the kingdom of God. I don't see this apart from the whole idea of where Moses prayed that the Lord would scatter the enemies and these kind of prayers that were also found in the prophets. So, it's all part of God eliminating the enemy. It's in the warp and woof of the Old Testament.

The New Testament cite these imprecatory prayers, and they cite them approvingly, interestingly enough. So for example, an Acts 1.20, "it is written in the book of Psalms, May his camp become desolate and let there be no one to dwell in it, and let another take his place, his office." He applies that to Judas who is going to be eliminated. He cites that Psalm with reference to Judas approvingly. He also justifies another taking his place from the book of Psalms.

Fifth, you find similar prayers in the New Testament, especially in the Apocalypse. "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 and the testimony they had maintained. They called out in a loud voice. How long sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you would judge

the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood." Now that's those who have already gone on into glory, and they're praying that they will be avenged and in heaven. They're still praying this prayer. They're not censoring it they're still using it.

But the question still remains. What do I do with the Sermon on the Mount, and the words of Jesus on the cross? But you could see why, I think you cannot say they're devilish because I find it in heaven itself.

So, this severe treatment of certain enemies in the New Testament and Paul says, "to be angry," and I think he means moral indignation. It's not, I think it's wrong if you don't have moral indignation, but that doesn't mean we should pray that God will zap them. I'm just saying moral indignation is appropriate. My problem is there isn't more moral indignation and I cannot understand how evangelicals can vote for certain candidates without moral indignation about that candidate.

Question: So, take this and apply it to today to like ISIS over there, killing Christian, raping people in the Middle East. It's unbelievable the amount of death, destruction and horror and suffering. Innocent people particularly, you know, the Kurdistan, the area of the Yazidis. How do you see that in this day and age, us praying? Oh, that their blood would you be avenged. What would be your thoughts relevant to us in our prayer in our day against the enemies of the Lord over there?

That brings it right down. Again, I would have to make the separation between church and state. So, therefore, I wear two hats. I wear the hat of the church and I wear the hat of the state. As I wear the hat of the church, my first response is to pray for their salvation. "They don't know what they're doing" and I don't think they do know what they're doing. I want to respond to them in love and win them to Christ. I don't want to zap them. I do, but I know it's wrong. I want to follow my Lord who said, turn the other cheek. So, I'm not going to resist them as a Christian. But I expect the state to uphold, it's established for righteousness, to establish the right order. I expect the UN and I expect the United States to step in as it's able and to punish the murderers. So, therefore, I think we ought to vote for people who will uphold righteousness with moral indignation and

punish the enemy to the extent they're capable of doing it. So that would be my thinking and how I would respond to it.

The other side of it is that, well, another concept is, I'm saying why I took up those who want to say it's prophecy. I have to rule that out. Those who say they're wrong in effect. I tried to answer why I can't say that: they're wrong.

G. Unacceptable Approaches: Use them today [28:55-30:59]

On the other hand, I come to the third one is that we use them directly and we pray that God will zap the enemy, which I said I can't do. So, to give an example of this one, I originally was thinking of this material. I was in Oregon and this was back in 1982. So, I've been thinking about this for a few years now. So anyway, I happened to be reading an article and it was a time when, Ian Paisley was coming over to the United States and Alexander Haig. So, this goes back to Jimmy Carter, you know, early Reagan administration and Alexander Haig, the secretary of defense, was bringing over Ian Paisley. So anyway, this is Bob Jones and Alexander Haig was opposing Ian Paisley. Bob Jones was favoring Ian Paisley. He was opposed to Alexander Haig and what he was doing. So this is what he said. "I hope you all [students at Bob Jones University] pray that the Lord will smite him [That is Alexander Haig], hip and thigh, bone and marrow, heart and lungs. And all there is to him that he shall destroy him quickly and utterly." That's what he was telling the Bob Jones students, at an evangelical student school that they should pray not that God would save Alexander Haig, but they will zap him hip and thigh and so forth. That is un-Christian to me. So, I reject that too. That to me is inconsistent with Jesus' teaching and it's inconsistent with the practice of Jesus. I do not find that in the church. I just can't go that route.

H. Toward a Solution: Psalmists are Oppressed [30:59-33:07]

Okay. So, I brainstormed it and I know what I can't accept. So, what can I accept? And since we're on a growth process, I call the next section, thinking my way through this, toward a solution, that would help me. Now we're on page one 67, "Toward a

Solution." The first thing we should understand is that these are by saints and suffering for the kingdom of God and they're suffering gross injustices. In other words, before you criticize them step into their shoes and see what they're facing -- gross injustices, I thought this was by Derek Kidner 160. Pardon, yeah. Well at any rate, note Rory Pressed. Yeah. I forgot about that. He was my student at, Regent who wrote a thesis on, the enemy and this other in the Psalms. Anyway, he says, "Most commentators read the Psalms from the comfortable perspective of security and economic affluence. Few have experienced the agony of utterly unprovoked naked aggression and gross exploitation. It is questionable whether such a detached discussion on responding to enemies would take place in the face of people with manifestly evil intentions." In other words, he's sympathizing with their situation of gross injustice, and we can sit here and we can think about it. We could debate it in the comfort of this beautiful home in which we find ourselves. We need to enter into that world, to appreciate what they're up against. I think it's a worthwhile saying. It doesn't solve it, but it helps out.

I. Towards a Solution: Prayers are righteous and just [33:07-41:57]

The next one I think does help us. The prayers are righteous and just. In other words, that God would right wrong is righteous and it's just. They're just prayers. So these prayers assume that the civil courts either will not uphold justice or cannot uphold justice. In other words, it was for the state to uphold justice. But what happens in David's case when the king like Saul is king and he doesn't uphold justice. What's he do? Where does he turn? Where does he go to find justice? He's looking to the God of justice to uphold justice. So, these prayers are asking God to uphold justice. I don't find fault with that. In fact, I must affirm that God upholds justice and he does punish evil, and these prayers are consistent with the very character of God to set a topsy turvy world right side up. That's what they are praying for. I find that profitable for doctrine, that's wholesome doctrine. I find that helpful. They're consistent with the Old Testament concern for retribution of an eye, for an eye and a tooth for tooth. The Imprecatory Psalms entail a very high view of justice. In other words, they really believe God is just, and they are

offended and they think it wrong when justice is not enacted. Here, C. S. Lewis, I find quite helpful. He said something, I think very significant in his *Reflections on the Psalms*, he notes, "Such expressions are lacking in pagan literature" because as he puts it, "the Jews had firmer grasp on right and wrong." He writes, "If we are to excuse the poets of the Psalms on the grounds that they were not Christians, we ought to be able to point to the same sort of thing and worse in pagan authors. Perhaps if I knew more pagan literature, I should be able to do this. But what I do know, a little Greek, a little Latin, of old Norse very little indeed. I am not at all sure that I can." That is, that he does not, he cannot find this in the pagan literature. "I can find in them lasciviousness, much brutal, insensibility, cold cruelties taken for granted, but not this fury or luxury of hatred. One's first impression is that the Jews were much more vindictive and vitriolic than the pagans." So, the pagans, their literature is lascivious. It's violent, but it is not morally indignant.

Now Lewis wrote *Reflections on the Psalms* some years ago. What he said about pagan literature is to my mind, true of our literature, full of the lasciviousness, violence and as Bill Bennett pointed out in his book, there is a lack of moral indignation. The reason we have a lack of moral indignation is we don't have a God who upholds right and wrong. We took out God, and we have no absolute standards. Therefore, without an absolute standard in an age of relativity, how can you talk with moral indignation and say something is wrong when nobody's sure what's right and what's wrong anymore. We don't know what sin is. We don't talk about sin anymore. So, if you don't have absolute standards, how can you have moral indignation? So, what Lewis said about the pagan literature, I think is true of our society. What he described there to me describes today, amazing! Page 31, thus, in his book, "Thus, the absence of anger," on the bottom of page 167, "Thus the absence of anger, especially that sort of anger, which we call indignation can, in my opinion, be a most alarming symptom." That is the lack of moral indignation is an alarming symptom. "If the Jews cursed more bitterly than the pagans, this was, I think, at least in part, because they took right and wrong more seriously." Where if we

look at their railings, we find they are usually angry not simply because these things have been done to them, but because they are manifestly wrong or hateful to God, as well as to the victim. The thought is of the righteous Lord, who surely must hate such things much as they do, who surely therefore must, but how terribly he delays, judge or avenge is always there, if only in the background."

So they are righteous and they are just as the second point that I'm making. They are necessary that we have absolute moral, we have moral indignation that comes from a clear sense of right and wrong. But in our age where relativity rules, we're not sure what's right and what's wrong anymore. The young people don't know what's right and what's wrong anymore because we've taken the Bible out of the school and we have lost our absolutes in our society.

Third, the New Testament upholds the justice of God. God will answer the prayers for justice. This is the Lord's prayer. "Your kingdom come, your will be done," which is to uphold justice. Jesus said, and he talked about the widow and the unjust judge. And she in her shameless audacity kept pestering the judge until he did what was right. She wanted justice. Jesus says, "and will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? I tell you, he will see that they get justice and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth that God will do it?" So, he is saying, clearly God will uphold justice. It's just what the prayers are praying for. So, Jesus is not censoring these psalms. So I find that a useful second step. They're not only concerned about righting wrong and moral indignation, but Jesus upholds that God will avenge the wrongs.

Again, compare Matthew 7.23 with Psalm 6.8. And then he talks about final judgment. And he says, "then they will go away to eternal punishment, but righteous to eternal life." He projects the judgment is in the future, eternal punishment and eternal life. So, we'll say more about that but the point I'm making is Jesus upholds the notion of justice. That's not contradictory to God now praying for their salvation before their time of justice.

J. Towards a Solution: Prayers are Faithful [41:57-46:12]

Another point, C. The prayers are faithful they trust God, not themselves to avenge gross injustices against them. In other words, these are prayers of faith. They are not avenging themselves. They are depending on God to avenge them. Those are great statements of faith. What the Bible will not tolerate is the person who avenges himself. We saw that in Psalm 8.2 "to eliminate the foe and the self-avenger" who takes it into his own hands instead of depending upon God. So, they are faithful, they are trusting that God will avenge because they can't avenge for themselves, the pious. They can depend upon the state, they can depend upon God. But David will not avenge himself on Saul he wouldn't even avenge himself in spite of gross injustice because Saul had been anointed and he was God's property. God had to dispose of his property. He [David] could not dispose of God's property. So, he couldn't do it for himself. He had to depend upon God. These are not imprecations to call down curses upon someone but prayers, petitions, depending upon God and that is totally consistent with Old Testament Theology.

This is seen in the life of David, says Kidner. "There have been few men, more capable of generosity under personal attack than David. As he proved by his attitudes toward Saul and Absalom, to say nothing of Shimei. Sarah, when she feels wronged by Abraham, she says either kick Hagar out of here or I go. See, she doesn't do that. "The Lord judge between me." She turns it over to God to right the wrong. That's a prayer. That's a woman of faith that God will right the wrong. She doesn't take it into her own hands.

By contrast, the wicked avenge themselves as Lamech did. He said, if God avenged Abel, he will avenge, he says, he will avenge the wrong sevenfold. He will get revenge. That's, well, let's see, that's the descendant of Cain. Pardon? Yeah, Well, let's look it up. I have a Genesis 4 where let's say I bumbled up the verse. Let's go to Genesis 4 and get it straight. Lamech there we are Genesis 4.23. "Lamech said to his wives, Adah and Zillah listen to me wives of Lamech hear my words. I've killed a man for wounding me, a young man for injuring me. If Cain is avenged seven times, then Lamech 77 times."

So, he does it. He killed a man and he avenged himself. That needs more work. I should have my commentary here, but in any case, Lamech is being censored for avenging himself. Yeah. Okay. Eduardo.

K. Towards a Solution: They are ethical [46:12-47:26]

Page 169. So far I've said they are righteous and they are just. I said they are faithful and the prayers of faith that God will right the wrong. And D they are ethical. They are asking God to distinguish between right and wrong and that's ethical. So, I've given a Psalm "Judge me, O Lord, according to my righteousness, according to my integrity, O my righteous God, O righteous God who searches, minds and hearts, bring to an end the violence of the wicked and to make the righteous secure." So, they are edified because the ethical, they distinguish right from wrong. Our problem today is that we don't distinguish right and wrong. They clearly identify what's wrong and what's right. I think that's very important. It ties in with all the others, but I think it's worth a separate point to make that point that they are ethical.

L. Towards a Solution: They are Theocratic [47:26-48:31]

E page 170, they're righteous, faithful, ethical and they are theocratic. That is, they are looking for the establishment of a kingdom of righteousness by the moral administrator of the universe. The earthly king asks no more of the heavenly King than the later asked of himself. That is, God told the king to uphold justice, to deliver the oppressed and punish the oppressor. So that's justice to deliver the oppressed, punish the oppressor. That's what the king had to do. The king is asking no more of God than God asked of him. He's asking God, as you, as the King of Kings, I'm asking you to uphold justice. I think that's worth a separate toward a solution.

M. Towards a Solution: They are Theocentric and Evangelistic [48:31-50:41]

Next prayers are theocentric. They aim to see God, praised for manifesting his righteousness and justice in the eyes of all. In other words, if you have an administrator/

administration that doesn't uphold the law and doesn't uphold justice, it tarnishes the reputation of that administration. So therefore, these prayers are theocentric and they're praying that all the world will see that by punishing the wicked that Israel worships a righteous God. So, they are concerned a theocentric. They have a theocentric aim, which is to seek God praised for manifesting his righteousness. "May those who delight in my vindication shout for joy and gladness. May they always say the Lord be exalted, who delights in the wellbeing of his servants. My tongue will speak of your righteousness and of your praise all day long."

So, they're concerned for God's reputation and that in turn goes right together with the next one is that they are evangelistic. That is, they aim for the conversion of the earth by letting all men or women see that the Lord is most high over all the earth, that at the temple emissaries would come from other nations and that they would see that Israel's God upholds justice. So, "May they ever be ashamed and dismayed, may they perish in disgrace, let them know that you, whose name is the Lord, that you alone are most high over all the earth." I meant to put a quote in there. Another point they're just, they're faithful, they're righteous, they're theocratic, they're theocentric. They are political hoping that the world will see that Israel has a righteous God.

N. Towards a Solution: Covenantal [50:41-51:33]

And the prayers are covenantal. That is to say, the wrong against the saint is seen as a wrong against God that they are together with God. So, when they are being persecuted. God is being persecuted because they represent God. Says the psalmist, "I endure scorn for your sake. Shame covers my face. I'm a stranger to my brothers, an alien to my own mother's son, for the zeal, for your house consumes me. And the insults of those who insult you fall on me." So, the wrongs being done are wrongs being done to God. I suggest the prayers are Oriental. They're full of figures of speech and I think some are hyperbolic.

O. Towards a Solution: Conditional Nature of Maledictions [51:33-56:19]

Furthermore, we should understand and this is under J. that these maledictions are conditional. That is all punishment is conditional. All prophecies of judgment are conditional. Prophecies don't automatically come to pass. You might want to take a look at that in the famous Temple Sermon in Jeremiah chapter 18, if you want to turn with me there. He goes down to the potter's house and he discovers that you can give a prophecy, but if the people change, then the prophecy changes. I'm saying that if the people change, the prayer changes. They are all conditional that if the enemy were to repent, these maledictions would be lifted. They wouldn't be there. But here's the prophecy. "This is the word of the Lord that came to Jeremiah. This is the word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord, go down to the potter's house. And there, I will give you my message. So I went down to the potter's house and I saw him working at the wheel, but the pot he was shaping from the clay was marred in his hands. So, the potter formed it into another pot, shaping it as seen best to him. Then the word of the Lord said to me, he said, Cannot I do with you Israel as this potter does," declares the Lord. Like clay in the hand of the potter, so are you in my hand, Israel. If at any time I announce that a nation or a kingdom is to be uprooted, torn down and destroyed. And if that nation I warned repents of its evil, then I will relent and not inflict on it the disaster I had planned. And if at another time I announced that nation or kingdom is to be built up and planted. And if it does evil in my sight and does not obey me, then I will reconsider the good I had attended to do for it." So, prophecy is always contingent upon a person's response. So that if it predicts doom and the people repent, the doom will not come to pass. If it predicts good and the people turn to evil, the good will not come to pass. We often say promises, prophecies are sure, they're certain to come to fulfillment. They're always conditional upon how people respond.

And I'm suggesting that in prayer, yes, he's going to judge, but understand if they repented, then God's blessing will flow on them. I've found that helpful for me to understand they're not in cement, that God's going to zap them regardless. They have a

chance to repent.

Question: some application ... O I think it does. I really don't our enemies don't fear us and our allies don't trust us. Yeah, that's true. Turning our backs on our allies you know, arming our enemies. Right? I know it's just, it is frightening, 15 years down the road. You're right, Mike. Yes.

Again, prayer must be held in dialectical tension with the concept of divine mercy and grace. There was always mercy and grace and the prayers are political. I'll let it go with that. My conclusion, these prayers conform to sound doctrine, and they are profitable for doctrine and for correction, for instruction in righteousness that we may be equipped unto every good work. I thank God for these prayers. They're edifying, they're ethical. They are faithful and trusting. They are God oriented for his praise.

P. Towards a Solution: Not Appropriate for Church [56:19-1:02:26]

However, I do not think they're appropriate for our age in the light of Jesus' teaching. Prayer for justice apart from praying for forgiveness is inappropriate for the new Israel. The judgment is now postponed to the final day of judgment. The church does not enact judgment now. It trusts God for the future. You have that famous illustration.

I think you are familiar with the Jesus use and Luke 4 of Isaiah 61. No. Well, that's the passage, but there's a tremendous contrast between Isaiah and Jesus' use of it. Well, let's take a look at it. It's worth our while to look at it. Take a look. Turn to that. That's Melanie out of it here, right on Isaiah 61 and verses one through four. One, no verses one through three and four. Okay. "The Spirit of the sovereign Lord is on me because the Lord has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He's sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives, release from darkness for the prisoner, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor and the day of vengeance of our God." And we'll stop there.

Now turn over to Luke 4 and see how Jesus uses it in identifying it for himself. Luke 4.18 and keep that passage open. You'll see how Jesus modifies it. Luke chapter four and verses 18 through 20. This is his first sermon in the temple at Nazareth. We get

the context in verse 16, "He went to Nazareth where he had been brought up. And on the Sabbath day, He went into the synagogue as was his custom. He stood up to read and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, He found a place where it is written: 'The spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim the good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.' Then he rolled up the scroll and gave it back."

Do you see the contrast? Do you see where he cut it off. He read Isaiah 61 and he stopped in the middle of verse. He says in chapter 61, "he was sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, proclaim freedom for the captives, release from darkness for the prisoners, proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." And he rolled up the book. He did not read. "And the day of vengeance of our God." This is not the day of God's vengeance. He didn't come to bring God's vengeance. He stopped, that's very instructive. This is not the day of vengeance. This is day of God's favor. This is the day when we offer salvation. This is the time of salvation, the day of salvation. We live within that understanding and that context of the day of God's favor. So, we pray that our enemies will find salvation, will find release from the prison and all that darkness and God's favor. And we trust God's vengeance for the future that he will do what's just. So, we live in faith. So, my point is they are doctrinally sound, but practically inappropriate for the church. That's what I conclude from my understanding of Scripture. We can now more clearly distinguish the sin and the sinner. Verse two, the kingdom comes spiritually today, not carnally. We're not establishing an earthly kingdom. We leave judgment in the hands of God. That's the unjust judge.

I'm not too happy with number five. I'll let it go with that. So, I'll stop the lecture there. So, I find that helps me toward a solution to a very difficult problem in the Psalter. So that's the lecture on the Imprecatory Psalms. You're welcome. I've thrown here as well. I got two hearing aids, Brittany. So, I've got to come over here to hear her.

Q. Psalm 137 [1:02:26-1:07:13]

Question: So, based upon your analysis and the qualifications that you'd get, where would you place Psalm 137 about the Babylonians and blessed be the one who bashes the baby. Where would you put that on your scale of A. to L is it the it the pride, is it the eccentric, is it a little bit of work?

Thank you very much, Britney. Turn back, if you will in your notes, in which I really deal with the psalm as a whole, and this is on page 162. So the question is where would I put Psalm, how would I handle Psalm 137 on page 162? And how do I understand that In light of everything, we've been talking about?

Here's the psalm: "By the rivers of Babylon, we sat and wept, when we remembered Zion. There in the poplars we hung our harps. For there our captors asked for songs, our tormentors demanded songs of joy. They said, 'Sing us one of the songs of Zion.' [And when we now know what they are], How can we sing songs of the Lord while in a foreign land. If I forget you Jerusalem may my right hand, forget its skill. May my tongue cling to the roof of my mouth, if I do not remember you, if I do not consider Jerusalem, my highest joy. Remember O Lord, what the Edomites did on the day Jerusalem fell, 'tear it down,' they cried, 'tear it down to its foundations.' Daughter of Babylon. [By that "daughter" is just a word for city in Hebrew is feminine. And therefore cities are feminine and called daughter. And we used to be "daughter of Babylon." That's confusing. So, then they translate it "daughter Babylon." That's the intention. "Daughter of Babylon, doomed to destruction. Blessed is the one." [that as we discuss, bless that is one who will be rewarded in the future.] "Blessed is the one who repays you according to what you have done to us. [But blessed is the one who does it.] Blessed is the one who seizes your infants and dashes them against the rocks."

In verses one through four, we have the congregational of lament. The fact is they are refusing to sing a song in Babylon and the reason is it would be like throwing pearls before swine in effect. You don't do it. Now, they have three imprecations, God will punish against self, against the Edomites and against the Babylonians. Firstly, against self

against his hand that he will not have the skill to play and his tongue that he won't have the ability to talk and sing anymore. Against the Edomites for gloating over all as Zion's destruction and against Babylon for razing Zion. And I'll skip comment, page 164 to Nota Bene. Zion is the place of God's saving presence on earth. That's the locus of salvation and they want to destroy, they mock and they're mocking the place God has chosen to bring blessing on the earth. That's the context of it. The passion that throbs and his imprecation is not mere nationalism but zeal for God's kingdom. That's what he has, zeal for God's kingdom. Another one, oriental warfare spared, neither woman nor children. The prayer is for strict justice. The practice aim was to terminate further. It was aimed to terminate fate of revenge. But there are exceptions if the condemned repent. So, in other words, when the Babylonians destroyed Israel, they destroyed their babies. That's the nature of oriental warfare, strict justice would be the other side of it. It was hard, but that's the nature of just warfare.

R. There are Exceptions [1:07:13-1:11:11]

Furthermore, we have to understand there are exceptions. In other words, according to the law, it says, "when the Lord, your God brings you into the land, you are entering to possess and drives out before you many nations, Hittites, Girgisites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites, seven nations, larger and stronger than you. And when the Lord, your God has delivered them over to you and you have defeated them. Then you must destroy them totally." [You cannot coexist. You must destroy the evil, totally.] "Make no treaty with them. Show them no mercy." That's the Old Testament, rid the earth of evil "and make no treaty with them."

But notice what happens when they actually get into the land. What I call attention to is Joshua 2, you have Rahab, the prostitute, Canaanite and she repents. She acknowledges Israel's God. The law did not have her in view. She obtained mercy. This is not nationalism. This is a spiritual war. When she hid the spies, which was faith in the Lord and not in Baal and the Canaanite gods, she was brought into the covenant family. And interestingly enough, Achan, the Judean, who was within the tribe of Judah, when he

kept the Babylonian garment and violated the Torah, the instruction of holy war. It was not a war of plunder. It was a war on the behalf of righteousness. So, when he violated and used it for his own aggrandizement, his own wealth and prestige of garments and so forth, then he is put to death. The harlot is saved. The Judean is put to death.

So, you have to read the law and light of that. See, the problem is some people just simply go by the law. The law is the entire narrative, and you have to interpret the law and light of what happened. The law, according to Deuteronomy 22 is both David and Bathsheba should have been put to death. She never cried out and I don't want to judge, but I'm just saying. The Bible doesn't fault her, so I'm not either, but I'm only saying according to the law, they should have been put to death. The adulterous and the adulterer should have been put to death. But David repented, and he couldn't restore life to Uriah. He couldn't give back purity to Bathsheba, but he was forgiven. I would say with the Babylonians, if they anyone repented and repented of the evil that they had inflicted. Israel had done them no harm. It was an unjust thing; they were just plundering them to destroy their temple and get this silver and get their gold and make them slaves. I mean, it was just evil, wicked. If any of them repented, this prayer would not be applicable. That's why I saying these maledictions are all conditional on the fact that you're not repenting. So, normally children follow their parents. And all the hatred we have normally is because children were raised in a certain kind of hatred, or the raised in the context of love within the church.

S. Lord's Prayer [1:11:11-1:17:14]

So that's how I've Brittany, that may be helpful in understanding that very difficult psalm. It helps me. So, thank you for asking the question.

Yes, Eduardo. Question: when the disciples asked Jesus to teach them to pray, and then he gives the the apostles prayer, but the Lord's prayer, Our father, you can say that to me, "your kingdom come, your will be done." Yes, but I'm not sure he means by that your kingdom come with the sword. I think he means your kingdom come through the faithful prayers of your people and through the work of the Holy Spirit. So, I don't think

he's saying that they're going to bring, this would be Islam. We don't bring the kingdom in with the sword. We bring it in with prayer and grace. So, the symbol of the church, our symbol is the cross. The symbol of his Islam is the sword. That's what we're discussing. It's a radical, radical difference between them. Absolutely, you can't miss it.

The Marines, Thomas Jefferson is the one who understood Islam and he understood they were an enemy. And I understand the reason the Marines have these high collars is so that the Tunisians, couldn't cut off their heads with their swords. That's what I understand. He understood the danger of Islam, and he didn't want to go to war, but they were exacting back then, an atrocious amount of money of \$225,000 a year. There was extortion money. And Thomas Jefferson finally had had it. And that's why we sing about "the halls of Montezuma to the shores of Tripoli. We will fight our country's battle on the land as on the sea." I did well, but that's helpful. Thank you. Very good.

Question: Dr. Waltke, one more follow-up question. If I could, earlier, we were talking about the distinctions between the response of the church versus the response of the state. So, it's a Christ culture kind of question. Well, let's just say, what do you do if you've got the Christian who is in the opposite of the presidency who is having to battle against ISIS. So, I'm always tempted to ask that question. I mean, do you act as a representative of the church because you are a Christian, even though you're not representing the church and that position, you representing the state. So, but does that present a moral dilemma to the person holding that office? Because you are a Christian?

For me, it would be, I was elected to a political office on behalf of the state. If I were elected to be a bishop of a church and I represent that people, that would be a different story. But I'm in a political arena and I'm acting therefore in a political arena. So I wouldn't have any ambiguity there to use the sword. I think it would be wrong not to use the sword if I have the capability and I see wrong.

But it seems to me they're all too ready to protect Islam and all too ready not to protect Christians. Why 50,000 people died, resolved, pull our troops over 250,000 Yazidi's and Kurds and people in Iraq. No, the church has gone from 2 million people

down to less than 300,000. As a result.

It's been the history of the church in the middle ages. The pope used the sword on behalf of the church and they killed the saints. That was within the church. And as a result of that, we had the division between Holland and Belgium. Belgium is largely Roman Catholic because they killed off all the Protestants, but we're here. It's been the history of the church. It's just part of and evidently this is the profound thought of God. And He will win out. That's our hope. This has been really good. Yeah. This is why you can think hard on what school is about. Now talking.

You mentioned one here and we didn't cover it was prayers are appropriate against Satan. Oh yes. I think they are. Yes. And I'm wondering, there's two views on that, but I say one, there's the prayer that you ask God to intervene against Satanic forces coming against you, or two you take the position that in Christ, we can speak a command against Satan because of our position in the kingdom, which did, are you thinking of our RFPs or when you're saying prayers or appropriate command. I think we, well, we have to resist the devil. I'm not sure I want to make a dichotomy here. I'm going to resist the devil, but I'm also know that it is God who has to defeat him. We're engaged in spiritual warfare and the end of Ephesians 4, we have put on the whole armor of God. The whole thing is prayer. So, therefore I want to put on that whole armor, spiritual, armor of faith and, sword of the Spirit, but I have be clothed in prayer that it might be victorious.

This is Dr. Bruce Waltke and his teaching on the book of Psalms. This is session number 13. Imprecatory Psalms. [1:17:14]

Psalms

[\[Jump to TOC\]](#)

Session 14: Petition Psalms, Psalm 3

By Dr. Bruce Waltke

This is Dr. Bruce Waltke in his teaching on the book of Psalms. This is session number 14, Petition Psalms, Psalm 3.

A. Opening Prayer [00:22-2:58]

So it is amazing that, our mouths can set air in motion and those waves in certain ways, reach our ears and they form words and thoughts. I realized that the words that I will speak teaching this can reach our ears and we can be tone deaf and not hear spiritual things, or it can simply go into our cognitive thinking. But Lord, it has to go beyond that and it needs to be conjoined with your Holy Spirit in order that it may reach our human spirit, that your Holy Spirit will take these words, spiritual words, from your text and transform them into our character, transform them so that we become more like our precious savior Jesus Christ That we may live out and become his body here upon the earth with his words and his empowerment. This is our cry. Thank you that we're dealing with this, a doxology of theology, that your people have voiced their faith in you and celebrated who you are and what you have done. You've been pleased to take that sort of inspiration and return it to us as the word of God. So help us then to hear their praises and to join in with them, to hear their petitions and join with them, to hear their instruction and be rebuked and learn. Thank you, Lord, that we are part of a great history of your people from the very beginning of creation till today. And your word is spoken and formed your community by your word and by your Spirit. And we're part of that catholic church. We praise you for it. In Christ's name. Amen.

B. Review [2:58-12:33]

All right, we're looking at various approaches to the Psalms. We looked, the first

day, at the historical approach and kingship in the Psalms. Then we moved into form critical approach. We began that broadly by talking about Hebrew poetry and that how you read Hebrew poetry. You look for how the lines are related to one another and yet how they can be differentiated from one another. They're very sophisticated differentiations and it's well worth it to meditate on parallelism. So, we've spent a bit of time on that.

More narrowly, there are various forms of Psalms and they are basically in my judgment, four kinds. There's the hymn that celebrates God's sublimities and his incommunicable attributes of eternity, omnipotence, and so forth. And his communicable attributes of his faithfulness, and grace that we can participate in. It's great theology. We've been looking at that. So, there is a hymn and then the second kind is Petitions. This is where the Psalmist is in distress and he cries out to God and his distress for deliverance to intervene because it's right. So, you have Petition Psalms. Then you have songs of trust, grateful praise. These are songs where God has answered your prayer specifically, so that whereas the hymn is in the temple and you're just praising God for who he is and what he has done, in a grateful song of praise you're thanking God, for what he has done for you specifically in a specific deliverance.

The fourth kind, we have therefore hymns and I should have put a second, grateful praise, petitions and the fourth kind that kind of punctuates the Psalter are instruction psalms such as Psalm 1. It's neither praise, it is not petitions, it is not a grateful song, but it commends, blessed is the man who rejects the counsel of the wicked but will spend time in the law of the Lord and he will become fruitful. So those are the various kinds of psalms.

We noticed the distinct motifs of praise psalms, namely the call to praise, the cause for praise, where you get theology. The motifs of the petition psalms are basically there's direct address, you turn immediately to God and to turn anywhere else in distress is sin because you're depending upon something other than God. Whatever else it is, is going to get praise. People praise their doctors. And I think rightly so, but it ends up with

praising something else other than God. We saw that we had been elected to give him praise. If we didn't praise him, humanly speaking, God would die because no one would know about him. So, radically what the press is trying to do is kill God so nobody talks about him. Therefore, God would effectively die. They are trying to kill God, but it won't work. If Satan were able to silence every mouth, Jesus says, "the rocks would cry out." They'll always be praised, but he's not using rocks. He's using us. We're here, our purpose here is to give praise to God. So, you have that address where we go to God and he's going to get all the praise. That's the point of the address.

Then we noticed that they have a lament section and they're very honest with their lament. So, I listed all the different situations in which they find themselves. So, that's lament. Then we notice they move into confidence before you get into the petition. There's a transition of mood from complaint, but wait a minute, we've got a great God that we can depend upon. We know who we are. We are the people of God. So, the spirit changes in the confidence section and with renewed confidence, we pray with confidence.

Then we have the conclusion and which, and here's where I got in trouble at the end of the last lecture, with sometimes absolute certainty that God would answer their prayer. And there's a total transformation.

And we were on page 162, and we had read from Luther to Melancthon, who was the Lutheran theologian. And then Calvin's formulation after that. So, Luther writes to Calvin. This is on the top of page 162. "I prayed for you. I felt the amen in my heart." So, he prayed until he had amen, certainty. From this experience, Calvin formulated "the rule of prayer in the midst of misgivings, fear and wavering. We should force ourselves to pray until we find illumination, which comes us. If our hearts waiver, are disturbed and we may not give up until faith proceeds, victoriously from the battles." So, you pray through and you're absolutely confident. My hesitancy was, they're not always ending that way. My problem was the way I was articulating was not right, because I wasn't distinguishing between confidence in God and confidence he'll answer the prayer exactly

as you asked it. I mean, what I read here, I can upgrade that you pray until you absolutely have faith and confidence, but your confidence is in God, and you may have confidence He is going to answer that prayer, but you may end up with Jesus, "not my will, but your will be done." So, that's what I was really struggling with.

Some of them, many of them, end up with a vow. If you answer my prayer, they run out with the certainty that that prayer will be answered. So, my ambiguity yesterday, as I thought about what went wrong here and where my thinking had gone wrong, I realized that what went wrong is I didn't distinguish between absolute confidence in God and absolute confidence that he's going to answer the prayer exactly the way I want. So that may help to clarify that point on 162.

We moved then into part two, after looking at prayers broadly and that massive material that Gunkel amasses. We looked specifically at the imprecatory prayers, and these are prayers that there are 50 laments psalms or petition psalms. Another 35 go beyond just asking for deliverance, they're asking for God to punish the enemy. We grappled with that at the end of the last hour, because these prayers to "bash babies against rocks" and whatnot are offensive to the Christian and contradict the Sermon on the Mount and the example of Jesus. So, we grappled with how do we, as Christians handle these kinds of prayers. I'm suggesting in laying out my data. I don't believe scholarly popes, I believe that we all lay out our data for all of us to examine it and argue it and with love and come to some conclusion. I laid it all out and I concluded they are necessary for sound doctrine. They assure us that there is a God of justice that he distinguishes right from wrong, that there is ethics and they are based upon firm faith in God. I listed some nine points I think that are very great doctrine. On the other hand, for our dispensation, I argued they're not appropriate. They're good for teaching that we learned how for theology, but they're inappropriate in light of what Jesus taught, because we know that justice is, now there's ultimate justice. That is by faith in the final judgment when Jesus returns and he's not exacting ultimate justice now. So that was how we tried to resolve the imprecatory psalms.

C. Petitions Always are Doxological [12:33-14:25]

Just a word about theology proper about prayer. One of the points that were petitions is that we made the point that petitions are always doxological, that with all of the complaint, it's always with praise and they never lose confidence in God. It's always with praise. I suggest that that's the difference between Job and the Psalmist. Both of them protest strongly. It's unjust. It's unfair. I don't know why I'm going through this, but Job has no praise until the very end. Whereas with the Psalmist there is always a praise motif, even the black sheep of the Psalter, Psalm 88. If you think about still makes reference that God saves, but that's the black sheep of the Psalter. The third book of the Psalter is known as the darkest book of the five in book of Psalms. So, they're always doxological and we'll see that as we work our way through specific psalms. The other thing that is a point is that they're always express of deep humility. They are dependent upon God.

We'll talk about that. We'll see it in Psalm 3, he's dependent upon God. But do you use means in connection with your dependence upon God? Does the dependence upon God mean, for example, if you're sick and you depend upon God, does it mean you don't use medicine? Can you have medicine and doctors in connection with dependence upon God? We're going to grapple with that just a bit when we do Psalm 3 and I think we'll get some clarity on that point.

D. Wish for Blessing on Others [14:25-16:46]

The fourth and final one is that they usually end with wish for others, especially the king is going to wish for the blessing on God's people. So, they don't end with self or they may, but they all, they normally involve other people receiving a blessing through it and more extensive. I shared with Mike the other day, a joke among the, well, not a joke, but a parable amongst the Hasidim and the Hasidic they're the very Orthodox conservative Jewish sector that have these curly sideburns. They don't cut their hair, according to Deuteronomy. The rabbi says, if you see a fire engine rushing in the direction of your house, and you know, there's a fire, do not pray that it's not my house.

He gives two reasons why that's the wrong prayer, why you ought not to pray it's not my house. The first reason is the prayer can't be answered because if it is your house, it's already on fire. So, it's kind of a stupid prayer. So, the other reason is if it's not your house it is somebody else's house. So, in effect you praying don't let it be my house, but somebody else's house. How does that square with love your neighbor as yourself? So it's a very bad prayer to pray. It's not me O Lord. So, we have to pray conscious of other people for God's blessing upon them. I don't know how that's going to work with sports, but I'll let you figure it out. Whether you're going to root for Houston or the Oilers is what hurts us now, the Oilers here and football game. Texas is, O yeah, that's used to be in Dallas, Texans were in Dallas originally. That's the whole story anyway. Or are you going to root for the Seahawks? And so, should I root for my home team and hope the implicitly, then I'm hoping the other team will lose, right? So, I have a profound theological problem, but I'll let you all solve it. Okay.

E. Introduction to Psalm 3's Context [16:46-19:30]

Now our approach has been to look broadly at an approach and then zero in on specific psalms. So, today having looked at it very broadly and getting a feel for the Psalter as a whole, we're now going to today be looking at individual psalms, various kinds of petition psalms. So, the first one on page 174 is the very first lament psalm or petition psalm, which is Psalm 3. Psalms 1 and 2 are the introduction to the book of Psalms. Psalm 1 is the wicket gate that you have to pass through to get to the celestial city that the Psalms are going to bring us to. So that you have to come with ethics and delight in the law of the Lord, meditate in his word. If you're in that spirit of ethics, then you are in a spiritually fit state of entering the Psalms. Because, as we saw in petition psalms, songs of praise or hymns from unclean hands and uncircumcised hearts is an abomination to God. So, therefore, we have to come fit to enter into the Psalter.

The second Psalm introduces us to the leading figure, which is the King. It's a coronation psalm. We're going to talk about that today. "I have set my King upon Zion, my holy hill." We're introduced to the one "ask of me, my son and I'll give you the

heathen for your inheritance, the ends of the earth as your possession." So, he tells the King to pray, to pray that his kingdom will extend to the ends of the earth.

It's in the context of nations, raging and throwing off the rule of God and throwing off the rule of the anointed king. We might've thought that the kingdom of God will come on a balmy cloud and you pray, "Lord, bring your kingdom." It's going to come just like that with rainbows and sunshine. Next thing we know, we have rain poured on our picnic and we hear the Psalmist say, "O Lord, how many on my foes, how many rise up against me." We suddenly realized that it's not going to come easily. It's going to come with struggle. And it's going to be a struggle of faith to bring about the kingdom of God.

F. Psalm 3 Morning Prayer / Psalm 4 Evening prayer [19:30-20:44]

So, this is a morning prayer. When does he offers it? But it has a temple in view. He's praying toward the holy mountain. He's not at the temple, but he's praying toward the temple with the temple in mind. The other day, we looked at Psalm 4, that's an evening prayer. So, these two are pairs. One is a morning prayer. One is an evening prayer. In both cases, it's his own people that are rebelling against him. In this psalm, it's an absolute revolt and the whole nation has turned against him without cause. As in Psalm 4 his own leadership has lost faith in him. So, you begin right away within his own nation, this rejection of him and how he struggles with it. And we learned the spiritual struggle of faith and prayer in the midst of what seems to be an impossible circumstance of the whole nation turning against him. Now look at our political situation. It seems utterly impossible to me. Then you have the next one, you have his own leadership is betraying him. So that's the context.

G. Superscript and Historical Setting [David/Absalom revolt] [20:44-22:12]

So, let's go and then we'll read the psalm. What I'll probably do more of today is instead of going through all the notes. Probably we'll just stay together and we can move a bit more quickly and we'll just stay with the psalm and keep the translation. If I'm saying something that I know is not in your notes, I'll probably call your attention to it.

So, otherwise you don't have to worry about writing too much. It's going to be in your notes when you go back over it at another time, if you wish to.

So, we begin with the superscript and the historical approach. We spent some time on validating the credibility of the superscript against normative academic scholarship. This is "a Psalm of David." And this is one of the 14 psalms where we are given the historical situation that prompted the composition of the psalm. We're told "it's when he fled from his son Absalom," and we'll come back to that. So, it's there for a purpose. It's there assuming that, you know, the book of Samuel, where we have the story of his flight, his exile, from Jerusalem due to his own son, usurping the throne from him.

H. Survey of Motifs of Psalm 3 [22:12-22:54]

As you're reading, think about the motifs I said. Where's the address? Where's the lament? Where's the confidence? Where's the petition? You'll find them all here. It might be useful for us to identify those difference sections. So, we can reflect better upon the theology of the psalm. So, pay attention to that as we go through it. When we're finished, I'm going to ask you, where's the lament, where's the confidence, where's the petition, and where's the praise or the wish.

I. Translation of Psalm 3 [22:54-24:07]

Okay. "I Am how many are my foes? Many rise up against me. Many are saying of me. 'God will not deliver him.' But you, I Am are a shield around me. You are my glory. The one who lifts up my head, I cry aloud to I Am And he answers me from his holy hill. I laid down and slept. I awoke because I Am sustains me. I do not fear the tens of thousands of troops who are drawn up against me on every side. Arise I Am deliver me, my God. Strike all my enemies on the cheek, break the teeth of the wicked. Deliverance belongs to I Am. Your blessing be on your people." And then the postscript, "for the director of music with stringed instruments" that's found at the beginning of Psalm 4, and I believe it belongs with Psalm 3.

J. Voice of the Church on Psalm 3 [24:07-30:27]

Okay, let's go back up. Before we get into the psalm, I want you to hear a bit of the voice of the church. It goes back centuries and hear what some have said throughout church history. At Easter, the commemoration of Psalm 3.5 was most intently celebrated, namely three, five. "I laid down as, so that I awoke again because I Am sustains me." The early church of crossed country and came directly to Jesus. They saw that Jesus in death, I'm going to lie down, go to sleep, but I awoke at Easter, good Friday. He laid down and death. Easter Sunday, He awoke because the Lord sustained him through death. So, that's how they would read the Psalms.

When I read it typically I start with David and what it meant to David. Then I understand that David is a type of his greater son, the son of God. So that as he laid down in a crisis. when Absalom, in the revolt of Absalom and he'll awoke. That is a type, to me, of Jesus when the whole nation rejected him and put him upon a cross. And he went to the sleep of death and he awoke again and triumphed because the Lord sustained him. So, they did not have our historical consciousness as much as we do today.

The desert fathers, this takes us back into the fourth century and their daily recitation of the Psalms, commonly 12 psalms, they sang 12 psalms in the morning prayer within their own cells and 12 psalms at night. That became the daily practice beginning in the early morning with Psalm 3. That's how they started the day. So, this Psalm has been celebrated with people of God and church history and this was critical to begin the day. The desert fathers, wanted to be a part and be as close to God as they could be and not be contaminated by the world. I think it was bad theology, but they had great hearts for God. So, they would begin with reciting Psalm 3 and I can learn from, I can learn from them. Then Jim goes on with Psalm 63 and they would end with Psalm 140. Other prayers at the third, sixth and ninth hours such became the origin and long tradition of liturgical hours with its various and diverse monastic foundations East and West. During the manual labor of the day, the Psalms were constantly chanted Perladious reports. Then around 3:00 PM, one can stand and hear the divine psalmnity issuing forth from each

cell. Imagine one is high above in paradise, that is with the angels. This was the time of the day for the main meal or more aesthetic forms, the single meal of the day.

So, that's just one taste that I think often we who are more independent, we don't have a sense of our history. I must say one of the things I'm enjoying about Anglicanism is that I have, I really have a sense more now, that I'm part of a very historic church. So anyway, I found it very useful. And the whole liturgical hours, I find it useful that four times a day, you go through a liturgy and each day you'd do a different section of the Bible. I find that very salutary. I don't do it well and perfectly as I wish I did, but at least I know what I'm striving for.

The Germans would talk about *sitz im buch* and I've read and that is how this sets within the structure of the book of Psalms. And I already commented that how you have Psalm 1, 2, and then you end up here at 3 and 4 and all of these laments. Then if you get the first praise psalm in Psalm 8. And we did that because that was the first praise psalm. Okay. Now let's go back. We won't go, to page 176. From here and then what I'd like you to do is simply let's just go and enjoy the psalm. Let's begin with, it's "a Psalm of David." Let me ask you: what in this psalm suggests this is a prayer by a king? Is there anything you can look at, is there anything there that was suggests this is not by just Mr. Everyman, but by a king?

I would suggest verse three where it talks about "you are a shield around me my glory and the one who lifts up my head." Okay. I think that the shield around me, I think it could be used for anybody, but the one who lifts my head above everything. I think that's a step in, I think that's helpful. I would add verse six too. "I do not fear the tens of thousands of troops drawn up against me." That's not Mr. Everyman. No, this is a military scene. If I take it at face value and not as metaphor, and I see no reason to take it as a metaphor. The superscript also prevents me. It's unnatural to take it as metaphor as Mr. Everyman, now as hyperbole, I'm surrounded by 10,000 troops in my imagination.

L. The Absalom Revolt, 2 Samuel 14-18 [30:27-34:33]

So, I think it's more likely this is a king and it would fit the Absalom revolt very

nicely. So, what he's asking us to do by the superscript is to go back to 2 Samuel chapters 14 through 16, where we have the story of Absalom. Actually, the battle is in chapters 17 and 18, but when David fled that story is in 2 Samuel 14, 15, and 16.

The background to the whole thing, of course, is the next psalm we're going to look at is Psalm 51. That is a real turning point in David's career. He's in a funk after that sin with Bathsheba and murdering the husband. He turns out he's just not perceptive. He seems to be in a sleep. He seems to be in a funk. He had passions of sex and had adultery and murder / killing the husband. That had its effect, evidently because the heir apparent to the throne would have been Amnon the next one, the oldest. He rapes his sister and models, his father's sexual passions and rapes Tamar. Then you have Absalom the next one, the heir to the throne. And since David doesn't act, Absalom takes it into his own hand to avenge the wrong, instead of going through the right process and having the father do it. He's the one who avenges himself, which is forbidden. So, he murders Amnon, and now we have a murderer. As a result of that, Absalom has to flee. He goes into exile and eventually David invites him back. There's never a clear confession or righting of the wrong. There's a coldness between the father and the son. So, Absalom revolts against the father.

Absalom is really wicked. He is the enemy. He is truly wicked. You could see that in the very fact, he wants to usurp the throne from his own father, which will entail he's going to try to murder his father in order to take the throne. The way he gets his gathering, you could see how he just cracked. He has no regard for God. He uses God as a pretense. So, he needs to get a gathering around him and he can't do it in Jerusalem. So, he's going to go down to Hebron and install himself as king at Hebron, the ancient capital where David began. So how does he go down there? He lies, he says to his father, "I have made a vow to offer sacrifices at Hebron." So, David said, "okay, you can go down there and offer the sacrifices at Hebron," but he's using the sacrifice as a pretense to usurp the father's throne and to kill the father. He's actually been utterly deceptive about this whole thing, because he has another agenda in mind. So, he sets up there and he goes down

there and many of the people that didn't know what was up, they just knew the king's son was offering up a sacrifice. And the text says that while he's offering up his vow and sacrifice to God, he is sending out, messengers telling the kingdom that he is the king and he is now the king at Hebron. So, while, he's sort of like the godfather, while the baptizing the baby, the Godfather's murdering everybody off. So, while he's offering up his sacrifice, he's working to undermine David and destroy David. This is taking God's name to vanity. This is misusing God's name.

M. Ahithophel and Hushai [34:33-39:12]

Then as he's offering the sacrifice, he secures the number one intellect in the country Ahithophel, the Gilohite. As best I can tell Ahithophel may be Bathsheba's grandfather. He is the father of the Eliam, who was the father of Bathsheba. I think he never forgave David. So, he is willing to conspire with Absalom to overthrow David. There is a, I don't know if I should connect that. He's the grandfather of Bathsheba and he's the one that wants to destroy David. Although I think the dots can be connected between them.

So anyway, he now becomes the counselor and he is so brilliant as a counselor that it says, David considered him equal to a prophet. He could tell what was going to happen. He had an insight into people and he knew what would occur.

It reminds me of when I was on the faculty of Dallas, we had a Dean counselor and very insightful. I was on the disciplinary committee one year and we had a case with a student. So, before we brought the student in, the Dean, the counselor, said, I'm going to go through 11 to 14 questions. I forget which it was. He said, I'm going to say this. He's going to say that, he's going to have say this. He's going to say that. And when we get to the 11th or the 14th, if he blows up, he's guilty. So, I sat there sure enough, just as he said, he says this, he says, and it's going along, just as he said. Now we come to the crucial question and the student absolutely blew up, stood up and he wasn't going to sit there, listening to this. It was amazing to me that the counselor could anticipate exactly.

That's how I see Ahithophel, he was that brilliant and insightful. When David flees

and he learns that Ahithophel is part of the conspiracy. He immediately prays that God frustrate the counsel of Ahithophel. They're evil.

So, when they come in, they're not going to murder the father. But the first counsel of Ahithophel is to take your father's harem and have sex with them on the roof of the palace. In other words, that's kind of, that's the news broadcast. You do that and then everybody knows this revolt is real, or that you made yourself a stench in your father's nostrils.

So, that gives you an idea of the evil of these people, of adultery, murder, misusing God's name, and the nation is following them. He steals the hearts of the people. That's another thing it says. He stole the heart of the people by lying about his father. He's a typical politician. Every one who comes your case is good. Your case is good. So, I'll give you whatever you want. And they all elect him. There's a typical politician, not you Mike, Mike, Okay.

So, that's Ahithophel and you could see the evil that David is up against. So, this is a spiritual war, not just simply a military war. The writer wants us to read that history and understand what this war is all about. It's a war. As I said, as in whole Bible, it's a war between good and evil, justice injustice, might or right, and so forth. That's the struggle.

Now let's take a look. We also need to know what was happening with David at this time. When David learns of the coup and he learns, everybody's following him, then David realized it's not safe to stay in Jerusalem because he has too many spies there. Someone could poison him; someone could commit treason; it was just not safe in Jerusalem. He's better off being out of the city in order that if there is a battle, they can have a real battle.

N. David's Encounters as he flees from Jerusalem [39:12-42:17]

So, David flees the city, and interestingly enough, he has these different encounters as he leaves the city. This isn't that germane, but it is part of the topology. It's interesting that Ittai the Gittite, joins him with total loyalty. Here's the picture. His own people are rejecting him and here is the Gentile, the Gittite from Gath, where Goliath

came from, he's loyal to David. That's a tremendous picture of Jesus where his own people put him on a cross and those who go with him today are almost all Gentiles. That's not a put down of the Jews, just saying that's the picture and that's the reality. I'm not politically correct sometimes, but that's the truth of what I see.

As he goes, the next person he meets is the priest Zadok. When he meets Zadok, he says to Zadok, you'll just be a burden, you won't do me any good here. O, and he says to him, are you a seer? By which he means, can you give me prophecies and give me advice? Because I need a prophet to direct me in the battle as often occurred. So, he says, can you direct me? Are you a seer? Can you give me prophecy? Can you help me in the battle? He says, no, take the ark back to Jerusalem. In the psalm, he says, "God will heal me from his holy hill." You go back there, go back to Jerusalem with the ark. You'll be there with another priest by the name of Abiathar. Abiathar has a son by the name of Jonathan and Zadok has a priest by the name of Ahimaaz. What is he setting up? What David is doing is setting up a whole counter spy system. He setting up that Zadok will be his eyes and ears and telling him what's going on. How he's going to learn what's going on Zadok is going to tell David through these two fleet footed sons, thank you, and the sons with fleet feet. That's my problem at any rate. All right. Okay. So, they're going to be runners. They're going to tell David who's now going to be down toward the Jordan exactly what's going on in the king's palace. And so, he sends Zadok back and he's setting up the spy system. So, he'll know what Absalom is up to and he can take countermeasures and know how he should flee or where he should flee and he'll know what Absalom it's up to. So, he's a general and knows and wants to know what the enemy is going to do.

O. Counsellor Duel: Ahithophel versus Hushai [42:17-44:46]

As he gets to the top of the mountain, and it would be worthwhile talking about the people he meets on the different stages of the mountain, but he gets to the top of the mountain, and that's where he learns that Ahithophel has joined the conspiracy and immediately he prays "God frustrate the counsel of Ahithophel." And at that moment in

the province of God, another counselor, very brilliant is Hushai. And he says, Hushai, you'll just be a burden to me out here. I want you to go back and frustrate the counsel of Ahithophel and this is all together crucial. So, what happens is they now have Absalom out in the providence of God as Absalom is entering the city Hushai, is entering the city. It's just the providence of God. And Hushai I wish I had time to develop Hushai, he's so brilliant, so clever. He begins. And he says "Long live the King," and, of course, he means David, thinks it means him. So, everything he says, Absalom hears as praise for him and everything he says is also appropriate for David. That's very brilliant. So, Absalom in his pride can't hear what's really going on.

Well, at any rate, Ahithophel, his counsel is: while your father is weak he's exposed, he's tired. He doesn't have an army really organized yet. This is the time to strike him."

Hushai knows that's right. But he has to defeat that counsel and so he comes back and he says, "you know how clever your father is. He's a wily fighter and when he kills a few of your soldiers they'll all depart because they all fear David. So, my counsel is that you gather all Israel with a great big army. You'll be at the head of them and you'll become like snow over them. You'll just be overwhelming. If they are in a city we'll get ropes and tear down the walls and they'll have no escape. But there will be such power that he can't escape.

Absalom likes Hushai's counsel better than the counsel of Ahithophel. And Ahithophel is so bright he knows that's utterly the wrong counsel and he knows it's over. So, he goes home and hangs himself. because he is going to be put to death. He knows David will win as a result of that counsel.

P. Theology of the Background Story [44:46-48:43]

Now that is the background to the story. Do you get the theology? If you read just the psalm and prayed you would think there are no means. But when the narrative is there you get another view of what is going on. David doesn't praise Hushai. He doesn't praise anyone but God. But he doesn't deny that behind this scene of providence, God is

at work.

So, for me to help illustrate that when our children were very young we used to play out the Bible stories. One of the Bible stories that my daughter loved was David and Goliath. So, I would stand at one end of the living room and she would stand at the other end of the living room. I would raise my sword and I would say, "I am Goliath and this is my sword. I challenge you to a battle. And she would say, "I trust in God." Well, we had in the corner of the room, we had a dish towel and we had five ping pong balls. So we would go over in the corner of the room and we would pick up the five ping pong balls. And we're off again, "I'm Goliath and this is my sword and I challenge you to a battle." And she would say, "I trust in God." Whereupon after saying she trusted God, she would swing the towel and the ping pong ball, went who knows where, and I would fall down and she'd run over and jump on me. The best part was cutting off my head. So that's how we played David and Goliath.

When we first began learning the Bible story, when we squared off the second time, she would normally forget to say, "I trust in God." So, she's swinging the towel and ping pong ball. Interestingly enough, David had five, but in any case, and I wouldn't fall down, of course, because she didn't say, "I trust in God." But one evening when we squared off, she said, "I trust in God" and did nothing. And I didn't fall down. She said to me, "Daddy, I said, I trust in God." I said, "I know, but you didn't swing, you didn't throw the ping pong ball. Faith works. And it may take more faith to go under the knife of a doctor, then the lie on your bed and say, "I trust in God." Do you see the theology that you are getting two different viewpoints here? In the narrative, it says, it could be David's means, but he prayed and at the opportune moment, God sent him Hushai, but it wasn't without human means. I think that's the profound theology.

I remember, I heard one of our students at Dallas preach on the psalm, but he didn't deal with the superscript and it was all "we just trust God." I know many people who just trust God and they'll die of cancer, for example, without using any means, not that you're going to be cured, but I'm just saying, I think it's a false dichotomy. The

spiritual necessity is that we really have an amen in our heart that God is going to work. However, if he's going to work, it doesn't mean we don't do anything. Faith works. So that's a suggestion.

Q. Psalm 3 motifs [48:43-54:03]

All right, now we look at the psalm itself and we got through the superscript so far, we're going to do faster than that. Okay. All right. First of all, I asked you to analyze the psalm. So I think the address is obvious. "O, I Am" straight off the bat. So where is the lament? Where's the confidence? Where's the petition and the conclusion of the Psalm? Anybody want to help? I cheated and looked at the next page. Oh, wow. I do that all the time on crossword puzzles. All right. Well then if you did that, go ahead. The lament is verses one and two. It's the lament. "How many are my foes? Many, many rise up against me!" Right. So that's the lament. Okay. You're doing well so far. You got an A. As part of that, God will not deliver him. Okay. Now what? So, we've got verses one and two so far.

Looks to me like 3 begins with confidence. Yeah, "but you, I Am are a shield." You see that, "but you" is often the signal we've moved into confidence. Here's the situation. But I have you, that's the confidence section, "but you are the shield" who protects me. Okay. How far do you want to extend the confidence? It looks like the confidence does down to verse 6 at least. You're right. Okay. You're right because I agree. You're right. I would say three through six is the confidence section. Okay.

What happens in verse seven? Petition, we get the petition "deliver me" as the crucial word. Notice how not only "deliver me." Notice what happens in the B part of it, punish the enemy. You see, "strike them on the cheek." So we have a double petition that we dealt with it with the imprecatory psalms.

All right. Then we, there's the praise, "deliverance." There's the praise, "deliverance belongs to the Lord." But it ends with a wish, "your blessing be on your people." So, there you can see, it might help you to understand a psalm when you understand the elements that go into the psalm.

In addition to seeing the parallelism of how "many are my foes," and that's a very close to synonymous parallelism, "the foes, and those who rise up against me." So, in other words, the point is, they're not only enemies, but they're attacking him. So, it there's a bit of escalation. "How many are my foes?" And they are attacking me. Then "they are saying to me," and they add to that. Here you see their unbelief and their rejection of the anointed king. You have to understand David is the anointed king and everybody knew he was the anointed king. The ingratitude of the people, this man who had defeated Goliath, this king, who had given them their kingdom from the Euphrates River to the River of Egypt, had done all this good for them with total ingratitude, they want to put him to death. You can see the pathos of that and the topology of it. God will not deliver him. It's just exactly what they said of Jesus on the cross. So, they have no faith, which has being shown, no faith in God, no faith in their king, "God will not deliver him."

Question: I'm just curious about the petition, unlike maybe some other petitions, he is not asking for his enemies to be killed, even though the enemies were seeking to kill him. Yet the lament seems to be a strong, rebuke but he's not asking for their death. Is that because of who they were and maybe they're part of Israel? Yeah. What I do know Cody is he's asking for their defeat. I think that may be some validity to that elsewhere in the Psalms they do pray for the death of the enemy. It could possibly be he's not asking for the death of his own people. That's a possibility. I think it's a helpful comment. So yes, it's possible that he doesn't go all the way, but we'll come back to that. We'll talk more about it when we get there...

R. The Confidence Section in Psalm 3 [54:03-1:03:17]

So you have the confidence in verses three through six. I would say there are two parts to the confidence. The first part is his statement of his confidence in God, "you are the shield around me." His confidence is expressing. "I cry aloud to I Am and he answers me from his holy hill." Then, as I understand it, he validates and demonstrates this confidence that in the midst of the battle and the danger, he goes to sleep. I mean, can you think of the whole world coming out against you and he lies down and goes to sleep?

That's an unusual person.

So, when he says the confidence, this "you, I Am." And by the way, the I Am is used seven times, which is not unusual. But anyway, "but you, I Am, are the shield around me." This is the light infantry shield. He not only knows who God is. He's the shield around him. He also knows who he is. That is, you are his glory is that he belongs to the covenant keeping God. They're united, his glory, that which gives him glory, social esteem in his victory. "You are the one who lifts up by head above the surging foe." So, he knows who he is. He knows he's the king. So, he knows God is going to protect him; he knows who he is as the son of God. He knows God will hear his prayer when he prays and God will honor him and bestow glory on him. So, I see this here, the confidence is based upon God. I think on his own election, that our confidence is in crisis. We have to know who we are and you and I, we are the children of God. God called him. You see, if God, we talked about how does he know he's king? I said, it was the prophet Samuel who said you are the king. Somehow or another, he didn't consider Samuel a madman. He heard it as the voice of God. It came to him as the word of God and his inner most being. He knew that was the word of God. It took tremendous amount of faith, I think. I mean, to say, he's going to risk his whole life on this because the king said so.

And then something happened. The Spirit of God came down upon him when he poured the oil upon him and he became different. He went out and did the works of God. Now the point is, it seems to me and that's what they're saying my core humanity speaking, and Jesus had the voice of John the Baptist and the great prophet. He had the Spirit of God come on him and he had the voice of God. He had all Scripture. He did the works of God and that's us. We know we are the children of God because the word God came to us, as it is indeed, it is the truth, the word of God. We heard it as the word of God. We accept it as the word of God. It's a gift to us. Faith is a gift and you hear it that way. And, and the Spirit of God is with us. He changed us. He's in us. He works with us and we live in a different way. We're walking to a different drum beat from the world. I know I'm different because of the grace of God operative in me.

Now, my point is for God to have moved so upon David's heart and all his whole life, and then say, I abandon you. He feels bad. But for that to be a reality, that would be wicked. That wouldn't be diabolical. He's risked his whole life on this and then to say, "sorry, I changed my mind" and walk away from you. For me, it would be diabolical almost that you give your whole life, you've been moved by the most religious sentiment to give your life to Jesus and then when you die, God says, sorry. "I changed my mind" and walk away. That would be wrong. God would never do that, but who am I to say, God is wrong. It's just that I know he's not going to do that, it's not in his nature. He will never do that. "I will never leave you. I will never forsake you." Trust me. That's what makes Christ different. Trust me, even in death, hold my hand while going through it.

So, he's confident and you've got this tremendous picture, that here is God, represented by the ark on the top of the holy mountain, 2,500 feet above sea level. And here he is in the Jordanian rift 1,300 feet below sea level. So, he is at the lowest, literally the lowest point of the earth, when he's making this prayer. God is at the highest point, theoretically, you all know about science that it's not the highest, but it's pictured as the highest. So, what it's saying is space makes no difference to God. So that even though he is pictured as in heaven and far above us, he is nigh to us. He hears our prayer and our prayer enters amazingly into his very presence.

He proves his faith now in verses five and six. As I say, he lays down, "I laid down and slept. And I woke because the Lord sustains me." In your notes that there is a helpful comment here. that may be helpful to you, on page 178 on the bottom of the page. I note, to sleep secure in trust is unique in the ancient Near East. Pharaoh says to his son, "even when you sleep, [this should read] guard your heart because no man has adherence on the day of distress." Never go to sleep because you have no one that's going to really stand with you. Here's David, he is going to sleep. What a contrast. And you can see that, that you don't go to sleep.

Remember the story of Saul when he's tracking David. Then he with Abner go to sleep and David and who was it? That was with him anyway. They steal it. Pardon, it

wasn't Joab it was the younger brother of Joab anyway [Abishai]. They steal into the camp while he's asleep. David takes his water jar and his spear. In other words, he's saying to Saul, I have your life and death in my hands, the water jar and the spear. What's so amazing is to show his loyalty to the king, he gives Saul back his spear because he needs that to defend himself, but it doesn't give him the water jar to sustain him. It's just brilliant, but full of loyalty. So, he was asleep. David stole into the camp and took his spear and water jar from him. The greatness of his heart, talk about the faulting him for imprecatory prayers, he would not touch God's anointed. That's faith, tremendous faith on his part.

There's another one who was, O, we had been in the poetry. Sisera went to sleep and Jael did him in. So, the fact he can go to sleep shows tremendous faith in God. When you have all your enemies around you. I think I might need a sleeping pill. But tremendous faith. I just love it. Then we have the petition. First of all, we've already discussed the word "deliver." This becomes then a crucial inclusio note that it began with the enemy, saying, "God will not deliver him," but he doesn't despair. So, at the end, he says, "deliver me" because it's right and "my God."

S. Imprecation Motifs in Psalm 3 [1:03:17-1:04:03]

Now here in the imprecatory prayer, when he says, "strike all my enemies on the cheek," as I understand that, make them defenseless. And if he could strike the enemy of the cheek, he has no defenses. So, take away all their defenses, strike him on the cheek to humiliate him, so he can't defend himself. Then on the other hand "break the teeth of the wicked." So, you can't be offensive and do damage, but I think Cody makes a good point that he didn't really pray for his death. He just said, render them so they are defenseless. Also, without any offense and just neutralize them.

T. Praise in Psalm 3 [1:04:03-1:05:36]

Then he concludes with a praise deliverance. This is the key "deliverance belongs to I Am." And he ends with a wish with this communal sense, a wish for the people,

"your blessing be on your people." We are that people and David's blessing is on us. That's the sense. I think that David's blessing is on you and on me. God will honor it. How privileged we are! And then it's handed over to the postscript and we're doing the right thing. We're using it for ourselves today and learning lessons from it.

That is Psalm 3. It's wonderful words of God is it not? It's rich, when you get that background from Samuel. Yeah, you don't have that. Yeah, you would miss all that. You don't have the context. It really makes a big difference. You can see how devilish it is when you take these superscripts away. It's a tremendous loss in interpretation.

This is Dr. Bruce Waltke in his teaching on the book of Psalms. This is session number 14, Petition Psalms, Psalm 3. [1:05:36]

Psalms

[\[Jump to TOC\]](#)

Session 15: Petition Psalms, Psalm 51

By Dr. Bruce Waltke

This is Dr. Bruce Waltke in his teaching on the book of Psalms. This is session number 15, Petition Psalms, Psalm 51.

A. Opening Prayer [00:24-1:22]

But let's begin again with a word of prayer before we approach the text. Father, we thank you for Bill and for Biblical Training, for Robin and his family and for the investment that he's made in this and his faith in moving ahead with it. We pray, Lord, that you will bless and reward him and bless our endeavors here. Be with the students that will, by your grace, be edified, and they will be able to share your word and all of its riches with others. Give the students joy in themselves, a joy that will express itself in praise to you, in Christ's name. Amen.

B. Selection of Psalm 51 [1:22-2:15]

All right, we're in Psalm 51 and there are two reasons I chose this psalm. First of all, is because it's, again, one of the most famous Psalms. It's like Psalm 23 and many people know the Psalm of David's confession after his sin with Bathsheba. That's a one of those psalms.

It's also a petition psalm and it's a petition for forgiveness of sin. It's a psalm we need constantly, for God's grace, because I know how great are my sins and how many, but I also know that God hears a prayer like this and his grace is greater than our sin.

C. Translation of Psalm 51 [2:15-6:03]

Translation. Then Psalm 51.1. It's A Psalm of David. When the prophet Nathan came to him after David had committed adultery with Bathsheba. Have mercy on me, O God. According to unfailing love, according to your great compassion, blot out my transgressions, wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions and my sin is always before me. Against you, you only have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight. So, you are right in your verdict and justified when you judge. Surely, I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me. You desire faithfulness [and this is almost unique with NIV] in the womb." It says "in the smeared over," "in the smeared over place, you taught me wisdom in that secret place." But it's two words here. It's a tomb and it means "the bottled-up place," I'll talk more about that. "Cleansed me with hyssop and I will be clean, wash me and I will be whiter than snow. Let me hear joy and gladness. Let the bones, you have crushed rejoice. Hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquity. Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me from your presence, or take your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit to sustain me. Then I will teach transgressors your ways so that sinners will turn back to you. Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God, you who are God, my savior, and my tongue will sing of your righteousness. Open my lips, Lord, 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. My sacrifice, O God, [that's a textual change. It could be "the sacrifices of God" with a slight re-vocalization] my sacrifice, O God, is a broken spirit. A broken and contrite heart, God, you will not despise. May it please you to prosper Zion, to build up the walls of Jerusalem. Then you will delight in the sacrifices of the righteous, in burnt offerings, offered whole. Then bulls will be offered on your altar. For the director of music." This is on page 181, and we can go. I know again, I will just go directly into the psalm and that begins really on page 184, going directly into the psalm.

D. Psalm 51: Its setting in usage [6:03-7:09]

We begin with superscript "A Psalm of David." I'll just give you a little bit of background to it. That's note from Jim's work that in the Professor Houston's work that in the medieval Roman revelry this Psalm was recited every hour at the conclusion of each monastic service with the exception of Christmas in England. For 13 centuries, it was repeated seven times daily finding cleansing from sin. As the French *de miserie*, as "of misery" it was selected for Ash Wednesday. In the Jewish tradition, it was sung with the ram's horn appropriately on the Day of Atonement. So, it's had a great history within the history of covenant people. And ready we would comment that it's a psalm and song.

E. Psalm 51 Superscript Historical Setting [7:09-12:05]

And now the bottom of the page is "when Nathan the prophet came to him, after he committed adultery with Bathsheba," This is an important part. And the next thing I make down there, I note, and these verses are wrong that in the psalm, in superscript with the sin against, by Bathsheba, there are sins of passion, and there's a sin of calculated cold-blooded murder. So, Bathsheba was the lust of the moment and his lust overwhelmed him. The lust of the flesh destroyed him. But the murder of her husband transpired over a two-week period. This is a coldly calculated murder. His attempt is going to be to cover up, his Bathsheba-gate, and that he's going to father the child out of adultery. He has to make it appear that the husband Uriah sired the child, fathered the child. It's obvious her husband, who is a Hittite again, a Gentile, a very loyal soldier, converted to trust in Israel's king and becomes part of the covenant community. Her husband is one of the 30 great warriors that David celebrates. He's one of the top 30, a tremendous warrior. He is out battling with Joab outside of Ammon. David is home in Jerusalem. He shouldn't have been at home. I think he should have been out there with his troops, but he's in a, let me see. Anyway, he stayed at home and that's his mistake. When he learns from Bathsheba that out of his adultery, she tells him she's pregnant, he needs a cover up that it will appear as though Uriah, the husband, has fathered the child.

So, he sends a messenger to Ammon Raba and it takes four days for the messenger

to get there. That's four days. He brings Uriah back with him to Jerusalem. That's another four days, eight days. He tries to get Uriah to sleep with his wife and that's over two or three days. Uriah the faithful man that he is, will not, not during war, not during battle do I have pleasure, and refuses. David makes him drunk, but his moral and commitment is so firm that even though he may have drunk too much, he cannot violate who he is. He's tremendous man of God. So now we have eight days, plus two or say three now. So, what David does, he writes, Uriah's death sentence, and tells Joab to put him right up against the wall of the city and then withdraw. So, he's out there all by himself and he's sure to be killed. It looks like it's a tragedy of war. So, it's a coverup, a total coverup. It's utterly, utterly wicked what David is doing. So, under this cover up as though it's just an accident of war. These things happen in war and so forth. Yet it is calculated murder and Joab doesn't like it either. He knows what's going on. So, when Uriah gets back there, sure enough, Joab withdraws, all the troops and leaves Uriah standing out there against the city and the city wall with arrows raining down on one man, he doesn't have a chance. He's killed. And he's killed and the agent is David and the sword is the sword of the Ammonites. That is cold calculated premeditated murder. There is absolutely no excuse. This is not a matter of passion. He is utterly, utterly guilty.

F. Nathan the Prophet Confronts David [12:05-17:43]

So it's a sin of passion and really cold calculated murder of a wonderful man. One of his chief officers, all to cover up for himself. The worst part is as he's accused, when Nathan comes to him and accuses him of doing this, he accuses him of despising God's word, because that's the problem. He just utterly has rejected God's word. I give you some verses there on the bottom of page 184, but the verses aren't as accurate as I would like. So, I say they are crimes against humanity. Then the main thing is it's defiance against God, namely his word. And that should be 2 Samuel 12.9 So if you want to turn to 2 Samuel 12.9, summarizes the two parts of a sin: adultery and the murder. And so 12.9, this is David condemning. And he said, well, in 2 Samuel 12.9 Nathan says to David, "Why did you despise the word of the Lord by doing what is evil in his eyes? You

struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword and took his wife to be your own. You killed him with the sword of the Ammonites." There's the accusation. He violated God's word.

The two laws and they're not altogether accurate here so just write them in more precisely. The two laws, the one for murder is Numbers 35.16 and the one for adultery is Deuteronomy 22.22. Those are really the only two laws you need. So he could see Numbers 35.16, the law he is violating. It says, "If anyone strikes someone, a fatal blow with an iron object, that person is a murderer. The murderer is to be put to death." So according to the law, I mean, the iron object in this sense is the sword. He did it for through the agency of the Ammonites, but ultimately David is doing it. So, he violates that commandment and he shall be put to death. He's under a sentence of death.

For adultery turn with me to Deuteronomy 22, where the adulterer and the adulteress both ought to be put to death, Deuteronomy 22 and verse 22. Is that right? Is that right here. Deuteronomy 22 and verse 22, "the man is found sleeping with another man's wife, both the man who slept with her and the woman must die. You must purge the evil from Israel." So, in a sense, both of them, both David and Bathsheba are under sentence death. He finds no fault. He takes total responsibility in the psalm and he doesn't say, like Adam, "she made me do it." I may wonder everyone knows where the king is, just like we know where president Obama is. And sometimes we wish we didn't know where Bill Clinton was. But in any case, everyone knows where the president or where the king is. Everybody knows he's in residence. His palace is on top of the hill.

I have to ask myself, what is a woman doing bathing on the roof of her house underneath the king's palace? I mean, it raises some questions, but the Bible doesn't answer that and it doesn't fault Bathsheba. It faults totally David in this case. But the point is he has despised God's word and disobeyed it for his own, for his own lust. He's under a sentence of death.

Here's what I'm saying is when you read the law, you must read the law is part of the primary history. It's not just part of the narrative that's thrown in there. But the law

really continues not only what he said to Moses, but how it is interpreted by God within the history of Israel. So, the sparing of Rahab the harlot that shows us how to interpret the law. When you have someone who is under a sentence of death and they repent and they own it and confess God as the Lord. She and her whole household came into the covenant community. That is part of Torah. This whole story that God forgives him, and "you will not die" has to be read in connection with these two commandments of a capital offense for murder and a capital offense for adultery. They're not exacted when there is true repentance. That is part of Torah is the point I'm making.

G. Grace and Forgiveness [17:43-22:28]

So, they're both under a sentence of death. Furthermore, they cannot change the situation. And in other words, it's irredeemable. There is the historical fact of what he did. That is, he cannot give life. He can't affect Lex talionis that is eye for eye tooth for tooth. He cannot, well that's sort of different, he cannot give life back to Uriah. He's dead. He cannot give Bathsheba back her purity, can't give purity back to Bathsheba. It's impossible and even though he cannot make, the word I'm looking for, restitution and restoration, he is forgiven, which I think is amazing. I've listed this then on your notes on page 185, that in his defiance against God, I point out it's a capital offense, both for adultery and for murder. And two, restitution is not possible.

I need a third one in here that I didn't include, and that is, we need to add here: third, that whoever confesses his sin or her sin and renounces it obtains mercy. That's Proverbs 28.13. Again, I think it's worthwhile turning there to Proverbs 28, verse 13. I hope it's right. It didn't look this up ahead of time. Yes. "Whoever conceals their sin does not prosper, but one who confesses and renounces them finds mercy." What David does in this psalm, he confesses it. He comes with an absolutely clean heart. He renounces it. He looks to God for cleansing and he's forgiven. "You will not die," is the word from the prophet. This is amazing grace.

Number four then, because he renounces, confesses and turns to God's mercy, he finds complete forgiveness with this godly repentance. In fact, the forgiveness is so great

that out of the adultery sprang Solomon who was called "Jedediah"-- beloved by God. God's grace was greater than all his sin.

But there is still historical guilt. If I get in a drunken brawl and I break a beer bottle and I stab somebody's eye out and then I turned to God for forgiveness, God will forgive me, but the person I injured will still be blind. There still are historical consequences. There are, in this particular case, the baby's going to die because God wants the world to know, because David is his representative, I still am a God of justice. So, he has the death of the baby instead of the death of David for justice. This is an absolutely amazing story to me that God's grace is this great.

I'd be interested, Mike, it was some years ago that you had, what was the name Fe? She was a capital serial killer. She killed 19 people here in Texas, Carla Fey wasn't that it? And she truly confessed and everybody who knew her, and I saw it on TV. No question that that was a new creation. In my judgment governor Bush should have pardoned her. If God could pardon David, it seems to me, the state can pardon a woman like that who is totally terrible. What she did was absolutely terrible. But if David can, the point of the story is no matter how great our sin is God's grace is greater than my sin when there's true repentance, such as expressed in this psalm.

H. "You are the Man" [22:28-27:01]

It shows to me how we ought to respond to people who are truly changed and transformed by the grace of God as she was, that would have been my judgment on that case.

Student: Yeah. People interviewed her, and said her confession was legitimate and authentic, but she also said that whatever he said.

Dr. Waltke: That was how humility and that's what David did. That's the grace of David. Oh, and that's I think, thank you for saying that. See what happens is when Nathan says, "you are the man," it gives the illustration of the rich man who took the lamb from the poor man and all of that wrong. What he brings out of David when in that parable about the rich man who takes the lamb from the poor man in order to feed his guests. He

brings out of David, the true David and David is a man, truly of justice. He had tremendous lapse, but he says that man should be put to death. Nathan says, "you are the man." David says, whatever God decides, he turns it over to God, to the word of God. He doesn't presume it all there and that's very similar to what she was doing. Whatever you say it's going to be right. She had no bitterness in her heart. It was to me part of her salvation, she reflected to me covenant values through it. Well, that's an illustration of a thing, how we might apply the psalm in the way we think about sinners, who may have committed the most egregious sins, but they turned back to God with godly repentance such as we see in this psalm.

So those are some of this superscript I think is extremely important to understand how terrible it was, how he fractured the word of God. He coveted his neighbor's wife. He stole her, committed adultery. He committed murder. He didn't love God. Everything is wrong. But he prays this prayer and that's why, I guess the monks pray it 13 times a day. We need forgiveness.

Student: Bruce. I'm going to ask you this question when wrong is done in our past, and people come to that realization. I'm thinking more in the marital side of it. What role does restitution play in that equation?

Yeah. Thank you., thanks for asking that. In this case, he couldn't make restitution, but if restitution can be made, it should be made. To validate that, for example, the law was, if you had a sheep or a cow, or a bull or whatever, and I were to steal your sheep restitution would be, I would have to give you back two sheep for justice, because as I intended to rob you, now, I must be robbed. So, I not only give you back your sheep, I give you back two sheep because I must make restitution for what I did. This is strict justice. Now, supposing I steal your sheep and I eat it and I can't give it back to you because I ate it. Now I have to give you four sheep to make sure I've covered my wrong. That's restitution. So, it is absolute justice, when you can make restitution. That's why I think Zacchaeus says I'll restore fourfold. That's what the model of the law would have

been for what he exacted as a collaborator, as a tax collector with Rome. So thank you for asking. Yeah, that's right. That's right.

H. Interpreting the Law [27:01-29:03]

And it takes a certain intelligence to appropriate the law. What really struck me, the law was you had to put in Deuteronomy 22, that same chapter, you have to put a parapet around the roof of your house. I'm reading with the children about putting a parapet around the roof of the house. So, I said to the kids, I said, what do you think, should we put up a railway around the roof of the house? Well, they said, dad, God said, you should. I guess we should. I said, well now think about it. In that world roofs were flat and people on the roof of the house and children fell off and were maimed or killed. Whereas we have a steep roof to keep the rain and the snow keep falling off the roof and nobody's up there and the parapet would do no good. Now, what do you think? No, it doesn't make any sense to put a parapet up there. So, then I said to them, "okay, so how, what does law mean today?" And I was amazed, my nine year old said to me immediately, "it means we ought to have good brakes on our car." Exactly! How the mind, how his mind could have gone from that specific to the abstraction that you protect your neighbor to a new, specific, a brakes on the car. He was exactly right, because the principle behind that specific law was to protect your life of your neighbor. If he said it means we shouldn't smoke or something, by which we protect my own life, it would be a wrong application. I don't know how to teach that kind of intelligence. That's something there that just takes native intelligence, that some people have more ability to do that than other people, but that's a very important part of interpretation that you're able to get the principle behind these ancient laws and apply them to a new situation, which is exactly what should be done with these laws.

I. Petition Motifs and Structure in Psalm 51 [29:03-32:48]

Well, now we've had that background material and let's dig into the psalm. I'm going to do the same as I did in a Psalm 3 and just have your translation in hand, or have

a translation of a Bible in hand on page 181. Now, first of all, let's look at the structure in light of what we've learned about motifs. What we have here, as I would understand it, we have the direct address immediately. "O God." What we have is an introductory petition for God's mercy in the A verset. And then the specific that God will just "blot out my transgression," which means just erase the slate, just erase it. Just wash it clean, blot it out and along with "wash away all my iniquities."

Then after that introductory petition and address, we now come to the lament, which is of a lament for his sin. "For I know my transgression" and now he confesses and he says, "against you and you only have I sinned." So, he's confessing his sin and I'll come back to it, his overt sin and for his nature, sin nature, in verses three through six that is the lament. It's the lament for sin in three through six and I'll analyze that more closely. I think it could say in verse seven, we begin to petition with the imperatives, "cleanse me, let me here, hide your face, create in me, do not cast me out, restore to me." So, we had two verses by way of introductory petition. We get four verses of lament in verses three, four, five, and six. And now we get six verses of petition in verses seven through twelve. So, what we're looking for what normally occurs, his address, and sometimes introductory petition. Then we get lament. Then we get petition.

And then at the end we have praise. And that extends from verses 13 through verse 18. So he says, do not cast me away from your presence. No, he says, "Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and my mouth will sing of your righteousness." And there we get the praise section of the psalm. I'll come back to that. And then we get a wish at the end of it. So having looked at the basic structure by the motifs of a petition psalm, we can now discretely understand, analyze it, tearing this wonderful flower apart, but yet it's worthwhile to investigate it's parts I suggest.

J. Introductory Address: Elohist Psalter (Pss. 42-83) [32:48-36:18]

Let's look on that one more detail. First of all, at the introductory address, I won't get to this. I will on editing the Psalter. You'll notice the addresses is to "O God." And there's something a mystery of here. Why isn't it to I Am. Why "O God"? Somehow in

the providence of God, there was an editing at some point of what we call the Elohist Psalter. Okay. From Psalm 42 songs from 42 through 83. There are 42 psalms, which use Elohim in preference to Yahweh, Jehovah, I Am. The statistics I'll give to you when we get to the lecture on editing the Psalms are staggering. In all the other sections of the book, I mean this covers Book II from a 42 to 72 is Book II then Book III 73 through 83. The priority is Elohim and they address God as Elohim. That's a whole other discussion. So, I know that this address is to God, because I'm in the book that uses the name for God. Interestingly enough, there are 42 psalms and it begins with Psalm 42.

The number 42 speaks of premature death. It speaks of deaths, premature death. And so you have, this is some dark material. So that, for example, when Elisha calls the bear on the boys, how many boys? 42. When Jehu kills the offspring of Athaliah and his coup, how many were those that were killed? 42. 42 has something to do with death, premature death. This demands some discussion and I don't have all the answers. As I said, I don't have to have answers to everything for me to continue. I'll watch, I'll enjoy what I do understand, but I'm just calling your attention to it, that this is a part of this Elohist Psalter, where he addresses him as Elohim, and this is God in his transcendence. Evidently there was some editor that preferred God [Elohim] to I Am [Yahweh] and gave it priority. They created it is unique. Anyway, that's the address. I kind of have you just hang in here. But my responsibility is to be honest to my texts and give you the data. That's my job. I don't say I can explain everything. I explain what I can, but I can't explain everything.

K. Introductory Petitions [36:18-39:16]

Now notice what he does in this introductory petition. He exhausts the vocabulary for sin, not exhaust, but he uses the three primaries. See, he's talking about "transgressions" in verse 1. "Iniquity" in verse 2a and "sin" in verse 2b. He uses three different words for sin. Every word for sin assumes an absolute standard. It's a deviation from a standard, the Greek word for sin and is Bill there. Yeah, correct me here. Anomia means without law, without standards, living without a standard or not obeying a

standard. But in any case, in Hebrew, every word assumes there is a standard and it's a violation of a standard. Each one has a different picture, a different strength.

Most people know that the word for sin at the end of verse two means a standard and you fall short of it. It means to miss the mark. And that's the basic meaning of the translation "sin" is that you miss the mark, you don't measure up. So, none attains the glory of God. The word "transgression" is the strongest word. So, if you think of a line with a standard transgression and its use, and this means to rebel. You can picture it with a raised fist of rebellion. David has rebelled against the rule of God in murder and in adultery. The word "iniquity" has a standard too, and the standard is either you deviate from it, or you twist it, I'm not sure. That's, at any rate, this is the etymology, how much you can put on etymology may be useful, but he's using different words. And "iniquity" includes guilt with it. The important point is that they all assume a standard and he's missed it. He's transgressed against it. He's twisted it. And this is going to be important when he says, "against you and you only have I sinned" because the standard is God's. When we sin, we are sinning against God's standard and this has profound implications to it. So, we'll see when Jesus says, "your sins be forgiven you," There's keen theologians, they said "who could forgive the sin, but God," because it's his standard that we are violating. I'll come back to that. That's the first thing.

L. Use of Exodus 34.6 [39:16-41:40]

The second thing to note is notice how his using Exodus 34.6 he's really, three words that come directly out of God's communicable attributes, namely mercy, unfailing love. This is in verse 1a "mercy, according to your unfailing love and your great compassion." Those are the three of the five words in Exodus, 34.6. Those are the ways of God. That's when in verse 11, he says, "then I will teach transgressors your ways." God's ways are ways of grace. That's what sinners have to hear that God is compassionate upon them. That God has the word "mercy" [hanani]. As I said, it means that when he looks at you He looks at you with favor and he meets your need to have grace. The word compassion is to have pity. He remembers our frame. He knows we are dust. He knows

our propensity to sin, and he takes pity upon us. He had called David and He has an unfailing loyalty to David. David is in a helpless situation. He cannot save himself and he's appealing to God with his repentance, remain loyal to me with love and keep your covenant. So, as I think, McLaren put it, "standing in the deep hole of sin, he looks up as in a deep well, he looks up and he sees stars of God's grace, that those who stand in the noonday sunlight of their own self-righteousness, never see." He's standing in that deep hole of sin and he sees this quality of God.

So, my encouragement is so what of skeletons would be in our closet. However deep that hole you can see those stars of grace up there. That's the second thing the words for sin, the words for grace. What a God!

M. Forgiveness [41:40-43:54]

Third, what is he asking for in addition to God, having mercy on him and so forth. Two things, one is forensic forgiveness, blot out, just erase, just wipe the slate clean. There are 54 different ways of expressing forgiveness in the Old Testament. He removes them as far as the East is from the West. He buries them in the bottom of the sea. He hides his face; he can't see them anymore. And here's another one, just erase it off the slate. When I get to heaven and all the things I did wrong because I've asked God, my slate is clean and he puts a benediction upon us. So, I think we all can look back, see our failures, at least I do, and know God's grace forgives it and removes it. It is no longer in his sight. The other point is not only is he looking for legal forgiveness, blotted out, but he's also looking for the liturgical cleansing. That is, he feels unclean. He feels unworthy to be with the people of God. He feels like a dirty garment. He stinks. That's what he's saying in verse, "wash me." And that means to put it in a river and just tread it over and over again. "Wash me and cleanse me and de-sin me."

Those are the introductory petitions, so that he will be legally forgiven and he will be ready to go back into the temple with the people of God, even though he had all these terrible things. Like 1 Corinthians 6, and you were adulterers and immoral, and you were homosexuals and Paul says, you were all of that. You are the people of God, and you're a

sweet fragrance to him and he washes us. I mean, that is wonderful. Wonderful. That's amazing grace. Thank God for this psalm that expresses it.

N. Confesses Over Acts of Sin [43:54-45:23]

Now we have his lament, which includes his confession and that falls into two parts. First of all, he's speaking about his overt acts of sin. Going back to blot out, now, he talks about his overt acts of sin. "I know my transgression, and my sin is always before me." Notice how he takes full responsibility with the personal pronoun: I, my, my, me, I'm guilty God, it's me. I know, in other words, I know it is a transgression. He is aware he sinned against God. There's no hardness here. "And my sin is always before me." I think what he's saying is when I commit a sin, I keep replaying it over and over again in my head, I keep going back to it and I keep seeing it in my head. What he's asking for is that that's, what's always before me and he's asking God, give me a clean heart. Take that memory away from me. It's always before me.

O. Against You only have I sinned [45:23-48:53]

Then it says something amazing, "against you and you only have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight. So, you were right in your verdict and justified when you judge." How can he say, "against you and you only"? Well, it's because of the words for sin. It's God's standard. It's not a human standard. Therefore, it's a transgression against God. In the process, you could speak about sinning against your neighbor, but that'd be a loose way of speaking of it.

The way I illustrate it is that I grew up on the streets of a Jersey City, opposite New York City. It was a cement sidewalk we were sort of on a hill and we lived in a six-family house. There wasn't any place to play except right out on the street. So, we would play two handed touch football. Get scraped up every so often. One time I hit my, I hung my head on a fender of a car, blood gushing out. Mother let us play out there on the street. Kids, boys have to do stuff like that. So, she had one rule and that was, you could not kick the ball. That was her only rule. Well, one day I couldn't resist the temptation. I

gave the ball a good boot. For me it would never be a good boot, but it was. I kicked the ball and it did go sailing right through my neighbor's window on the second floor. I guess my mother was watching, as soon as I heard the crashing glass, I heard my mother "Bruce" and I'm in deep trouble.

Against whom did I sin, my mother or my neighbor? I sinned against my mother. It was her standard. That was to protect me. I damaged my neighbor. I had with what little bit I got. I had to replace that window. I had to make restitution for it. But the point I'm making, I sinned against my mother. It was her rule.

That's why I'm saying when Jesus healed the paralytic and they let the paralytic down into the house in front of Jesus. And he said to him, "your sins are forgiven you, take up your bed and walk." Then the keen theologian said, "who can forgive sin but God?" That was a claim to deity. Who can do that? And Jesus said, "which is easier to say, your sins are forgiven or take up your bed and walk" and make the man whole. I'm not Mr. Everybody, but you see they saw that as a claim to deity that he could forgive sin.

I think the reason David is doing this, as I said earlier, I don't think everybody in Israel, forgave him, all that mattered is that God forgave him. I don't think Ahithophel forgave him. Maybe the people who were friends of Uriah didn't forgive him either. So, he says, "against you, and you only have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight. So, you are right in your verdict, and justified when you judge." So only God can make a judgment about this. I'm not under the judgment of anybody else. I think that's the point he's trying to make in the psalm.

P. Moral Impotence [48:53-50:54]

So he confesses the overt act of sin, and now he moves beyond that. He goes back to Freud, id, what made me do this? I'm not even a master in my own house. He now speaks of his moral impotence. He talks about the contradiction within our very nature. So, he says, "surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me." Now, this sort of says a lot about the unborn in the womb. They are in a spiritual state and they are in a state of sin in the womb. This is original sin. I am sinful. That's my basic

nature. I was sinful in my mother's womb. The contradiction to it is he says, we should have put it here. "Yet you desired faithfulness even in the womb, you taught me wisdom in that secret place." So, here's this contradiction. He's basically sinful, but God was also put a conscious in him that he knew right from wrong. He could have wisdom has giving him the wisdom of how you ought to live. That's the contradiction of human nature that we're sinful, but we know better. And that's what he's confessing. So, I'm sinful, but there's something else in me and this is the struggle of the Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde that is in us. So, instead of saying, I can't help myself, he is saying, he's confessing, that I am a sinful creature. He's not saying, "well, that's the way I am. I can't help myself. I'm given to these ways of living and that's who I am, and I'm not responsible." David is saying, he's lamenting, I'm a sinful and I know better.

Q. Petitions [50:54-59:09]

Now comes after these four lines of lament and confession of his overt act of sin and his moral impotence not to, now comes his petition of six lines. The first three pertain to the overt acts of sin in verses seven, eight, and nine. The next three pertain to his moral impotence and he's looking for a new spirit that will enable him. First of all, with his overt acts and reverses it.

Now he starts with the cleansing. In the first half he asked for forgiveness and then the cleansing. Now he starts with the cleansing. He says, "Cleanse me with hyssop." This is rather ad hoc. The hyssop was a very hairy plant and you dipped it into blood and water. It was used on two occasions. It was used when say you came across a carcass and you saw death, and then you would go to the priest and he would sprinkle you with blood and water. In that symbolic act, you were transferred from the realm of death, into the realm of life. That was the intention of why, when you saw unclean or in the presence of death, you don't belong to that realm. You belong to this realm of life. So, the priest would put water and blood on you, which was anticipatory of the blood of Christ. They would use the ashes of the red heifer, which the writer of Hebrews says was a type of Christ. As we appropriate by faith, his blood and the water from his side to our lives, we

are transferred from the realm of death, to the realm of life. I think David is using that. I've been in the realm of death, bring me into the realm of life.

The other way you would use it, the other occasion we use hyssop is if you were a leper and you were unclean, and then you were healed. You will be sprinkled again, you would be transferred from one realm to the other. That's what I think David is really a bit at hope here. He sees himself like a being in the realm of death and he's asking God to take him into the realm of the life. He is not the denying blood in this psalm. This is always this alleged. When you talk about hyssop, that is metonymy, that is one noun for another. Hyssop implies blood. So, he says, "sprinkle me with hyssop." "Cleanse me with hyssop and I will be clean, wash me and I will be whiter than snow."

Now here we come to another figure of speech. "Let me hear joy and gladness." Now that is obviously a figure of speech. A figure of speech is when you have words that don't go together. You cannot hear an emotional state. You know, you're dealing with the figure of speech, there's something wrong. That's an inapposite juxtaposition of words. "Let me hear." So, he has to hear something. You have to fill it in, that will produce joy and gladness. The only thing I can see that he's talking about is the words of Nathan, "you are forgiven." That will produce joy and gladness. So, he jumps into terseness of poetry "cause me to hear the word of forgiveness, and that will produce joy and gladness," which is exactly what God did. When I accepted Christ as a ten-year-old, all I knew was the Sinner's Prayer. "God be merciful to me a sinner." I knew he heard my prayer and it produced joy and gladness. "And the bones you have crushed will rejoice." You can see my whole being and it refers to his psyche, my whole being.

Now comes to the blotting out of my iniquity, you see how it's a chiasm. He started with blot, and then he had cleanse. Then he comes here to full elaboration of the petition, cleanse. And now we have blood out and we come back to where we started. "Hide your face from my sins," which is another figure of speech, "and blot out all my iniquity." So obviously we're going back to verse seven, "wash me," which matches verse two, wash away in verse nine. "Blot out," which goes back to verse one, blot out. You

could see how you have an introductory petition that is now being elaborated upon in the full petition. So now we, to the second half, he has lamented his moral impotence in this contradiction of human nature, we're born sinful, and yet we know better. So, what's the resolution. It's going to be the Spirit as far as he could understand it. Notice what happens now in verses 10, 11, and 12 in the B versets, every verse references the spirit. 10b "a new spirit, a steadfast spirit;" 11 "Holy Spirit;" 12 "willing spirit." So, it's a changed spirit he's asking for that will give him the strength. So, he says, "create in me a pure heart." There are some people who can accept God's forgiveness and there are some who can't and they stay in their sin. It takes, he says, a creation that you're able to accept the grace of God. Create in me a pure heart that I really know I'm forgiven. You have to create that. Every good and perfect gift comes from God. Even the ability to accept forgiveness is a gift of God and "create in me a clean heart." "And renew," so that I'll have a steadfast spirit and I'll persevere in a new way of life that will overcome my depravity.

Second, "do not cast me from your presence." He is a king and "take your Holy Spirit from me." The Holy spirit basically enabled, empowered a person. When God took his Spirit from Saul, he could no longer function as a king. David is saying, don't take that anointing, that Spirit, away from me, cast me out. Let me continue to be with your Holy Spirit and your anointing to be the king. "Restore to me the joy of your salvation," and to be full of joy "and grant me a willing spirit." So, I just offered myself up wholly and freely to you with a clean heart, full of the spirit as steadfast spirit. I offer myself up as a freewill offering with that kind of spirit. That's how he will overcome his impotence.

R. Praise Section of Psalm 51 [59:09-1:01:52]

We now come to his praise section. "Then I will teach transgressors your way. So that sinners will turn back to you," and the ways this Psalm, are the ways of mercy, unfailing love, grace. Those were the ways at Exodus 34.6. Because people have hope that God can forgive them as in the prodigal son, they can turn to God and find salvation. "And they will return back to you" because they know they could be forgiven and have a relationship with the living God. He doesn't presume upon God, "deliver me from guilt of

bloodshed, O God, you are God, my Savior, and my tongue will sing of your righteousness." Here we have the word of praise. I will sing of it. And your righteousness means that you restore what's topsy turvy, which includes salvation. And he's going to right everything that's wrong with David. So often righteousness is almost equivalent to salvation as you restore a topsy turvy situation.

"Open my lips and my mouth will declare your praise." So, there we have the word of praise. I said, the praise has two parts. It has a word of praise and it has the sacrifice. You would eat a meal in conjunction with the word. It's in that context that David is saying, this is not the time for us to have a big meal with a pregnant wife, a dead husband. How in the world are we going to have a big party here? We couldn't feed on that. And so, he says, "you do not delight in a sacrifice or I would bring it. You do not take pleasure in a burnt offering. My sacrifice, O God" and what we can all feed on is "a broken spirit, a broken and contrite heart. God, you will not despise." So, his sacrifice is his broken spirit. He's not denying the sacrificial system as almost everybody reads it. He's moved beyond the sacrificial system. And they don't read about cleansing with hyssop. They don't understand the form of the psalm. They can't handle the psalm correctly. If you don't understand that you're in the praise section and how to understand what this praise is, what the sacrifice is.

S. Final Wish [1:01:52-1:02:53]

Then comes the wish at the end, and he moves beyond it, that the whole kingdom has been under a cloud of. now, if the king is restored, may "it please you to prosper Zion, to build up the walls of Jerusalem." And when that occurs, then we'll have burnt offerings again. "Then you will delight in the sacrifices of the righteous, in burnt offerings offered whole, then bulls will be offered on your altar," and if the king gets right, the kingdom gets right. The kingdom can again expand because the king is right. And to us, I hand it over "to the chief musician," whatever our spirit influence may be that if we are right and we're cleansed and we're forgiven, the kingdom can expand, but we have to renounce any sin.

This is Dr. Bruce Waltke in his teaching on the book of Psalms. This is session number 15, Petition Psalms, Psalm 51. [1:02:53]

Psalms

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Session 16: Petition Psalms, Lament, Psalm 22

By Dr. Bruce Waltke

This is Dr. Bruce Waltke in his teaching on the book of Psalms. This is session number 16, Petition Psalms, Lament, Psalm 22.

A. Elohist Psalter (Pss. 42-83) [00:23-3:58]

Point you in the notes where I discuss the Elohist Psalter, and that's on page 332 of your notes, on page 332. I give you the data and some suggestions on how to understand it. So, I begin with the data. There are striking statistical contrasts between the use of I AM [Yahweh] and Elohim [God], in the rest of the Psalter, that is, between the Psalms 42 to 83, which is the Elohist Psalter and the rest of the Psalter. So, for example, in Psalms 1 through 41 and 84 through 150, I Am is used in those sections 584 times and Elohim is used 94 times. In Psalms 42 to 83, the Elohist Psalter, I Am is used 45 times and Elohim 210 times. So, you can see this as a tremendous change in the use of the divine name.

Again, on page 335, given the data most occurrences of the alternate are due to parallelism in 1 through 44 and 84 through 150, I Am is in the A verset and Elohim and the B verset. In 42 through 83 it's exactly reversed. That Elohim is in the A verset, and I Am is in the B verset.

And in fact, in 14 Psalm take a look at the synoptic material, for example, if you want to see this book in Psalms take a look at Psalm 14 in the first book. And you can do this in several places and I give you the data there. Psalm 14 "The fool has said in his

heart, there is no God. They are corrupt." Verse 2, "The Lord looks down from heaven on all mankind to see if there are any who understand and who seek God" and so forth. Now turn over to Psalm 53, which is in the Elohistic Psalter, if I can find it here. "The fool says in his heart, there is no God, they are corrupt and their ways are vile. There is no one who does good " But now note the change. "God looks down from heaven." Do you see the change? Instead of I Am or the Lord as in Psalm 14 now it is God. And it is that kind of change that we get that I think is very legitimate to recognize that Psalm 42-83 for some reason are giving priority to the transcendent God over the covenant keeping God.

B. 42 – Psalm 42 and 42 Psalms in the Elohistic Psalter [3:58-6:38]

Now having had that data and trying to understand what is going on. This is fairly new the research on this. I turn now to page 334 and F. There are 42 psalms and it begins with Psalm 42. I say elsewhere in the Old Testament the numeral 42 is used in the context of judgment, of premature death. This would be of the Ephraimites. Oh, this is at the crossing of the Jordan. Only this is in the thousands I'm on page 334. And I'm showing that where it refers to premature death and it is used of the Ephraimites who couldn't say "shibboleth." I think it is 42,000 are put to death, premature death.

Again, with Elisha it's used of the children, 42 children. It's used of the relatives of Ahaziah. There are 42 who are put to death. I think it has some bearing on the tribulation and the symbolic tribulation, I don't take it literally, where you have the three and a half years or 42 months. I think it all fits together. I suspect therefore what may be because it's got to deal with the destruction of Jerusalem. I think it may be that behind it is the premature or the death of Jerusalem in the exile. The other part of it is they're going to come out of the exile and there's going to be salvation behind it. So, I think this is a very dark tends to be dark and Psalm 51 fits somewhat within it to say, God can forgive when the nation repents. God can forgive. That gives you another dimension to our understanding. Those are at least as far as I have come in my thinking about this matter.

C. Introduction to Psalm 22 [6:38-12:26]

All right, now we're on page 188 and we're going to do another lament psalm, an individual lament. So, we did the individual lament, the very first one, Psalm 3. We took a very distinctive kind of lament in the penitential psalm, lamenting sin Psalm 51. I thought, well, we could also combine here a Messianic Psalm, clearly messianic, that this Psalm is portraying Jesus Christ and his death. It's a psalm that Jesus took upon his lips. When he's upon the cross. We are on very holy ground and it was clearly on the lips of our Lord as he is dying. It is the fourth of the seven words of our Lord upon the cross. I give you the seven words upon the cross, beginning with "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do," and then the "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit" and in the middle, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" And that's the fourth saying of the seven. And this saying, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" stumbles many people, because it seems as though Jesus is saying, God I've lost the cause. God abandoned me.

I quote here, that God in his grace has entrusted to me I think, I don't know, thousands of students I've been teaching what? since 1958. And God has entrusted to my care. I think, who knows, I don't know all, 15 to 20,000 in the classroom. By God's grace, I think those who have defected from the faith are less than five. This represents one of those students and this psalm stumbled him. So, he walked away from his faith when he was at Regent. I never thought he really had faith to tell you the truth. But he had made a profession of faith and he walked away from it. But even in class, I could tell he was somewhat skeptical and I give you his letter, he wanted to depart, argue with me.

I think once you've tasted the things of God and you turn your back on it, I don't think there's any hope for you. I don't think you can crucify the son of God afresh. I don't think you can come back. If we deny him, though we are unfaithful; He abides faithful. But if we deny him or disown him, he will deny and disown us. And John says there is a prayer. I said, for certain sin, which is where you abandoned God after you've accepted him. I say, don't pray for that one. That's how I understand 1 John. Well, I suspect my

poor student is in that state. So, there are certain things where I wouldn't debate and I just see it as a lost cause. If you know it's just going to start a quarrel and this is not going to do any good. The sage tells you drop the matter before it gets worse than the whole damn gets broken and you unleash a flood. I think if you know that a person cannot be corrected and they're just going to come back, don't make it worse. So, you have to use some discernment here to know that's the case. Okay?

We're on page 190 and you could see it's a long psalm. And what I'll do is that same as I did with Psalm 3 and 51, without going into all the notes, all the notes are there. We'll just look at the Psalm and comment on it as we go along. Okay?

So, we begin it's "A Psalm by David" and in this particular psalm, there are all this, all the psalms by David speak of Christ in different ways. They speak of Christ in just by type. He is a type of Christ, that's the King. That's typical. Another kind is this one, where they speak of Christ, he's a type of Christ, but he uses language that is prophetic. He uses language that transcends his own experience and the details of this psalm do not match the life of David, but they match the life of Jesus or the cross particularly. So, these are, typical prophetic psalms. There's only one psalm I think may be purely prophetic and that's Psalm 110. So, mostly it's typology. You have this one, that language is so astounding that it is typical prophetic. He's using language that transcends his own experience.

D. Translation of Psalm 22 [12:26-16:34]

"My God, my God, why have you abandoned me? Why are you so far from saving me, from the words of my roaring? My God. I cry out by day, but you do not answer, by night and I'm not silent. [There's no sensation, no answer]. Yet you are the Holy one, the one enthroned on the praises of Israel. In you are fathers put the trust; they trusted and you delivered them. To you they cried out and were saved; in you they trusted and were not put to shame. But I am a worm and not a man, scorned by mortals, despised by the people. All who see me mock me; they split open their lips. They shake their heads. Commit yourself to I Am; let I Am rescue him. Let him deliver him; surely he delights in

him. Surely, you are the one who brought me out of the womb, The one who caused me to trust at my mother's breast. From the womb I was cast upon you. From my mother's belly you are my God. Do not be far from me, for trouble is near. Surely, there is none to help. Many bulls surround me strong bulls of Bashan encircle me. Lions tearing their prey and roaring open their mouths wide against me. I am poured out like water and all my bones are out of joint. My heart has turned to wax. It is melted away within me. My strength is dried up like a potsherd. And my tongue is made to stick to the roof of my mouth. And you lay me in the dust of death. Surely dogs surround me, a band of evil men encircle me. They bore holes in my hands and my feet. I can count all my bones. People stare and they gloat over me. They distribute my clothes among them and cast lots for my garment, but I Am do not be far off, my help come quickly to help me. Deliver my life from the sword, my precious life and the power of the dogs. Save me from the mouths of the lions answer me from the horns of the wild oxen.

I will declare your name to my brothers; in the congregation I will praise you. Those who fear I Am, praise him. All you seed of Jacob, honor him! Revere him all you seed of Israel! For he is not despised. He is not abhorred the suffering of the afflicted one; He has not hidden his face from him, but when he cried to him for help listened. From you comes my act of praising you in the great assembly. I will fulfill my vows before those who fear you. Let the poor eat and be sated; with those who seek I Am praise him, let your hearts live forever. May all the ends of the earth, remember and turn to the Lord and all the clans of the nations bow down before him, for dominion belongs to the Lord, as ruler over the nations. May all the rich of the earth bow down to him; before him all who go down to the dust will kneel. Those who did not preserve their lives, may their seed serve him. May it be told to the generation about the Lord of all. May they come and proclaim his righteousness to a people yet unborn. May they say, surely he has acted.

E. Motifs of Psalm 22 [16:34-19:24]

I think you could see. This is obviously a lament psalm. It's not a complaint. It's true lament. It has all the motifs again. Notice how it begins with the address "My God,

my God." The lament is a mixture of lament and confidence and praise. And that runs from verses 1 through 10. It's a mixture. It begins with lament and then he moves into confidence and praise. Then you have lament and he moves into confidence and praise. It's a mixture. That's in verses 1 through 10.

Verse 11, I would argue, is a transitional verse that puts that lament together with the petition that will follow "Do not be far from me for trouble is near. Surely there is none to help." Then you get seven verses 12 through 18. You have seven verses 12 to 18 in which he truly laments and describes his situation. Then that's followed by three verses of petition. They are united that lament and petition are united in various ways. That's then after verse 12, you go from verse 12 through verse 21, and you get 10 verses of this lament with petition. I think you could see the shift to praise in verse 22, "I will declare your name to my brothers" and he's in praise. That runs from 22 through 31. So, it falls into three stanzas; 1 through 10, transition 11; 12 through 21, 22 through 31. So, you have 10, 10, 10. The point is in the midst of this horrible situation that he's finds himself in, he's able to compose with great symmetry. His emotions are not out of hand in the lament.

F. First Stanza Ps. 22:1-10 [19:24-29:06]

Well, with that broad viewpoint on it, let's look then at the first stanza, which is a mixture of lament and confidence and praise. That falls into two stanzas; verses 1 through 5 and verses 6 through 10. In the first stanza he is abandoned by God, "My God, my God. Why have you abandoned me?"

In the second stanza he's abandoned by people. "All who see me, mock me, split out the lip." So, he's abandoned by God and he's abandoned by people. "I'm a worm and not a man, scorned by mortals and despised by the people." In the first stanza, he finds his confidence in God's past faithfulness to the fathers. "Yet you're the Holy One, the one" verse three, "the one enthroned on the praises of Israel. In you our fathers put their trust. They trusted and you delivered them."

In the second stanza his confidence is not bolstered by God's past faithfulness to

the fathers, but by God's past faithfulness to he himself, that is verse 9 "you were the one who brought me out of the womb. The one who caused me to trust at my mother's breasts." So our fathers trusted in you and now you cause me to trust. So we have these two stanzas that are cyclical of lament and confidence, lament and confidence. And you could see it's an alternating parallelism, A B A' B'. Yet there's escalation where he's been abandoned by God. He's abandoned by people. He found confidence in his fathers who trusted, and now he finds confidence in himself, in God's past faithfulness to him as he trusted him. He never knew a moment when he didn't trust. It was from his mother's womb. Okay?

So that gives the overview. Now I had 10 verses and now I got five and five. If you look at it, I got two verses of lament, "My God why have you forsaken me," and then three verses of praise. And then it turns around that you have three verses of lament and two verses of confidence. The Psalmist is in total control. He hasn't lost his emotions have not overwhelmed him. He's totally rational. And yet very passionate. It's amazing to compose a psalm like this. It's this one, and this is what Jesus is using on the cross. When he picks up a word out of the psalm, you have to keep in mind the entire psalm. So, this is his fourth word, but he is reciting. I take it this psalm upon the cross. It all fits him precisely because they are mocking him. As we find it "all who see me despise me, they bought me, they say the Lord delighted in him, let him delight in him. They shake their heads." And all of that has picked up exactly. Matthew describes the crucifixion scene in the terms of this psalm. But I think this psalm is predicting what really was at the cross.

So, looking then at verses one through five with these two circles, he says, "My God, my God, why have you abandoned me? Why so far from saving me, from the words of my groaning, my God, I cry out by day, but you do not answer, by night I find no rest." In other words, it seems like all the time, and this would be totally perfect with the Christ. But day and night, constantly, I'm crying out and you seem to have abandoned me in the midst of it. I'm saying that is normative Christian experience as we discussed the psalm. You find them "how long, O Lord?" and you go through those experiences. I said, where

you knock on the door until your knuckles are bloody raw. Nobody opens the door and the lights are out upstairs. That's what he's feeling. So, Christ has been tested in all points as we have been. One of them is the testing where you feel abandoned by God. He went through that experience with us. We're not alone. And wow. He went through it. He was tested with us, yet He did not sin. So, he gives honest expression, but you can see it's with full confidence and it's going to end with praise. It's doxological lament and that's the difference. It fits it perfectly. Verses 3 through 5 has the past faithfulness of God who has a great track record. "Yet you are the Holy One [totally other], the one enthroned on the praises of Israel." God is spirit. And so, it's pictured as we offer up our spiritual praises, God sits enthroned on our praises. Glorious! "To you they cried out and were saved; in you they trusted and were not put to shame."

Now having that first unit he now takes up himself, "But I am a worm." Utterly that is in the eyes of other people. I'm not even treated or thought of as a human being. I don't even know how to push that. But you know on the cross he was so marred he no longer looked human. You got something of that in Mel Gibson's movie "Passion of the Christ" that he no longer looked human he was so marred. That is what Isaiah predicted of him. He was so marred. That he said "I'm not a man, I'm just a worm." Horrible! People ask me if that's really true. I say, I think it was even worse than what I know. There are things about the cross that I've read I don't want even to discuss in public. It is so horrible.

And they mock him verse 7. He's scorned, despised, "all who see me mock me," they can't keep it in, their betrayal, it has to come out. They split open their lips. They shake their heads in mockery. Then they acknowledge he is without sin. "Commit yourself to I Am. Let him rescue him. Let him deliver him. Surely he delights in him." They found no sin in him. And now his own self-confidence from his own experience "Surely you are the one who brought me out of the womb. The one who caused me to trust that my mother's breast." I ask in the notes how different things might have been, if his mother had not been married. He drank the milk of her faith. I still remember nursing

as a child. And I remember, I think I was drinking, not only my mother's milk. I think I was drinking her faith and love and it became part of my being. That's it. "You cause me to trust from the womb. I was cast upon you. From my mother's belly, you are my God." So, he never knew a moment without faith. I know many people who never knew a moment, who grew up in a Christian home, Christian faith, and never had a moment of unbelief. I don't think I ever had a moment of real unbelief growing up. There was a point where I recognized I was a sinner in need of a savior.

G. Lament Ps. 22:12ff [29:06-31:32]

Now he moves to the lament itself and he uses, and this too falls into two cycles. First of all, he describes the enemies in zoomorphic terms, 12, they are bulls 13; they are lions. And then after two, he comes back to his own experience. He says, "I am poured out like water. My heart is turned to wax, my strength is dried up." And then after those verses, he turns again to the zoomorphic imagery and now the enemy is likened to dogs. And then he turns to his own personal experience. "I could count all my bones." So now using these terms, when he says, "many bulls surround me strong bulls Bashan." They are extremely rich, well fed and exceedingly strong. He's no match for strong bulls. Can you imagine yourself being surrounded by strong bulls breathing down on you? That's how he sees the enemy all around him. At the cross, the Roman soldiers, the leadership, they were like strong bulls surrounding him. They're like lions tearing their prey and roaring opening their mouths wide against me. And himself, "I am poured out like water, all my bones are out of joint," and this is exactly what happens on the cross. What happened on the cross was not only the mockery, but on the cross, the bones get out of joint. And because the bones out of joint, it causes asphyxiation, a person on the cross dies of asphyxiation. They can't breathe and because they can't breathe and they're gasping, they're thirsty. This is a perfect picture of the cross. So, "all my bones out of joint," the perfect picture of the cross. And a metaphor is "I'm like water." Therefore, he has no longer a strong heartbeat. His heart is like wax, "It is melted within me" as he's going into death itself.

H. Suffering of Christ [31:32-34:38]

All of this is very descriptive of a death by crucifixion, which was unknown in David's day because you stoned people to death. He's pictured something quite differently here with all the bones out of joint. He's thirsty and it's not a picture of stoning. "And my strength is dried up like a potsherd. And my tongue is made to stick to the roof of my mouth as you lay me into the dust of death." So, he's going into death with these animals surrounding him, tearing him apart, so to speak, and bulls around him. As he goes and all his bones are out of joint and so forth. Now his strength is dried up and he can't breathe.

The only time I've ever felt that in my tongue was made to stick to the roof of my mouth. Often when I'm reading scripture, I try to picture it from my own experience. I was leading the family to Iraq in the middle of the summer. July is no time to go to Iraq. I never saw the thermometer go below 50 degrees, Celsius, 120 degrees the whole time we were there. It's extreme heat. We went out to a place called Hotra, and that was the very limits of the Roman empire in the extreme East. There they fought against the Parthians and I was supposed to lecture on it and I began to lecture and I couldn't, my lips stuck together. My tongue just stuck to the palette of my mouth and to everybody's relief, I couldn't talk. And that's how it feels.

And then he goes back to the dogs, "unclean dogs, a band of the evil men encircle me. And then they bore holes in my hands and in my feet." Now there's some textual problems there, but that is almost certainly the original text. And then he describes, "I can count all my bones, people stare. They gloat over me and they distribute my clothes among them and cast lots for his basic garment." And we talked about that in poetry, which is exactly what happened at the foot of the cross.

This is an amazing prophecy, a person pictured dying by crucifixion and then boring holes in his hands and his feet, and then distributing his garments. There was nothing like that in David's life and totally fulfilled. This is why Jesus said, "it is finished." He totally fulfilled the Scriptures and the Scriptures speak of him to validate our faith.

I. Petition and Lament Woven Together [34:38-36:01]

Now comes the petition. And he's asking even in the midst where God feels far off to reverse it, "but you I Am do not be far off, my help come quickly to help me. And then what he does is he reverses the imagery bore in his hands and his feet and he just goes back with the sword and the dogs and the lions and the wild oxen. He just goes backward in a chiasm tying together his petition with his lament. So, you had, I mean, his lament with his petition. So, he had seven of these petitions with these zoomorphic images. He picks them all up into his petition and reverses it.

"Do not be far off to deliver my life from the sword, my precious life." The only one I have all of us have just one. "From the power of the dogs, save me from the mouth of the lions. Answer me from the horns of the wild oxen." It pictures him not hanging on the horns, but the wild oxen, these bulls, having their heads lowered too with their horns all around him. That's how I picture it.

J. Praise Breaks Out [36:01-40:29]

Almost with the transition of a resurrection, all of a sudden, he's praising God in the midst of it, just as suddenly. The praise falls into two sections. First of all, he's going to praise the Lord to the Jewish people, "to my brothers," and really to the believing Jews. That's in verses 22 and that's for five verses through verse 26. Then having declared the praise to the brothers that in turn is going to echo out in verse 27 to the ends of the earth. So, it begins with his own praise to his brothers and they're going to eat and then that in turn will lead to all the ends of the earth. So, you have five verses of praise within the congregation, five verses of praise to the ends of the earth. Again, you get a five and a five. So he says, in verse 22, "I will declare your name." That is the name I Am, who lives eternally, who has this great act. That God is not only eternal, but he's becoming by his future, by all of his saving acts, he becomes more and more clear to us as to who he is and what he does. "In the congregation, I will praise you." And so he addresses those who fear the Lord in the congregation that could include Gentiles, but it's mainly to his own people. "You who fear, I Am praise him. All you seed of Jacob, honor him. Revere

him all you seed of Israel," as he addresses his own people, that they may have, he came first to the Jew and then to the Greek. So, he's giving his testimony to his own people. And that's how it was that he gave it when he was risen from the dead. He said to the women, "go tell my brothers" and he fulfilled it exactly.

This praise comes from God and using the language of the Old Testament, it'd be only appropriate that they would have a meal. Probably on the cross, Jesus said, when you answer my prayer, as it were, we will all, it's going to become the Messiah's banquet. We'll eat and be glad. So, he says to them, "let the poor eat and the afflicted be sated. Let those who seek I Am, praise him. Let your hearts live forever" because of the resurrection you have hope. Let your heart live forever. In a sense, we never die. Then to the ends of the earth, it's going to be in space universally. "May all the ends of the earth remember and turn to the Lord. All the clans of the nations bow down before you. For dominion belongs to I Am as ruler over the nations." So, it has universal application that all will hear this story of this king, who suffered and triumphed. It's going to go to all nations who will become part of his dominion as it is to the earth. It's going to affect all classes of society. "May all the rich of the earth bow down to him, before him all who go down to the dust will kneel those who did not preserve their lives." Not only universal in space, but universal in time that this testimony of what this Psalmist has experienced of having gone into the dust of death and now coming out of death itself and giving praise.

K. Next Generations [40:29-44:00]

It's going to be passed on from generation to generation. Here we are at the end of history, as far as we've come in Houston, Texas, and we still celebrate it and our children will celebrate it. "May their seed serve him, may it be told to their generation about the Lord of all. May they come then proclaim his righteousness." We've already commented on righteous "to a people yet unborn." And what do they say? He has acted. He has done it. This is the testimony. What a heritage we have! What scriptures! We have a more sure word as the hymn writer said, a more sure word of prophecy because we see the fulfillment of it.

I think the best illustration of the psalm. If you heard the story, tell me it's the story of the Duke Wellington after the battle of Waterloo. And I'd heard the story years ago, that after the battle of Waterloo, they wanted to communicate to England, the battle and Wellington's victory. They communicated it by semaphore, across the English Channel. So, you would have the lights and this is how they communicated those days. You would have flags or whatever, lights and candles, whatever. They would communicate there by semaphore across the English Channel and from Calais to Dover. This people in Dover would see the message and then they would send out messengers throughout the Island and that's how they got their news. The story is told that after the battle of Waterloo and the message was being told, what it said was "Wellington defeated" and a fog set in and that's all they saw. And that was the message to the British Isles, "Wellington defeated." I actually I was in Victoria one time at an inn. Elaine and I took a little vacation there. And there was this picture on the wall and it showed a basic armory and a blacksmith with his hearth and his bellows. Then he had on a blacksmith's apron and there was a shiny new cannon in the front that he had just made. And there was a messenger there who was reading to him and you could see the astonishment and the gasping on the blacksmith's face. So, I asked the proprietress tell me about that story. And she told me this is when the message went out and the blacksmith heard "Wellington defeated." But when the fog lifted the full message was "Wellington defeated the enemy."

That's the story of my psalm. You get up through it up through the cross "Christ defeated." Then Easter Sunday, "Christ defeated the enemy," our greatest enemy death itself. We are on holy ground.

This Dr. Bruce Waltke in his teaching on the book of Psalms. This is session number 16, Petition Psalms, Lament, Psalm 22. [44:00]

Psalms

[\[Jump to TOC\]](#)

Session 17: Petition Psalms, Communal Lament, Psalm 44

By Dr. Bruce Waltke

This is Dr. Bruce Waltke and his teaching on the book of Psalms. This is session number 17, Communal Lament, Psalm 44.

A. Opening Prayer [00:23-2:09]

Let's begin with prayer together. Father, we, by your grace, would take our shoes off our feet. As we recognize that we're on very holy ground in your sacred Word. We would humble ourselves before you and recognize our uncleanness. Thank you that in your holiness, you purified us. You sanctified us. You made us your holy nation, your holy people. You consecrated us. I thank you Lord, for the refreshing of my friends who have come, each different one comes, and listens to your Word. They're an encouragement to me. I thank you for them. Thank you for Bill Mounce and this unique opportunity for students around the world to dig into your Word with some depth and savor its meat. Hopefully they'll find it as honey sweeter than the honey comb and more healing than honey. You know every need. Meet our need in presenting your Word today in Christ's name. Amen.

B. Review: Hermeneutics [2:09-4:25]

All right, our psalm today is going to be Psalm 44 and I'm going to turn there in your notes. There's I don't know on your syllabus. I give a page that goes with it, but anyway, it's on page, 222 of your notes. So, to orient ourselves again, that we're are looking at different approaches. After we gave a lecture on hermeneutics that I think you can now see how important that is, where we said that any object has to generate the

appropriate method of study. We noted that the Scripture has three aspects to it. There is the all Scripture inspired of God. There is God who is the ultimate author and he is without error. He is perfection. He inspired the human writer and we have this wonderful mixture of the Word of God and perfectly the word of man. They come together in what Wolff called his concursive theory, fully the word of God, fully the word of man.

Then there is, and we have to come with sympathy. We have to come with faith. We're meeting God in Spirit. So, to meet God in Spirit, we must come in the Spirit, to have a relationship with him and so that his Spirit can speak to us. So, that was fundamental. And we saw the text itself. The text is subject to scientific investigation with laws of philology and so forth and word study, and grammar, and historical background, and all of that we're doing in the course. We're able to do textual work, but we must never forget the spiritual aspect of it that ultimately we must come with the Holy Spirit to the Word of God.

C. Review: Historical Approach [4:25-5:00]

Then we moved into different approaches. We looked at the Historical Approach and we saw the dominant person in the Psalter is the king. In fact, we're going to see it today in these psalms. I think the average person reading it doesn't realize that the Psalms are mostly about the king and Israel is identified with the king and they're about Christ. We are identified with Christ and praying these prayers with him. That's a little different way, I think, than we normally read the Psalms.

D. Review: Form Critical Approach [5:00-9:58]

Then we got into the Form Critical Approach in which we noticed that we can group psalms into different kinds of psalms. So, there are four different types of Psalms. There's the hymn of praise. There's the song of grateful praise. Then there is the petition or lament psalms. And fourthly, there are instructions psalms that along the way an editor puts a psalm to encourage who's ever reading through these, working with the Psalms to be encouraged to be ethical because, hymns without ethics and life is detestable to God.

We're constantly being reminded of the need to be righteous. We defined righteousness in the Psalter as a complete dependence upon God, it's not adherence to the law, but rather its dependence upon a God who lives out the law in us. The righteous are those who are concerned about community and they do not avenge themselves. The righteous are dependent upon God and they're often depicted as the poor, as the afflicted and the dependent, the lowly. So, these are the petitions. We have to be righteous when we come in praise to God, hence these instruction psalms are what I'm talking about.

Then we focused on, and then the third kind, there was a praise and a grateful praise and a petition Psalms. And then there is instruction psalms. So, we went through the hymns of praise and we saw their motifs and what's involved. And we got into the doxological theology that in their songs of praise, God is using their songs of praise in order to teach us theology about himself. We looked through this wonderful data about God's sublime attributes that they are celebrating in the reality of life.

Then we looked at, and then our approach has been to look at it broadly and then specifically. So, after the songs of praise we've took up, I think what were they? We did Psalm 8 and Psalm 100. Those were two songs of praise that we considered. Our song of grateful praise was Psalm 92. And there were many other Psalms, but 15, but we did one and the Psalmist has conquered his enemy and it's an assurance that the righteous will flourish. We looked at that in Psalm 92. So that was a song of grateful praise. Then we got into petition Psalms and we noticed that they're very concerned about the enemy. And 47 of the 50 petition Psalms make reference to the enemy. It's really a spiritual warfare because the enemy is the wicked, which is the opposite of the righteous. So, instead of being dependent upon God, the wicked are dependent upon themselves and they will avenge themselves rather than looking to God. They are self-absorbed rather than loving God and loving their neighbor. In essence, they're selfish, self-serving in what they do. And this is the wicked in the Psalms.

So, we talked about that and also we talked about imprecatory prayers where the Psalmist will pray that they will be judged for the wrong that they did. We saw that those

prayers are ethical, but they're not appropriate for the church today because this is the age of grace. This is not the age of judgment. We wrestled with that. Then we took off as our method is to look at it very broadly. Then we centered on individual laments. And we looked at the very first one, which was Psalm 3. Then we then yesterday looked at the great messianic psalm of Jesus on the cross, which is an individual lament. I think that's where we ended.

D. Communal Lament -- Psalm 44 [9:58-11:18]

We have not done a communal lament. And in your notes, I've given you two communal laments, Psalm 90 and Psalm 44. But I think I'll limit myself to just the one, Psalm 44. And that's where we are. So, I think we now have a context of where we are in our course. It's a psalm you could call it "A Prayer for Martyrs." These Psalms of Lament give us a theology that enable us to go through suffering. We noticed that the dominant mood of the psalm is lament. A third of the Psalter are these lament psalms. It's a dominant mood. We noticed from Professor Mobley, that suffering is not marginal. It's not something we put behind us. Suffering is absolutely essential to the spiritual life. So, these psalms teach us a lot about suffering and how to relate to suffering.

E. Deserved and Undeserved Suffering [11:18-16:54]

It might be helpful to distinguish between deserved sufferings and undeserved sufferings, because we don't have too much of a problem with deserved sufferings. By deserved sufferings I mean that we are punished for violating some law. We all understand that. So, if I exceed the speed limit, I might feel the anguish of seeing flashing red lights in my rearview mirror. I think maybe, a more, you're more pious than I am, but I suspect most have had that experience of flashing red lights in your rearview mirror. You not only have the anxiety of the policemen, but then you might feel the financial pinch of being fined a couple of hundred dollars than having your insurance penalized. So, we understand that deserved sufferings are where you have violated some law. The other side of it though, and so there are some what we call these penitential psalms, like

Psalm 51, we looked at and that is, it's for deserved suffering. In his case, the suffering was really his conscience. He couldn't live with that burden on him and he needed salvation from his guilt. Also, he was under a sentence of death, but he had submitted himself to a sentence of death. We saw the amazing grace of God in deserved suffering and God forgiving David.

Undeserved sufferings are when we have violated no law. So, you haven't violated a law and all of a sudden you see flashing red lights in your rearview mirror, you've done nothing wrong. Then you're penalized and you know it's unjust. It's unfair and that's undeserved suffering. That's how the Psalmists are. Well, there are two kinds of undeserved sufferings. Undeserved sufferings are of two kinds. They can be because you're innocent or because you're doing good as a missionary might be martyred. So, it's one thing, if it's very unjust, if the policeman stops me, fines me, when I've done nothing wrong. I've violated no law. It's just unjust, but he does it.

But let us push it on the other side, that it is because I'm doing good. So, let's suppose I stopped to allow a crippled person to cross in front of me. And in that act, now the policeman stops me and gives me a ticket and penalizes me because I'm doing good. That's extreme. So that's what we have in the Psalter we have the innocent suffering. But then it goes beyond that as in Psalm 44, they are dealing with actually, because you could see this at verse 22, if you have that, "Yet it is for your sake we face death all day long. We're considered like sheep to be slaughtered." This is undeserved suffering for doing good. They are suffering because they are serving God. Do you recognize that verse? Yes, Paul, he uses it in Romans chapter eight. And he picks that right up. See, I'm saying I think Christ and the apostles had memorized the Psalter. I'm amazed at how Paul and the apostles can just pick out these verses. This is a unique verse where you have, "for your sake we face death all day long." He's saying that's true of the apostolic community because they were doing good and preaching the gospel. And because Peter healed the lame man and carried on the works of Jesus, Peter was put in jail and eventually they ended up as martyrs and that's worse. So, this is really undeserved suffering because

you're doing good.

So, using the analogy of the policemen, I tried to help us understand the different kinds of sufferings from deserved sufferings to undeserved and the undeserved to distinguish between the innocent and those who are actually doing good, like missionaries. They suffer because they are doing good. So, this is a psalm for martyrs and it gives them truths to live by.

Unless we have these truths, to live by when we believe God is just, and we go through this experience of unjust suffering, whether innocent or because we're doing good, we're in danger of making shipwreck of our faith. Where's God? Why is it when God is just, God is good and here I am suffering? There are people who make shipwreck of their faith because they don't know how to handle that. The Psalmist himself faces that he almost lost his faith. You could see that in Psalm 73, if you want to turn there with me. That opens up the second book of the Psalter.

F. Psalm 44 and Undeserved Suffering [16:54-18:44]

This is a psalm by Asaph. He says, and you see, he starts off with he doesn't deny God. There's always praise. He starts off with a note of praise. "Surely God is good to Israel." So, whatever, He acts beneficially and He acts in a style that's beautiful. And he affirms that. But "to those who are pure in heart, but as for me, my feet had almost slipped," that is, off the ladder of faith. "I had nearly lost my foothold, for I envied the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked." He describes what they're like. Then he says in verse 12, this is what the wicked are like: "They're always free of care, they go on to amassing wealth, surely in vain I have kept my heart pure, and I've washed my hands in innocence." And because of that, because of the prosperity of the wicked and his own suffering in his case, innocent, not because he was doing good, but he says in verse two, "I almost slipped." I almost lost my foothold. I almost left the path of faith and righteousness. He makes an honest confession. What happens to him, which it is its own study. Maybe in this course later on, I'll do Psalm 73, he goes into the sanctuary and then he sees their end and he gets a total picture of it. That's what happens in Psalm 73.

G. Pilot not Trusting in a Cloud Analogy [18:44-22:28]

So when we go through these times of undeserved suffering, we're in danger of losing our faith and just walking off the path. If you saw the movie "Miracles from Heaven," this woman when her daughter had this, what appeared to be a, fatal ailment. She left. She said, I could no longer believe in God. That's a not unusual thing. Moody Institute used to put out science pictures. I remember one in particular, I don't know what it had to do with science, but, they had a dialogue between a pilot and he was a novice. I think one of the first times he flew solo and he is in correspondence with the controllers at, I think, Colorado Springs Airport. Everything on the tape is going normal. They stay on the beam and you run the right altitude. You have the right, everything's fine. They are assuring him, everything is okay. All of a sudden, he says, I'm in a cloud. I can't see where I am. And they said, that's fine. Just keep going. You'll be all right. You'll come out of the cloud. But in that cloud when he lost visual contact, he panicked. And the next thing you hear on the tape, I'm in a spin. Then they say to him, let go of the stick, the plane will right itself. He says, I can't and I'm in a spin. He's in panic mode at this point. The control tower assures him. This happens three or four times each time he's crying out and panic because he'd lost visual contact. He's in this cloud, he's afraid. The last time he says, I can't, and that's the end of the tape. He was shipwrecked because he lost visual contact.

And I thought to myself, that is a picture of the life of faith. When we lose rational contact; we can't see where we are. It doesn't make any sense. That's when we're in danger of crashing and people do. What we have to do when we're in a cloud and we lose, in the metaphor, rational contact, we don't understand what God is doing. What we have to do is switch to the control panel of our instruments. We have to fly by instrument at that point. What the Psalms give us are truths to live by. We have to fly by instrument through this time where we've lost rational contact. It doesn't make any sense, but there are truths we can lay hold of.

Psalm 44, like all these psalms give us truths to lay hold of. It's kind of the

instrument panel by which we can guide our ship through the crises of life. So, that's how I read the psalm. As we'll read it, think to yourself, what's enabling this Psalmist as he's going through undeserved sufferings for doing good, why does he not make shipwreck? The Psalm ends up within the Psalter and at the end of the psalm his situation is not resolved. There hasn't been an answer yet, as we would normally think of an answer.

H. Translation of Psalm 44: Maskil and Selah [22:28-28:55]

So let's read this Psalm. To page 222, It's "Of the sons of Korah, a maskil," which would mean, "making prudent." I don't know why we have several songs, marked, maskil, because all the psalms make us prudent. So, I think, I really don't know what this word means, I know what it means etymologically, but I don't know why it's uniquely this psalm because every psalm is a maskil as far as I'm concerned. So therefore, I don't understand. There must be something else going on here, but we don't know. There are words in the Psalms we don't know what they mean. Most of these are technical terms, we don't really know what they mean.

By the way, we don't know what Selah means either. The way you normally would study a word like selah, you might go to the ancient versions, like the Septuagint or whatever, the Latin or the Targum. I don't think they knew what it meant either because they translated it, "everlasting." I think they may have been reading a different word, the word, that's nitzak means that, not selah. So, and then you look to the rabbis, can they help us out? They don't know what it means. And then you might look to cognate languages today and scholarly work. Does anybody know what selah means? 60 different definitions have been proposed in the literature and there's no consensus. So, I conclude, we don't know. At this point we can't know. So, I'll let it go. I don't know why people say they're meant to pause to heighten the glories or something like that. They do seem to be at pauses, but some occur right in the middle of the verse. I don't understand to pause in the middle of verse. So, I really don't know what selah means. In the NIV, we didn't translate it in 1984, because it was a non-meaningful word. Maybe a word for the musician. But we were now going to put it back in because it's in the text, but understand

nobody knows what it means. All right. So that's the word maskil. I don't know what that means for sure.

Translation: "We have heard with our ears, O God. Our ancestors have told us, what you did in their days and days long ago, with your hand you drove out the nations and planted our ancestors. You crushed the peoples and made our ancestors flourish," by the way, notice the parallelism. I mean you read in parallelism and notice how they are related. Notice 2a "you drove out," [notice the escalation] in 2b, "you crushed." Notice the development from "planted" to "flourishing." You could see what's going on there. When you put on the lens of reading poetry, you begin to see how it's being escalated and intensified as you read through it. So, I just noticed that. I'm just encouraging when you read in your Psalms that note this parallelism, and it can be rich to meditate upon it. "It was not by their sword" verse three. "It was not by their sword 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. You are my King and my God, who decrees victories for Jacob, through you we pushed back our enemies, through your name we trample our foes. I put no trust in my bow, my sword does not bring me victory. But you give us victory over our enemies. You put our adversaries to shame. In God we make our boasts all day long, and we will praise your name forever. But now you have rejected and humbled us, you no longer go out with our armies. You made us retreat before the enemy and our adversaries have plundered us. You gave us up to be devoured like sheep and have scattered us among the nations. You sold your people for a pittance gaining nothing from their sale. You have made us a reproach to our neighbors, the scorn and derision of those who are around us. You've made us a byword among the nations, and the people shake their heads at us. I live in disgrace all day long, and my face is covered with shame at the taunts of those who reproach and revile me because of the enemy who is bent on revenge. All of this came upon us, though we had not forgotten you. We had not been false to your covenant. Our hearts had not turned back. Our feet had not strayed from your path. But you crushed us, and made us a haunt for jackals. You covered us over with deep

darkness. If we had forgotten the name of our God or spread out our hands to a foreign God, would not God have discovered it, since he knows the secrets of the heart. Yet for your sake we face death all day long. We are considered as sheep for the slaughter. Awake, Lord, why do you sleep? Rouse yourself. Do not reject us forever. Why do you hide your face and forget our misery and oppression. We are brought down to the dust, our bodies, cling to the ground, rise up and help us, rescue us because of your unfailing love. For the director of music, to the tune of "Lilies." That's the psalm.

I. Motifs of Psalm 44 [28:55-34:45]

Now we've been in form discussion and motifs, and I think you can divide the Psalm and into these motifs. You have a direct address. He's talking to God. "O God." Then I think you could see, well, where would you put the confidence and praise as you read the psalm? How many verses where do you see confidence and praise in the psalm? One through eight, right. We'll come back to that. Actually, what we have here in one through eight, the verse one in the Hebrew, if you looked at your Hebrew, you could see, I didn't lay it out of the page. It's a quatrain. There are basically one A B and two A B's in that particular one. The same is true in verse three.

All right, then what do we get after, and I think you would see that's praise. "We will boast in your name all day long." I think also it functions as confidence. "Our fathers trusted in you and you gave them the land." So, I think you could see it's also. So, I put it together as confidence and praise. So, what happens then in verse nine? Yeah. That's where you get the lament and this may be considered a complaint as well. How far now, what you have here in our camp, there's a new motif that you don't get in many songs and that lament goes through a verse 16, and then you get a new motif, which is unique. Well, this is what makes it the suffering for doing good, that next step, because here it is protest, and you have a new motif of protest and that runs from 17 through -- How far would you say there is the protest and where does petition begin? Beginning at 23. You begin "awake O Lord" and that begins the petition. So, I think once you have the lens of understanding, you begin to discretize and understand the composition of how it's being

put together. Now, in addition to that, we have in verses one through eight, we have the confidence and praise and verses 9 through 16, we have the lament, and 17 through 22 we have the protest, and 23 through 26, we have the petition.

Now what's interesting. Here is the structure of the psalm. It seems to me, there is such in all of these psalms with all of their emotions, anguish of heart. There's always this tremendous symmetry and structure that shows they're not panicked like the pilot we talked about whose emotions took over his reason. Their emotions have not taken over. They're cogently thinking. And they think clearly.

This particular psalm, I said, there are two lines in verse one, and these two lines of verse three, which makes it in verses one through eight in the praise and confidence, we actually have 10 lines of Hebrew poetry. Then in verses nine through 16, we have eight lines of Hebrew poetry. If you counted out 9 through 16, I hope it's eight. Then in the protest, you have six lines of Hebrew poetry. That would be 17 through 22. Then in the petition, we have four lines of Hebrew poetry. So, you go ten lines, eight lines, six lines, four lines. I don't think that's accidental. I think it's showing this Psalmist is in full control of what he's doing. All of his anguish and he's boasting in God and all of that, his emotions have not destroyed his ability to think. I see serenity and composure. Something else is going on proposed by I don't know if he's still living Ridderbos at Free University Amsterdam. He says, it's in the shape of a ziggurat. I give you a picture of a ziggurat on page 224. There's a ziggurat. You can see it has a big base. Then you have another plateau on top of that. Then you have the pavilion on the top. That's where the prayer was made was that the very top. This Psalm seems to be constructed like a ziggurat, one section being built upon the other. The climactic moment is the petition at the end. My friend did this for me and he shows here Bruce the poet, climbing up the ziggurat.

J. Structure of Psalm 44 [34:45-41:04]

So that gives us an overall outline of the psalm. And I think when you understand motifs, then we can begin to do a little better work. It's not that we didn't understand the psalm. We can use the Psalm as Paul did, but I think we can take it just another step. And

that's what this course is about. It's a bit more advanced.

Student: I've been taking this home and been reading it and it's really interesting when you read through all the stuff that you have provided here. How it really amplifies these psalms and all the background material Bruce that you've put together. It's just precious.

Thank God he should take somebody like me who didn't even know there were seminaries and make me a professor doing this kind of work. It's just amazing grace.

Student: You know that context yesterday you know over in Samuel where you went through the whole story of David and all those players and all those things it just made Psalm 51 explode right before our eyes.

Bless you, bless all of you because you have a heart for it and you celebrate and love the truth. That's why it's a privilege. I could have taught in a university but I didn't want to teach in a university. I wanted to teach with God's people. I wanted to prepare pastors and people who love the Word. I didn't want to teach those who wouldn't spiritually empathize with it. That was not my calling. This is my calling is to feed the church that's my shepherding. There's where I ended up. Thank you for the encouragement. Trouble with that is I know how much more I could be doing. This is not just pious talk I realize I will really say having done what I did I didn't do all that well that's how I honestly feel. Thanks. Any way.

All right now, furthermore as far as structure is concerned it falls each of these ten, eight, six and four, fall into two halves. You can see that in the praise and confidence section in the first five lines which is verses 1 through 3. He's looking in the past and why he has confidence from the past. In the next five lines in verses 4 through 8 he expresses his own confidence and we move into the present. So, you start with verse one "we have heard with our ears our God, our ancestors have told us what you did in their days in days long ago." But then it shifts to verse 9 "You are my king my God, and through you we push back enemies" and he takes them into the present. So, he goes from the past to the present. You have five and five. I don't think it is accidental. In the lament section in

verses 9 through 16 those eight lines also divide into two halves. The first four deal with his defeat on the battlefield "You rejected and humbled us and don't go out with our armies, you made us retreat before the enemy." In the next four lines, he talks about his humiliation, how he feels he has been humiliated because he represents the living God and he's been defeated and he feels ashamed. Again, Jesus must have felt all of that when he was on the cross and when they shamed him and rebuked him and so forth, but he knew who he was.

So, the 10 goes into a five and a five. The eight goes into a four and a four. And the protest in verses 17 through 22 is you have the protests that we were faithful. We haven't turned back. This is undeserved suffering. We haven't violated your law. So, we know it's undeserved suffering. So, you've got three in lines where he says that. Then he has three lines that prove it, that's in verses 20 through 22. In other words, if there is any fault, if it is deserved suffering, then he expects a prophet to stand up and say, "you are the man" and you're guilty. So, as in the case of Joshua at Ai and he pours out his face, he's humble. He's on the ground. They've gone down in defeat and God says a prophetic word, "there is sin in the camp." But there's no prophetic word here. There's no condemnation. It's simply presenting us with the reality of what saints must go through. And they must live by faith. So, this must have been a great comfort to the apostles. All of whom are going down into a martyr's death and were preaching the word of God. So, has this king and his army go down. So, it's a great word of comfort to us. That's why I call it a Martyr's Prayer, giving us truths to live by in our suffering.

The petition also falls into two parts. You have the questions, "Why do you sleep? Why do you hide your face?" And then the reality, "We're brought down to the dust. Rise up, help us, rescue us because of your unfailing love. So that's the overall structure of the Psalm. And even the way you have like a four and four that will divide into a two and a two and so forth. It's just and the six goes into a three and a three and so forth.

K. Christians and Suffering [41:04-46:01]

Student: Bruce, do you think that in our day and age with prosperity and

materialism and wealth, you know, access to great medical stuff, we have a misunderstanding of suffering?

I really do. I don't think, I think part of the problem is we don't risk ourselves enough to suffer. So, I think that's, true of me. I don't say that. I mean, I think that I don't fully enter into the sufferings of Christ because I don't risk myself. I like my comfort zone. So, I think that's part of the reason for it. I think there's been a wrong emphasis on health, wealth, and prosperity.

We celebrate Easter, but we don't celebrate Good Friday. Everybody's happy about Easter, but Good Friday is not a dominant note. And I'm in my new tradition. We have Lent for 40 days in which you deny yourself to enter into suffering. For 40 days you live in Lent; and for 50 days you'll live in Pentecost which I think is helpful. So, I'm coming out of my older tradition. I never that it belonged to some kind of Roman Catholic where I wasn't, hadn't been. So, I didn't identify with it. I've never had an Ash Wednesday, but now I go to Ash Wednesday to remind myself of my death and the darkness that life can be. You live in Lent where you suffer. I think that is spiritually good. I've learned a spiritual good, and I'm learning that the liturgy has spiritual values that I had missed entirely. So, I think that would help. And that's going to keep you from that wealth, health and prosperity sort of thinking. Because you really, constantly, I mean, if you fast and you get hungry, you don't have an idea of health, wealth and prosperity. You recognize it's delayed and you're looking forward to Sunday when you can celebrate again because you fast on Friday, but you don't fast on Sunday sort of a thing. So, I think that whole liturgy has some value to it.

Student: We're just praying that anything that disturbs us that it would go away. We want it to go away We want it to go away, Lord. It's undeserved, deserved or whatever that he's dealing with He will do what is best. Right?

And it gives us the hope that, and he will answer prayer in this life, but we know, and this is why without faith, you cannot please, God. We live for Easter Sunday and Easter Sunday is beyond death. We live for the eternal city. We don't live for this city.

We live for the eternal city "who for the hope, that was set before him endured the cross." And that's Paul he's, he's enduring everything. And he says if there's no resurrection, we are fools for Christ.

That verse that's so difficult where people abuse it, where he says "and why would they be baptized for the dead?" And this is where people make a mistake by bad exegesis so you have the Mormons and they baptized for the dead thinking that somebody else can be baptized and take the place of the dead and give them a baptism. What Paul was talking about that here you have people who are dying and suffering for Christ and they're martyrs. Why would anybody be baptized to take their place? That's what he means by that. So, the only reason you would be baptized and identify with that and take their place and you become a martyr is because, you know there's something beyond death, even as it was before for the martyrs before you. So, we have to live in light of resurrection and not of this world.

Appreciate it. I appreciate your interaction because you prayed that I'd be refreshing you, and you all refresh me, by God's grace.

Student: That was our Sunday morning prayers to be refreshed. And I have been refreshed in every way. We'll drop it there, but it's been great refreshment.

L. Essential Lessons of Psalm 44 [46:01-48:13]

All right, now let's just go through it. Now that we have a good idea where we're going in this psalm. We've covered I think some of the essential elements. Let me just ask. Then I said that when we go through times of undeserved suffering and we lose rational contact and we likened it to a pilot who finds himself in a cloud and he loses visual contact and he can crash his plane and he has to learn to fly by instruments. So, I'm saying, what are the instruments? What's our instrument panel telling us that enables us to fly the craft through this time we lose rational contact. When we see things so unfair and so unjust. So what are some truths that came through to you as you're reading through it and we'll come back, but just think about it for a moment.

Student: Do you want answers?

Yes, I do.

Student: Are you talking about from this psalm. So, as I'm just looking over the psalm in general, I would say when you were in that place, the confidence Scriptures, I mean the confidence sections.

Yeah. What do you get out of the confidence section? You said something very significant there. In the confidence section, what gave him confidence? And you said, the Scriptures. That's what he did. "Our fathers have told us," and we beat up on the fathers because they didn't teach the next generation, but there were some who must have passed on. So, what it does is "our fathers have told us," and it is the Scriptures and that history that is sustaining him. Because as I say, God has sustained his church through all of these martyrdoms and all of this confusion and all of this persecution, we're still here.

M. References to Joshua's Victory [48:13-55:01]

And he goes right back to Joshua. Now this has to be written before the exile, because he's still a king in battle. This doesn't happen after the exile. So, this has to be written before 600 BC. Joshua is about 1200 B.C. So, it's already 600 years old or less, but anyway. It's already, in other words, we go back to Joshua 2,600 years ago, the saints were ready going back to Joshua. So, it's a common source of strength, spiritual strength to us. So, I think Melony that that's a wonderful answer that he went back to Scripture, but he didn't have the full, I mean, and we have the whole revelation of God. And so, we have it even greater than Joshua. We have the true Joshua and he conquered death. So, it is that tradition that can help to sustain us, the tradition of the saints throughout the ages. Then you have the great roll call of faith in Hebrews chapter 11 of all those different ones who had that great roll call of faith. What I find so interesting there, I mentioned about you have the first one is Abel, and the second one is Enoch. And the third one is Noah. And Abel, believed God and what happened to him? Murdered, martyred from the blood of Abel to Zechariah the son of Berekiah, which was the last we've mentioned, the Bible. Abel was murdered. If there is no resurrection, then Cain won. Abel see that text is assuming God is just, and the only way it can be just it's had to be after his death. That's

the very first story in the Bible where the righteous have to die. And that's the first story. That's incredible to me, that's what you start. So, it really shows you that they had hoped something that may have been vague and not clear until the resurrection, but in their hearts they knew who their God was. Well, that's his response.

The next one is Enoch. What happened to him? Translated, he didn't die. So, the first one dies, the second one didn't die. What happened to Noah? Everybody else died. So, these are the first grade heroes of faith. So, what's normative? I would like to think it's Enoch. And if I were sadistic, I might go with Noah, but I don't like Abel. So you can't judge life by the consequences because some people are martyred and some people are translated and some people go through a flood. The only thing they all have in common is faith and they've pleased, God. God was pleased, in his own sovereignty, that he would reward their faith differently, but they all end up beyond death within Enoch and are with God. We'll all end up there.

All right. So, it's a great history that we have behind us here. It's giving us a history that they're all kind of experiencing. So, they go back to Joshua that wonderful experience. And that's what we're reading about. "We have heard with our ears" and somebody had to tell them "our ancestors have told us." So, thank God, as I put in the notes, for parents who are not tongue tied and could speak to their children and communicate. They told them what they did in their days. He says already, this is before the exile in days long ago. Amazing! "With your hand, you drove out the nations. And you planted our ancestors. And you crushed the peoples and made our ancestors flourish." And we commented on the parallelism and how that works. But he's looking back, obviously at Joshua when they took the land that God had given them because the time of grace for the Canaanite had ended and the time of judgment had come. And God replaced them with his holy people. "He crushed them." And, by contrast, "he made the ancestors flourish." Then he says, "It was not by their sword, that they won the land, nor did their own arm bring them the victory. It was your right hand, your arm and the light of your face for you loved them." So, Joshua had a sword, but there was also tremendous

power. I mean, with Joshua, you have the walls of Jericho falling flat. That was chapter six, but against Ai, he used the sword. But the sword was ineffective without God's grace behind it. God would not make it effective when it was being used for only nationalism and selfish interest. And that's what we get out of the Achan story.

Then you have the story of the Gibeonites. Then you have the story of the king five kings of the South. To destroy them, you had the tremendous miracle, where God made the sun stand still and the moon stand still. I understand that to mean that the sun, they were coming down off the central height down toward Aiyyalon down in the valley. I think what happened is the sun was blinding the Canaanites. So, you have the sun behind them, the moon in front of them. I think the Canaanites were blinded. I think that's why Joshua had commanded the sun to stand still because now the sun was fighting against them. But that's the wonderful book of Joshua.

N. "I" and "we" [55:01-56:20]

But now notice what happens in their own dialogue with it. Notice the going back and forth between the "I" and "we." You see "You are my King, my God, who decrees victories for Jacob." And now we, "through you, we pushed back our enemies, through your name we trample our foes." Now the "I," "I put no trust in my bow. My sword does not bring me victory, but you," and now we shift to in the odd verses, we shift to the "we" and the "us." And so, I think the most plausible explanation to me is who is the "I" with this army? The only most plausible person, it's the king who leads the army. Again, I end up with the Royal Psalm in its own way. Once that's open to you, you begin to see, this is about the king and his army. They've gone down in a humiliating defeat, just like it seems as though Jesus and his army went down to a humiliating defeat on Good Friday. They all scattered from him.

O. Confession of Trust in the Lord [56:20-58:07]

He's confessing that his strength is in the Lord. But in this case, it goes back and forth. "You are my king, through you we pushed back our enemies. And I put no trust in

my bow. My sword does not bring me victory." So, what he's saying is I have total confidence in you. I'm not trusting in myself. He is an exemplar of rectitude. This is holy war at its best. And though he's conducting Holy War with integrity, and this is saying, it's by faith. They fought this battle by faith. In the protest, they didn't violate anything, there's no sin in the camp. So, this is a holy army that has gone down into defeat. It's amazing. We have a song like this, and this is a Communal Lament of God's people, for they've gone down into defeat. And they're getting truths by which to live in the midst of it. Yet they're not giving up a life of faith. They're not going to say, "Well, God, you let us down. We better do it on our own strength and forget about it or go to another god or something else we'll trust." No, we've gone down in defeat, but we're not giving up on God in the midst of it.

Almost all the stories in the Bible are stories about being in adversity and overcoming the adversity through faith. Almost all the stories are being in adversity and triumphing in the midst of it by faith. Well, I think we've gotten some truths here by which to live when we're going through times of undeserved sufferings.

P. Lament [58:07-1:00:49]

Now we come to the lament and you could see he begins with the two parts with the defeat, and then the humiliation. The defeat, it's really in quite literal terms in verses nine and 10. Then very metaphorical terms to show us the extent of the defeat in verses 11 and 12. So, in more literal terms, "You have rejected us and humbled us. You no longer go out with our armies. You made us retreat before the enemy and our adversaries have plundered us." Then he uses the metaphor. "You gave us to be devoured like sheep, have scattered us among the nations. You sold your people for pittance, gaining nothing from their sale." What does that mean to you? "You sold your people for pittance." And what would that mean? It seems to me what he's saying is, "we lost our army and they devoured us and you sold us and we got nothing from the enemy. It was for a pittance. We didn't kill them. They killed us." That's how I understand it. Just for a pittance. We didn't get anything, none of the enemy, they came out flourishing prospering, and they

plundered us. This is essentially not saying, health, wealth, and gospel, prosperity gospel, by a long shot that we have here. Then comes his humiliation, because he's representing the living God and he's the king. I'm ashamed of where I am. And he's very honest with his emotions. That's why the psalms are loved by people because they're honest. So, he says, "you've made us a byword."

And then, in verses 13 and 14: it deals with the army. You have made us reproached what neighbors, the scorn and derision of those around us. You have made us a byword among the nations. We're just one big joke to them. He wanted to have a joke about an army. Sometimes we joke about certain armies and they just don't seem to be able to fight. So, they become the butt of the world's jokes. Now you have the king and he lives in disgrace and he blushes in shame. "My face is covered with shame." I think that means I'm blushing with embarrassment at what has happened. "At taunts of those who reproach and revile me because of the enemy who has bent on revenge."

Q. Protest [1:00:49-1:02:24]

Now comes the protest. It's a protest that we have not broken covenant. This is undeserved sufferings. "All this came upon us, though we had not forgotten you." Then the word "forget" means basically like you have, remember, it is the opposite of a remember is forget, but really forget is a moral thing. It entails to some extent dis-member. In other words, we did not dis-member ourselves. We have remembered that was a little bit too extreme, but it helps understand what's involved in forget because you had dis-membering yourself from that history. "We have not forgotten. We have not been false to your covenant," the ten commandments, that is. They have loved God with all their hearts. They have not had idols and images. They have not misused God's name. I take it they have kept the Sabbath before the Lord and they haven't committed adultery, or theft or murder or false witnessing. It's a holy people that are at stake here. "Our hearts had not turned back, our feet have not strayed from your path, but you crushed us and made us a haunt for jackals," and so forth.

R. Application of Lament [1:02:24-1:08:38]

Before what we did there, I skipped something. What are you get out of, what truth did you get out of the lament section? Did you get any truths by which to live? We got out of the confidence, the history that the Scriptures, the history, God has a great, as I put it, a great track record. There's a tremendous history behind us and that history is a handmaid to our faith to sustain us. What truth do you get out of the lament?

Student: It looks pretty hopeless. Looks pretty helpless.

That's a good point. That's the reality.

Student: I think for myself and a lot of us, because of our prosperity, you know, when troubles come, we say, you left me God, you know, right.

Well, that's the honesty of it but what I'm asking is what gives us confidence while that's going on. What I get out of it is God's sovereignty. He didn't doubt God was sovereign over the situation. That's what I get out of it. Notice verse nine, "You did it. 10 "you"; 11 "you"; 12 "you"; 13 "you." You can't miss it. You, you, you, you, God did it. He never doubted God's sovereignty. So, whatever suffering we're going through be assured God had a design before, and he doesn't know what the design is. In most cases, we don't know, but he didn't doubt God was in control. It wasn't out of hand. I think that's an important truth to lay hold of for martyrs. God is in charge of all that's going on with ISIS in his own way. Pardon.

Student: It sustains our faith anchoring it in the sovereignty of God, amen, strengthens whatever's going on. Whether it's here, whatever is going on even in our own lives, that's what they do. I would even say to add onto that is trust. Well, that builds your faith but to me that trust deep down that I know that he sovereign. Yeah. So, because of that, we can trust in the midst of it. That's our response to it. Amen. Well, I love it because in the middle of protest, he's declaring his faith, and we do the same thing, instead of just protest and complaint. We don't couple it with faith. Amen. And that God, whatever trial I'm going through, you put me here and I don't understand, I'm in the cloud. I've lost rational contact, but I don't doubt you are sovereign over at all. And that's

a tremendous statement of faith. That's awesome. Isn't it? What an encouragement, what an encouragement these psalms are to us, to the life of faith.

Student: You know, Bruce, a couple months ago I was led in my readings, I just, can't on Psalm 75, where you get to talking about, you forgot this. God did all these things, tell your children. Tell your children to tell their children. So, along the way they stop, they dis-membered and stopped. It's a mixture, isn't it? Because when Joshua it complains that they didn't tell their children, but here is quite clear that this is also true some did tell her children. So, you have to put the two together to get the full picture of it.

All right this excellent. "All this came and we had not forgotten you. And now our hearts had not turned back" we're dealing with our very hearts of loving God. And there's, this is faith. "Our feet had not strayed, but what you did to the Canaanites you have done to us. You crushed us made us a haunt for jackals, covered us over with deep darkness." So, then the proof of it is "if we had forgotten the name of our God or spread out our hands to a foreign god, would not God have discovered it since he knows the secrets of the heart." So, it isn't that just outward observance inwardly we have walked with integrity and faith and love. He's talking about our hearts are right with God and God does not condemn their hearts. God does not accuse them that you're outwardly hypocritical as in Psalm 50, for example. And Paul picks it up "yet for your sake we face death all day long. We are considered as sheep to be slaughtered."

I think what I take comfort in is what the psalm is all about that this godly army and king goes through the same suffering that I may be going through. I have a king who has suffered with me. I think it speaks of Jesus because he has gone through this suffering and he has been rejected and he's has been shamed and they all mocked him. "Why don't you get down off the cross?" But he had to do the work of God and his work entailed being on the cross and dying a humble, shameful death. So, out of the first section, I get Scripture and history out of the second section I get sovereignty. The third section, I get example, that's sustains my faith.

S. Unresolved Lament [1:08:38-1:10:26]

Then we come to the last part "Awake, Lord, why do you sleep Rouse yourself, do not reject us forever." He's just saying, this is the way it appears that this is part of the life of faith. That God seems asleep sometimes we knock on the door as C. S. Lewis said until our knuckles are bloody raw and the door never opens up. And I add to that, I stepped back and I look upstairs and all the lights are out. That's how it feels. Jesus felt that on the cross abandoned. "Why do you hide your face and forget our misery and oppression?" And then utter humiliation, it was the serpent who was supposed to be in the dust, but we're in the dust. "We are brought down to the dust, our bodies cling to the ground" like a snake. We are so humiliated. "Rise up and help, rescue us because of your unfailing love." That's the end of the psalm. It leaves us where we sometimes feel even in death, it's the end, unresolved.

Then it's given over "for the director of music." It's in the canon of Scripture because God eventually answered him, but not to the Psalmist, but not in the Psalm, which is telling us we must live by faith even though we don't see the answer here and now. So, it's a great prayer for martyrs, that we've just been through. It is one of the great psalms and we're in the company of the great apostle Paul in this psalm.

This is Dr. Bruce Waltke and his teaching on the book of Psalms. This is session number 17, Communal Lament, Psalm 44. [1:10:26]

Psalms

[\[Jump to TOC\]](#)

Session 18: Psalms of Trust, Psalm 91 and 139

By Dr. Bruce Waltke

This is Dr. Bruce Waltke and his teaching on the book of Psalms. This is session number 18, Psalms of trust, Psalm 139 and 91.

Opening Poem: J. R. Lowell [00:24-2:46]

Now in this hour, we're going to -- O, let me just -- I want to share a poem with you that ends the laments psalms. So, this is one of my favorites. I think you probably all know it from James Russell Lowell, "Careless seems the great Avenger; history's pages but record One death-grapple in the darkness, twixt old systems and the Word, Truth forever on the scaffold, Wrong forever on the throne--yet that scaffold holds the future, and, beyond the dim unknown, Standeth God within the shadow, keeping watch above his own."

"Careless seems the great Avenger; history's pages but record, One death-grapple in the darkness, twixt old systems and the Word, Truth forever on the scaffold, Wrong forever on the throne -- yet that scaffold holds the future, and beyond the dim unknown, Standeth God within the shadow, keeping watch above his own."

I think that's a great poem to end the lament sections. Pardon? It's from James Russell Lowell. I think maybe I have it at the end of Psalm 44 and I think I wrote it there. It should be at the end of 44. Is that where it is? Yes. Yeah. Okay. There's the poem and it's just one stanza. I don't know the whole poem. But it's just a brilliant poem to me and it expresses what I see so much of in the lament Psalms and the faith we have behind it. Okay.

Introduction to Psalms of Trust or Confidence [2:46-4:14]

Now we're on page 232, and we're moving into confidence or songs of trust. We're going to try to do two psalms here. Yeah, it's just the piece. I'm going to try to do two psalms in the hour we have left. So, it be moving a bit more quickly. I'm going to be doing these because these are two famous, well, these are two famous psalms as well. We've done 23, we've done Psalm 1. We've done 51. We've done 22. We've touched upon some of the great psalms in trying to specify these different kinds of psalms.

The psalms of trust are favorites with the people of God, because they express faith and trust and there isn't the great lament. It's the victories. Psalm 139 is so extensively confidence that it's called a song of trust, but in truth, it's really a lament psalm because it ends with a petition and a situation where he's in crisis also. But it's a great psalm and we'll just look at it more or less quickly.

Translation of Psalm 91 [4:14-8:28]

And here we are at Psalm 91, and I think most of us have heard as for any part matters of translation. It isn't out yet. Is it? This will be coming out in the third volume on the Psalms, Psalms as Christian Wisdom and Praise. So, this is one I just worked on recently last fall. "As one who dwells in the secret place of the Most High." The Most High is the name for God, El Elyon. "Who in the shadow of the Almighty resides." The Almighty is El Shaddai and you know the name Shaddai. The truth is we don't know what Shaddai means. When I was finishing my residency work at Harvard, my professor was trying to think about a dissertation and suggested that I would resolve and find out what Shaddai means. I thought I'd just be coming up down a dead end in my dissertation when we don't know. So, I thought if it hasn't been solved by now that then we're going to have to wait for more research, more data that we don't have yet. That's the nature of biblical studies. This is why I liked biblical studies because we're constantly refining and things we don't know at one generation, the next generation finds out and the church is growing in the process. So, we're not there yet on this name, but it was called in Greek

pantokrato, which means the "all powerful." And out of that then Jerome and so forth, we get the name Almighty. And I'm sure it entails that. Almighty it was certainly. I think, that's wonderful. That's how the Greek is. And I think it's great.

"Who in the shadow of the Almighty resides. I say of I am, he is my shelter, my stronghold, my God in whom I trust. Surely, he will deliver you from the fowler's trap, from the destructive plague. With his pinions he will overshadow you, and under his wings you may seek shelter; his faithfulness is a shield and a rampart. Do not be afraid of the terror at night, from the arrow that flies by day, from the plague that walks in darkness, from the pestilence that rushes at noon. A thousand will fall at your side, a myriad at your right hand, but it will not come near you. Only with your eyes where you look and you will see retribution of the wicked. Because you proclaim, I am as my refuge and you'll make the Most High your dwelling place, calamity will not beat you., and a plague will not draw near your tent. Surely he will command his angels for you to protect you in all your ways; upon the palms of their hands they will lift you up, lest your foot strike a stone. Upon the lion and the cobra, you will tread. You will trample the young lion and the serpent. Because he clings to me. I will rescue him. I will set him on high because he knows my name. He will cry out to me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in distress, I will deliver him. I will glorify him. I will satisfy him with endless days and I will show him my salvation."

Psalm 91 Sorting out the Pronouns [8:28-13:44]

Just looking at the psalm part of the problem of the psalm is we're just having pronouns without identification. We begin with an "I", as "one who dwells in the secret place. I say of I am." Who is the "I"? And then we get so he's talking about I am, and then someone's talking to a "you" "surely he will deliver you." Who is the "you" who's being addressed here. And that runs all the way through. So, we're not told who the "I" is, and we're not told who the "you" is.

And then at the end, "he will cry out to me." Who is the "he" and who is the "me"?--And it's all pronouns. Something's been assumed here that we have to decode.

Who are these pronouns? It's quite clear to me that the "you" is the, "I" in verses one and two. Whoever's speaking in verse two says, "he is my shelter." And that is God. And then it has said to him, verse four, "and under his wings you may seek shelter." So, the "you" is the "I". And he says, "I find shelter in the Lord." Someone else is saying, "and you may find shelter." You'll see it more clearly I think in the reprise in verse nine and 10, "because you proclaim, I am is my refuge. "And you make the Most High, your dwelling place. Calamity will not meet you." There it's very clear "because you proclaim, I am is my refuge, calamity will not meet you." So, I feel totally confident that the "I" and the, "you" are one and the same person.

At the end when "he will cry out to me, and he will answer, and I will satisfy him with endless days." The speaker must be God. And this person, "he will cling to me." He's talking about this person. "He will cling to me and I will be with him. I will deliver him. I will glorify him." Who can satisfy him and glorify him and exalt him, other than God. So, God is speaking in the last three verses about the person who says, verses one and two "I say of I am He is my shelter."

So, I have three speakers. I have the "I" in verses one and two And then I have someone who's speaking to him and that someone has to be a prophet. He's not identified, but he speaks for God, assuring him. So, whoever is speaking in verses three, actually, until God speaks in verse 14, he speaks for God. So now I have the "I" is speaking, someone is speaking to him and then God is talking about him at the end of this psalm. Who is the "I"? I think it's quite clear to me. He must be a king. Notice what's happening to him. Verse five, "do not be afraid of the terror at night, from the arrow that flies by day,," Who is surrounded by thick arrows, flying around him if it's not the King? Or again, "a thousand will fall at your side, a myriad at your right hand." Who has a thousand falling at his side? And innumerable of the enemy are slain at his right hand. Who is that? With arrows flying at him and thousands dying around him. That's not Mr. Every Man to me. This is the king is the way I see it. "Only with your eyes and you will

see the retribution of the wicked." So, I think it's clear to me again, the "I" is the king who is putting his trust in God, as he is in the midst of a battle.

Christ as King in Psalm 91 [13:44-20:28]

More than that, I believe it's an anticipation of Christ because this King is invulnerable and invincible. No one can defeat him. That's not Psalm 44 there the king went down in defeat. Here is a king who is invincible. It's not as even John the Baptist was not invincible. He had his head cut off. Saints today and throughout history have been martyred. So, this King is invincible and invulnerable. So therefore, as the Targum has understood it, they understood it as David. Well, they understood as for the King that David was talking to Solomon.

But I think it's a reference to Christ who in his life was invincible and invulnerable. You could not touch Jesus until he laid down his life. He says, "no man takes it from me." And so, from the beginning, you have the slaughter of the innocents, all the babies that were slaughtered under Herod's paranoia and madness, and Jesus escaped. All the way through when Jesus heals the leper, he could have said to the leper be clean. He did that to others. Why does he touch the leper? It's to show He's invincible. Not even leprosy can overcome him. He goes to the storm. When he preaches his first sermon, they want to kill him. He walks out through the midst, John 8. When they want to stone him, they went to seize him. John says they couldn't do it. You could not touch Jesus until he voluntarily gave up this life as a ransom for sinners. And he says, in John 10, "no man takes my life from me. I lay it down of myself."

And so for me, David is using language of his world to speak of the invincibility of his greater son, who is the Lord Jesus Christ or whoever this King is. But I think it is a reference to Jesus Christ who is invincible and invulnerable, unless he lays down his life. This is to say to us that he's with us and when things come into our life, it's because he willed it to be in our lives as he willingly laid down his life. It's no accident. He is in control and we can trust him. So that's how I read the psalm. I read it as a King who was untouchable, and this King will trample on the lion and the cobra. And the point is, what's

the point of them Christ walking on snakes? They're symbolic of evil and nations that are opposed to him. And he tells the disciples, you will trample on scorpions, snakes and so forth. It's symbolic of his victory over evil of his final triumph. Interestingly enough, when Satan tempts Jesus in the temptation, I have this in your notes you may want to turn there. Well, up for that, it's a King. I like the quote from Kidner on page 234. This first one is by Goldingay. "The psalm makes sense as addressed to a king. It is the king who is specially needs the Lord's rescue and protection in battle." And Eaton says, "for a king, the air is ever thick with deadly darts whether a plague often a danger or campaigns, hostile curse or weapons, but God confers safety on him day and night though armies fall and tens of thousands at his side."

But so as a King, I give you some quotes there, but the eschatological messianic interpretation, that is how Satan understood the Psalm. Jesus did not refute him on that basis. He just said, you don't put God to the test. So, you have on page 235, Luke four, nine through 11, "the devil led him to Jerusalem and had him stand on the highest point of the temple." Now, in my mind, this whole temptation scene is in the spiritual realm. I don't take it literally. I think it's in the spiritual realm and in the spiritual realm, he is on the pinnacle of the temple. Satan showed him all the kingdoms of the world. That's a vision. It makes the point, even though it's a vision, it's reality that it's representing. And he says to him, "if you are the son of God," and I want to make the point and I have it that way illuminated by all my underscoring. So, he says, he recognizes this Jesus as son of God, "throw yourself down from here." Now note "for it is written. 'He will command his angels concerning you, to guard you, the son of God.'" And he's identifying him as the son of God that the angels are bearing up. Therefore, he says to him, "throw yourself off the temple. Let's see the angels of God bear you up." He understood it as a reference to Jesus. Jesus seemingly accepts that interpretation that it refers to him. So it's in the language of David's, of an ancient Near East a battle. It's teaching us that this king is invincible and invulnerable.

3 Voices [20:28-23:19]

So, we have three voices. We have the king who asserts his faith. Then we have the prophet who assures him. Then part of prophetic speeches, the Lord speaks through the prophet and talks about him, that he will be protected. So, let's look at what we just take the page, we'll just run through it, on page 232. Now the king is speaking as one who dwells, he's speaking, "as one who dwells in the secret place of the most high." That means the God who is over everything, Most High, Elyon. As Kidner says, it cuts everything down to size. Everything else is small compared to him.

"The secret place," it means a place that is inaccessible, that only those who are allowed in on a secret. The secret message is inaccessible to anybody else except those to whom you wish to communicate it. So, he's referring to the temple. I think as the secret place, that's accessible only to the righteous. He lives in that domain, in the temple, in the presence of God. "And the shadow of the," the shadow is the place of protection. And in your notes, I give you the data for that. So, he's protected there. He dwells there in the sanctuary. That's what he says.

And now he confesses his faith and the Hebrew here says, "I say again and again, and again," is the point. "I say," not just once. This is what he says for his lifestyle. "He is my shelter, the place of safety and my stronghold," which means a citadel on a cliff that is impregnable. The Hebrew word is "metsuda." And you can think of it as it's the Hebrew word, but it is the word "Masada." Masada was a stronghold. And he is saying, God is his Masada, it's inaccessible, impregnable. It's secure. "You are my God in whom I trust." So, the King speaks and he's confessing, "my hope, my trust is in God." That's the point. I'm living my life feeling secure in God. This is a song of trust.

The Prophet Speaks [23:19-28:19]

A prophet now speaks to him. It falls into two halves verses three through eight. Then the second half after a transition in verses nine and 10. Then you have the second half verses, nine through verse 13. So, a prophet is speaking in verses three through 13, and that falls into two halves because you could see how it's divided up. He stops speaking. And then he reprises, the king's confession in verse nine, "because you say [or

proclaim], 'I am is my refuge.'" You can see that goes back to verses one and two. "And you make the Most High your dwelling place," which is what he said in verse one, "that the Most High is my refuge, my dwelling place." Now the prophet says, if he reprises that, because you say that, he gives him more promises. So, it falls into two halves. The king makes a confession of faith. The prophet gives him promises. Then the prophet repeats his faith and gives him more promises in the second half. Climatically God himself speaks through the prophet in the last three verses because God speaks. I think what's happening here is it's antiphonal will you have the king speak, a prophet speaks, and then God speaks. That's in the temple. It's antiphonal with these different speakers. I think if we had different speakers, the "I" being the king, the prophet speaking to the King, and then with another voice speaking of God is speaking, and God is talking about the king, which is his own affirmation of faith. So, what's happening here the king is expressing his faith and the prophet, and climatically God, is giving the king confidence with the word of God with prophecy.

So, I think it's a spiritual battle and God is bolstering the faith of his king. For us, it's because I know he's invincible, he's invulnerable, I can have full confidence that he will triumph, even though I have to put it together with Psalm 44, I know my king. I know God who stands behind this king and he will triumph. That's sort of the direction of the psalm. I think once we get that, we can begin to understand this psalm. So, I say, he begins with calling God Most High and the Almighty. He's over all things and he's all powerful. He has unique access that only the saint has and God takes the saint into a secret counsel. We have access to which the unbeliever does not have access. We are protected in the shadow.

It begins with as one who dwells and one who resides, this is where I live. I live in the presence of God. That's what I want. I want to live in the presence of God, the Almighty One, in that place where by his grace, most don't have access because they don't believe. Whoever wants it can have it. God's grace is to all who will accept him.

Now comes the promise of the king. And he promises him that he will, then verse

three, he will be delivered and he will be protected. That's verses three and four. In verses five and six, he will be protected around the clock, night and day. At the end of verse five, night in the A verset, day in the B verset. And that's a merismus, which means all the time.

The Plague: Psalm 91:3-8 [28:19-35:18]

And he picks it up again in verse six, "for the plague that walks in darkness, for the pestilence that rushes at noon," the highlight of light. So, you have these merisms. When you read poetry you can put that together and you get the point. It's all the time. I'm with you on that battlefield. You're never alone. He then guarantees him his victory, that he will destroy the wicked. He's going to see the destruction of the wicked all around him. God is with him. So those are in the first half, those are three and four. Is that right? The three quatrains. So, you have three and four, five and six, seven and eight, and you can see they go together.

Three and four, "He will deliver you from the fowler's trap." That is, they'll try to destroy you secretly, when you don't expect it. "And from the destructive plague." And the plague is a very important point in this psalm. Notice how in verse five, it's the military, "do not be afraid of the terror at night, from the arrow of day." Then verse six picks up this plague "from the plague that walks in darkness, from the pestilence that rushes at noon."

What I argue in the Psalm is that the plague is a bubonic plague. A real danger in the ancient Near East on the battlefield was the bubonic plague. So that in all probability when the angel of the Lord struck the Assyrian army of 185,000, talk about a myriad. 185,000 fell at that moment when they were besieging Jerusalem. Herodotus tells us that story was repeated. That story occurs that occurs at about 700 BC. Herodotus, Greek historian, that's about 400 BC. When he's in the he's telling his experience in an adventurous way, he's a historian. He goes to Egypt, he hears the story about Sennacherib and he hears about the destruction of his army. What he gets is they attributed it to mice, as he gives the account. They try and figure out what the mice have to do with it, they

don't have any medical scientific knowledge. So, he says, well, the mice must have devoured all their quivers and devoured their weaponry and the baggage and so forth. That's the way he explains it.

But in all probability, we associate rats, they carry a certain flea. We associate rats with the bubonic plague. I think it was the angel of the Lord who used the bubonic plague to destroy the Assyrian army. It's interesting that Herodotus validates that whole story in his own way.

I think the same thing happened with the ark of the covenant when the Philistines captured it. In order to ward off some kind of appropapaic they made images of rats and tumors, both of which are associated with the bubonic plague. I think from our modern view point, we would have described it as a bubonic plague. That's what he's saying.

Then that makes sense, because then he says that plague "walks in darkness" as one soldier after another soldier dies. Then note, it says, "from the pestilence that rushes," and now it's reached, I think, epidemic proportions. And now it's just shift now, walking it's fit for a plague where from one to the next one to the next one. So, the plague is "walking in the darkness" and then it's epidemic proportions at high noon. The result is that the army falls around him as it did in the fall of the Assyrian army in the days of Hezekiah. So, here's a king with the whole army at his right hand. It doesn't say he used the sword or anything. It's just says, God destroyed it miraculously. It's at his right hand and he gazes at it. The whole enemy is utterly defeated at his right hand.

And then I understand verse 7 "a thousand will fall at your side, a myriad at your right hand. But it," that is, the pestilence, "will not come near you." The plague could destroy the others, but it couldn't touch the king. "It will not come near you." It's not within talking distance of you. You will look at it, but it will not come near you. You'll see the results of it, but not you, you are protected by God and Holy War. I take it as using a bubonic plague to destroy the enemy. That puts the psalm together.

Then we move to the second half. So, reading again, I think you could say, let me just read delivered and protect. "He will surely deliver you, from the trap of the enemy,

and from the destructive plague." Then he says that, "with his pinions he will overshadow you, under his wings you may seek shelter. His faithfulness is a shield and a rampart." And now don't be afraid 24 hours a day. "Do not be afraid of the terror at night, from the arrows that fly by day." But the terror at night could be arrows because I give you data in your notes where they actually had to fight at night. Then from the plague and then on that, "a thousand will fall at your side, a myriad at your right hand," the total destruction of the enemy. "Only with your eyes. You will look and you will see the retribution of the wicked." So, in other words, you will see God just decimate the enemy without you even lifting a finger. God just destroys the enemy.

Psalm 91:9-13 [35:18-37:31]

Then he picks it up and goes beyond that. If it's great to be under the pinions, under the shadow of God's wings, that's escalated that the angels will hold you up. So, you don't stumble and you can complete your mission. So, there's a real escalation here. "Calamity will not meet a plague, will not draw near your tent." And again, and again, the tent suggests we're on a battlefield. "Surely he will command his angels for you to protect you in all your ways." I give you the data of the angels and how they protect. Then he says, "on the palm of their hands, they will lift you up. Lest your foot, strike a stone." Nothing is going to impede you in your victory. They will just, with their hands, lift you up and carry you. So, you don't stumble and fall off a cliff and bear you along. Here's the point of the whole battle. You're going to tread on the lion and the cobra, and they're going to be under your feet. That's what he promised Adam and Eve in the garden, "You will crush the head of the serpent." And here he is "upon the lion and the cobra you will tread." You remember the lion and the cobra elsewhere are used for Babylon. and was a lion and for Egypt, the cobra. I think you've all seen the head dress of the Pharaoh. It always has that cobra, called the Urias. That cobra symbolizes his sovereignty, his rulership, his deity and his authority. It's the symbol of his dominion. And I think when he says, you are going to tread upon the cobra, if you know anything about Egypt and

you see that Urias, you know, very well, what he is saying here. He's going to destroy Egypt ultimately.

Psalm 91:14-16 [37:31-38:24]

And then the God picks it up "because he clings to me." That means because I'm so attractive to him, "I will rescue him. I will set him on high because he knows my name. "He will call out to me and I will answer him. I will be with him in distress. I will deliver him. I will glorify him. I will satisfy him with endless days," eternal life. There's no end to his victory. "And I will show him my salvation because it is just, and right." What a tremendous promise from the Lord. What a tremendous psalm. Okay. That would be Psalm 91.

Psalm 91 and the Messiah [38:24-42:27]

I have another psalm to go here. You just have to trust it. That's right. Well, I say, I think it's about the Messiah. It's about the Messiah because it's not true to John, the Baptist. It's not true to what happens in Psalm 44. That's a type, but it's not it. I put this down on page 234. I say, first of all, it's about the king and then D. Eschatological Messianic, the Psalm's assurance that God will rescue the king from the wicked in a present round the clock battle is not universally true. It wasn't true in Psalm 44. It wasn't true of Paul. It wasn't true in Matthew 14, one through 12. No. Yeah, it wasn't true of John the Baptist. It's not true of the church today. It's about Christ and it's true of him. And he is an assurance that since he could be victorious and invincible, we're in him and ultimately, we will triumph in him. And that's what I'm saying throughout his life. No evil ever touched, no one could touch Jesus until he laid down his life.

This psalm is true of him, but not everybody. I think that's an important distinction, very important. Because otherwise, if you read it, for me, it doesn't ring true. It just doesn't ring true. Or it doesn't ring true. I can't harmonize it with 44, but I can put, see it's about the King and this is a unique King who is invincible. Who is that? So, for me, Jesus said, "the Psalms speak about me." I think we're so interested in therapy

preaching that we really don't understand the glories of Christ. Okay. Yeah. I disagree in my commentary, I disagree with the NIV, the word there is *ki*. And it's the word "surely" it means "because." It can mean in, see I don't think it, possibly in the legal literature it can mean "if," but if you make the Most High it doesn't fit verses one and two, where he said the Most high is the shelter and security. So, if the "if" is it that would be rhetorical. It's "you do, if you do and you do," but you've got to, that's why I think it's better just simply to translate it "because" which is its normal meaning. It's not conditional or questionable because he said, "God is the Most High." Thank you for, I remember that and Don Wayne. So, thank you for, I really like it. I like questions and I think we should ask questions. So, okay. I think I told you that I had a friend at Harvard and he named his fifth son after me. Did I tell you that? I did. Yeah. Okay. Because I asked questions. So thank you, when you ask questions.

Psalm 139: a Psalm of Confidence [42:27-46:21]

Alright, now we're going to Psalm 139, page 250. Thank you. Okay. Let's just enjoy the song, meditate on it. This is one of these great, great psalms again. Yeah. 139. And what I'll do is I'll just read it and comment on it as we've been doing it. And everything I say is in your notes anyway. So, alright. Let's read it. It is: "A Psalm of David. I am you search me, and so you know me. You know when I sit and when I rise. You consider my thoughts from afar. My going out, my lying down, you discern; you are familiar with all my ways. Surely, before a word is on my tongue I am, you know it completely. Behind and before you hem me in. You have laid the palm of your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, it is too high, I do not have the power to scale it. Where can I go to escape your spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I ascend to heaven, you went there. If I spread out my bed in the grave behold, you. Were I to rise on the wings of the dawn and alight on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast. And then I thought, surely if the darkness questions me, and if light becomes night around me, even darkness will not be too dark for you; and the night will shine like the day. Darkness is as light to you. For

you gave birth [literally] to my kidneys," which is not great poetry. I think the King James to get around this "for you gave birth to me. You created" they translated. It qanah, "you created," and they say "reins," R E I N S. That sounds good. It's the French word for kidneys. Okay. "You gave birth to my emotional structure. You wove me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I'm fearfully extraordinary your work. So wonderful, I know it full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was wrought in that secret place. When I was colorfully woven in the depths of the earth. My embryo your eyes saw. And in your book, all of them were written. My days were fashioned when there was not yet any of them. And for me, how precious are your thoughts? God! How vast is the sum of them? Were I to count them, they would outnumber the grains of sand--I awake and I'm still with you. If only you, God, would slay the wicked, blood thirsty men get away from me who speak of you with evil intent, your adversaries misuse your name. Do not I hate those who hate you I am and loath those who rise up against you. I hate them with complete hatred. They have become my enemies. Search me God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts, and see if there's any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

Structure of Psalm 139: First Stanza 1-6 God's Omniscience [46:21-47:03]

Looking at the Psalm broadly in 24 verses. It falls into four stanzas of six verses each. I think it's quite clear the first stanza of verses one through six speak of God's omniscience that God knows him. You can't miss it: verse three, "you know;" verse four, "you know;" verse six, "such knowledge." So, he talking that God, you know me, His omniscience.

Psalm 139:7-12 God's Omnipresence [47:03-47:58]

In the next stanza, he talks about God's omnipresence with him. Just as in verse one begins with a summary statement. "I am you search me. And so, you know me," and that is the introduction to that stanza. So, we get an introduction to God's omnipresence with him. "Where can I go from your spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?" And

the answer is obvious, I can't. You are everywhere. And he ends up, if you go through the stanza, that everywhere, God is with him. So, you have six verses of knowledge and you have seven verses of God's presence. God, you know me, and God you're with me. I can't escape it.

Psalm 139:13-18 is God's Omnificence [47:48-48:55]

In verses 13 through verse 17 and verse 18. And the next six verses, he speaks about God's omnificence, that is, his making him. "You made me." And that is the proof for notice verse 13, for the proof that you know me and the proof that you're with me is the fact you made me. And look where you made me. "You made me in a dark watery chamber of my mother's womb." So, you have four verses that substantiate because God created him and made him that God knows him and that God is with him. At the end of verse 18, he leaves the state of reflection.

Psalm 139:19-24 Real World Enemies [48:55-51:47]

And he says, "when I awake, I am still with you." And now the waking up, in other words, he's been thinking about God, he's been thinking about his omniscience, he's been thinking about his omnipresence. He's been thinking about his omnificence that he made him, therefore, all this is true. Now he wakes up and he comes back to the real world and we suddenly find ourselves in the real world. From he's thinking about God but now he leaves his state of reverie and looks at the world all around him and he's surrounded with enemies and the wicked. And he says, "get away from me." His reflections on God knows me and that God is present with me is fostering his confidence because he has all these wicked men around him. And so, he says, "get away from me."

And he says to God, "I am with you. And I hate who these men are, who misuse your name, these covenant breakers. And they're trying to murder him. And I hate wickedness. And then he backs up. Not only does he want the enemy dead, but now he says, "I'm not so sure about myself." I want to be sure that I am really allied with you. "Search me God and know my heart, test me and know my anxious thoughts." In other

words, I want to be sure I'm your man, or it could be for a lady You are his woman. "And see if there's any offensive way in me." And if there is, let me get rid of it. "And lead me in the way everlasting." So, he is finding confidence because God knows him, God is with him, God made him. And so he comes to the real world and he says, God, I'm with you, in this stage of which we find ourselves, in this battle between good and evil and justice and injustice and truth and delusion, God, I'm with you. But wait a minute. I want to make sure there are anxious thoughts, am I all that pure? I've got anxious thoughts about this. Am I really that pure? Test me. And we say, let me know that I'm certain that I'm on your side. This is a very honest prayer.

Stanza #1: God's Knows Us to Our Core [51:47-55:00]

Let's go back then having gotten the broad view of things and just look at the first stanza, the summary statement. "I am, you have searched me." It deals with a penetrating, diligent, difficult probe. That is, it's very hard to know your own heart or the heart of another person. What's really going on inside of the person. I'm not always sure. I know what's really going on inside of myself, but God, you know. And he says, you did that diligent difficult search of getting to my very core being. And God knows your basic core, right to the pith of it, who you really are. God knows who you are in a way no one else knows and maybe even you don't know fully, but God knows. He knows who you are.

Then he develops it, and he says, you know me all the time by this merism or merismus. "You know when I sit, you know when I arise, [and even though you're a far off], you consider my thoughts from afar." So even though you're in heaven, you know exactly what I'm doing. He knows the cattle on the hillside. He knows the hairs of our head. He knows everything, the sparrow that falls. He knows beyond that, the depths of our being and he knows us all the time. So, from the moment we got up this morning to when we go to bed at night, God knows you. He really knows you all the time.

And furthermore, not only in time, but in space, "you know, my going out and my lying down." So, and actually the going out is public. The lying down is often used for

coitus, my most private moments. In other words, you know, me publicly, you know, me privately my most private moments. You know me. God is there. In fact, I haven't even articulated what I'm going to do. You know me so completely that at the very point where I'm verbalizing, what I'm going to do, you knew it already ahead of time. That's knowledge. "Before a word is on my tongue. You know exactly what I'm about." Now that can be very comforting, but it can be somewhat disquieting. David backs off a bit. And he realizes I can't escape this. I never have a private moment. So, he feels now hemmed in, by this knowledge. "You hem me in behind and before, you hem me in, you have laid your palm of your hand. I can't escape you. And such knowledge is too wonderful for me." It's beyond all comprehension.

The Extent of God's Presence: Vertical and Horizontal Axes [55:00-59:08]

And then it's too high. I don't have the power to scale it. In other words, I can't climb out from under this awareness. So, like it or not, God knows you all the time, everywhere, all your thoughts, everything about you, God knows. If your heart is right, that's comforting. If your heart is not right, it can be disquieting. The second one is a summary statement of God's universal presence. His summary, "Where can I escape your spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?" There he looks at it, first of all, on the vertical axis. And then he looks at it on the horizontal axis. So he looks at it on the vertical axis and looking at it up and down. "If I ascend to heaven, you were there. If I spread out my bed in the grave, look, you're there too." And that's not only in space but that's in quality because heaven is bliss and the grave is hell. And so whether it's good or bad, God is present. So, whether you're in bliss or you're in pain, God is there. That's our God.

And looking at it on the horizontal axis, "were I to rise on the wings of the dawn," that is, he sees the morning light as wings flying across the sky and were I to get on the wings of the dawn and fly with that speed across the sky "and alight on the far side of the sea. Even there, your hand will guide me and your right hand will hold me fast."

So vertically, quantitatively height/depth, qualitatively heaven/hell; quantitatively

East/West. But in that world, the orient where the sun rose that was life and in the West where the sun set that was death. So, if you go to Egypt and go down the Nile, for example, you might point out that all the temples of life are on the East bank of the Nile and the pyramids and the Valley of the Kings to the Karnak temple, for example, is on the East side of life. But Hatshepsut's tomb is in the West. So, all the tombs are in the West where the sun sets and its dark. So symbolically the East is life. The West is death. And that's what he's talking about here.

So, whether I go to heaven above or hell beneath, if I go to the morning light or I go to the setting sun and the darkness, it's all the same to you. I can't escape it. "Even there, your hand will guide me. Your right hand will hold me fast." And then he thinks of it differently. And then he said, now I'm in darkness, utter darkness. And darkness, of course symbolizes death, danger, fear, everything chaos, everything you stumble around, you don't know where you are. You're bumping into things. That's where thieves are and so forth. "And I said, surely if the darkness crushes me and if the light becomes night around me, it would make no difference to you. Even darkness will not be too dark for you. The night will shine like the day. Darkness is this light to you." So, it makes no difference to God. No matter how dark it may be, to God it makes no difference whatsoever.

God and the Unborn [59:08-1:02:08]

Now comes the proof, the validation. "For you gave birth." He's not denying the biological realities of life. He goes to ultimate cause and behind those biological realities, which only the natural man only sees. Behind all of that there is God who is the one who's giving life. This says a lot about the unborn. "For you gave birth to my very basic emotional structure. You wove me together in my mother's womb. And then I praise you because I am fearfully extraordinary. Your works are wonderful. I know full well." I think all of us have felt the marvel of a human being and of birth. It's just awesome. And that's God. And how you can destroy that is awful to me.

This is his Magnum Opus. "I praise you because I'm fearfully extraordinary. Your

works are wonderful. I know that full well. And my frame was not hidden from you when I was right in that secret place, which is in the mother's womb. When I was colorfully woven together, as it would have been as in the depths of the earth." God produced his Magnum Opus in utter darkness. And that's the analogy that the dark doesn't hide from you and God designed it so that we are formed in utter darkness and water. And that's where he makes his Magnum Opus. "And my embryo, your eyes saw." And if his hand is on us, we now know a lot about nature. But his saying, "in your book, all of them were written, that is, my days were fashioned when there was not yet any of them." Talk about sovereignty. That is sovereignty. God has designed all of our days beforehand. He has his own purposes.

Then he says that "these thoughts" and here's the oxymoron, but there's so many, I can't count them. But usually when you have a lot of something it's cheap, but then he puts it together. "As for me, how precious are your thoughts! How vast is the sum of them." So, I can't count them all, but each one is precious against the law of supply and demand. They're vast, but each one is precious. "Were I to count them, they went out number the grains of sand." So, he's marveled at all this.

Confronting the Wicked [1:02:08-1:08:28]

And now he comes back to the real world and he wishes God would get rid of the wicked that are surrounding him. "If only you, God, would slay the wicked, bloodthirsty men that murderers get away from me." I think you can picture this a bit. If you think about David during the time of Saul, they were bloodthirsty men, they took God's name to vanity. He can't touch them. He says, "Oh God, if only you would get rid of them and slay them." That's not the prayer for us today, but prayer for the David in his day. I can understand that. In the Saulide period, Oh God, just get rid of him.

And he loathes them. He doesn't just dislike them. I hate murderers, blasphemous those who misuse your name, who take innocent life, who commit adultery. And I have no part with them. I know who I am. But then he backs off and he says, he started out, "Oh God, you have searched me." And now he says, opens his heart, I want you to really

search me and let me know. What's really in there. "Search me, test me, know my anxious thought and lead me in the way everlasting." And so, he wants to know if there's something in there that isn't right, that he may be sure I am really your person, your man, or your woman. That's what made him the king he was.

So, I think that's a good note on which to end for the session. That's our God. Alright. Psalms of confidence.

Audience comment: May I share with you that I've used these verses as I counsel women who have questions about abortion or are contemplating an abortion, or are not settled on the right or wrong of it. Right? And when I showed it to him here, God's involvement in the womb and his knowledge of that one even before one day was lived, before one breath was taken that God was there and involved and that there is a plan for every child that is conceived in the womb, the days are planned. Then that brings a whole new perspective to taking life that God is involved with.

Dr. Waltke: That's the problem that it isn't recognized like God, when you get rid of God, you, you really are at sea. If you really recognize that God gave conception, it's precious, the whole thing is precious. It's not just so much mother tissue. It's a spiritual being. In Psalm 51 he said I was in a state of sin in my mother's womb and you would be teaching my conscience. This is just not the mother's body. This is another person and that person has dignity. And this whole idea that woman's rights and I want to protect women. But I also want to say, God created a new, a new being here and used your body to do it. What a privilege and how awful to kill that. God gave you the privilege to bring his image into the world. What a privilege. And then to destroy it. Amen. Thank you. Thank you, Cynthia for sharing that. Thank God that you're there to counsel and protect life. Legalize 55, over 50 million more. It is because I believe God is just, I don't know what's going to happen in the Western world.

Audience: Did you know abortion is illegal in the world is that here we're the only place literally to have legalized I, we made legal in America. And I think in Spain isn't yeah, we've codified it. Yeah, none of the Islamic nations. I think that's the reason Islam grows amongst youth is they have absolutes. I think youth is looking for absolutes in our democracy, we don't have any absolutes. They see how it has become decadent. So that Liberty has been transferred into the libertinism of doing whatever you want and immorality. I think something intuitively says that's wrong. You'd rather latch on to something like Sharia, which has absolutes, but what are horrible absolutes. One extreme to the other, have no absolutes, I mean you, certainly Satan is strong in our world. We're fighting against principalities and powers and spiritual darkness. Yeah. Well, amen.

This is Dr. Bruce Waltke and his teaching on the book of Psalms. This is session number 18: Psalms of trust, Psalm 139 and 91. [1:08:28]

Psalms

[\[Jump to TOC\]](#)

Session 19: Liturgical Approach, Cultus / Ritual

By Dr. Bruce Waltke

This is Dr. Bruce Waltke in his teaching on the book of Psalms. This is session number 19: Liturgical Approach, Cultus / Ritual.

Welcome and Review [00:24-1:19]

We're done and the lovely home of Darling Bridges in Sugarland, Texas, a suburb of Houston, Texas. And now welcome to my home in Redmond Sammamish area, a suburb of Seattle. I must say it's just a sheer delight to welcome you and to continue these reflections and studies in the book of Psalms. I think it would be good to review where we have been by looking at the calendar on page three of your notes. So, I invite you to look at page three of our syllabus and to orient where we are in the course.

Historical Method [1:19-5:27]

Our attempt has been toward entering into the mind of the inspired Psalmist, mostly David himself. In addition to the historical critical method interpreting his words against this historical background, we've been looking at other accredited methods or approaches within the church's history for a better understanding and entering into the mind of the Psalmist.

So, on page three of the calendar, after the introduction to the course, I talked about hermeneutics, the art of interpretation. The principle point there as to the approaches that fundamentally, we must have a spiritual approach to the book of Psalms because ultimately the author is God and God is spirit. We do not encounter God through a scientific method. We encounter God through spirit, through faith, hope, love. All of

these are the expression of God's own spirit, the Holy Spirit. Also we said, we have to come with a sympathy with the human author if we're to understand him. So, we enter into his world and into his history of Israel's covenants and his faith in the God of those covenants. We share that with him. Unless we do share that common spirit and that common faith, we will err in our interpretation of the Psalms.

But in addition to God and the human author of there is the text and that requires a scientific approach. That's where we focus in academics. We focus on scientific approaches or methods of interpreting the text. So, one of the approaches is, number three, the historical approach. We enter into the life of David. But the important point we were making there is that the author is a King and there is a royal interpretation to the song. It's a royal hymnbook, it's the songs of the King who's gone through sufferings and through triumphs. The royal element is far more extensive than the 10 Psalms that mentioned the king. So, it permeates, we argued, the entire book, which will alter the way we think of it. That has profound implications for our Christian faith because they indirectly, at the least, speak of Christ, who is the King of kings and Lord of lords.

With each approach, I've tried to exegete with some detail, a given few Psalms one and two. So, we actually enter into the psalm and see the reality or the helpfulness of that approach to that particular psalm. In the case of this historical approach, we looked at Psalm 4. In preparation for moving into looking at Psalms and grouping them according to forms, the broadest form category of looking at it from a formal viewpoint is that it is poetry over against narrative or prose. We tried to expound what Hebrew poetry is. And we spent a whole lecture on that.

Form Criticism [5:27-10:18]

After that broad categorization we've looked at what is known as form criticism, grouping of Psalms in two distinct genres. This included understanding the historical background in which they originated as well as looking at the various gattung, the German; word genre, the French word; and form, the English word. We began by noticing the broad category of hymns. These were songs in praise of God. Basically, they

praise God as the creator and as the Redeemer, as the Lord of creation and the Lord of history. It looks at God broadly not specific answers to prayer.

That's the other kind of praise that we dealt with and that's called "grateful praise." That is, you've prayed to the Lord for a specific need and God answered that need. Then you have a specific song of praise.

For the hymn we looked at two Psalms, we looked at Psalm 100 and we looked at Psalm 8. For the song of grateful praise, we looked at Psalm 92 and we could have seen that's David's, Psalm 51, is also song of grateful praise, but we handled that in connection with his lament or confession of sin.

The largest category of Psalms was lectures 11 and 12, which dealt with the Lament Psalms. This is 50 of the Psalms, as we know, a third of the Psalter, the Psalmist is in crisis and he looks to God in his need. But we also noted that there is no Psalm that you come to God in your need without praise. Even though perplexed as in Psalm 41, "we are slaughtered all day long for your sake," with no explanation, it began with praise of God. This is the difference between the Psalmist and Job. Job complained of his sufferings without praise. And that was displeasing to God and he had to repent. The Psalmist complaints too, and also laments. We noted the difference between lament and complaint. Lament is when you're suffering and you're innocent. But a complaint is that when you're suffering and it's unjust. You wonder where God is in the midst of it because you have not violated any law. It's undeserved sufferings. In an undeserved suffering you hear a complaint about it. Lament can be any kind of suffering, including deserved sufferings, which would be confession of sin.

So, we looked at individual lament such as Psalm 3, the very first Psalm after the introduction of David, when he had a flee from Absalom. Then we also looked at a messianic Psalm, which we'll talk about in a later lecture, we'll talk about the Messiah particularly, but specifically messianic psalm that Jesus took upon his lips upon the cross is Psalm 22. We looked at Communal Laments. I had hoped to do Psalm 90, but it turns out we didn't have time to do that. But we looked at Psalm 44, which I just mentioned.

A derivative of the Lament Psalms are Songs of Trust because, as we noted, these different genre have distinct motifs. One of the motifs of the Lament or Petition Psalms is there's always or normally a section of confidence. So, they moved from lament to petition through confidence because they remind themselves of who they are and, more importantly, who God is and what he has done for his people. In that new milieu of hope and faith and confidence, we hear the petition that comes out of it.

Opening Prayer [10:18-12:24]

We're now up to lecture 19, which is called the Liturgical Approach. So, I invite you to turn in your notes, page 256, where we are going to be handling, the Liturgical Psalms. But before we jump into the new material, as I think it's fitting that we should begin with prayer together. So, "Father, we begin our lecture looking to you with praise to you for revealing yourself and giving us means of grace, the grace of your word. And we would not approach it without having prepared our hearts. We ask you, we would pray as the liturgy has it, 'Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and in deed by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with a whole heart. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry. And we humbly repent.' We ask you to have mercy on us, forgive us all our sins through our Lord. Jesus Christ. Strengthen us in all goodness and by the power, the Holy Spirit keep us in the way of eternal life. We're confident Lord, that as you were promised, that when we confess and renounce, our sins we are forgiven and we are made fit to enter the Holy Place because we're clothed also in the righteousness of Christ. With this confidence, we enter into the Psalms further. In Christ's name, Amen."

Introduction to Liturgical Approach [12:24-14:44]

The liturgical approach is also a derivative of the form critical approach. We said that the form criticism has two parts to it. One is that you look at the setting in life and the other one is you look at the way the Psalm is composed: it's mood, it's vocabulary, it's

motifs that make it either a hymn of praise or grateful song or a lament. We're looking at the setting of the Psalm, but we're going to look at it so extensively that it's worthy of a separate topic, and thinking of it as a separate approach. In other words, it's so quantitatively more than what we've done, it actually becomes qualitatively another approach. So, we're looking at the liturgical approach.

This approach in the literature is normally called the, the cultist, the cultic approach. That's a difficult term because for the average English speaker, a cult means a small group of people who hold to some kind of religious idea or practice that the majority regard as strange or even sinister. And that is obviously not how it's used in academic literature. The cult as in academic literature refers to the external expression of religion. So, we're going to be looking at in this lecture first of all, we're going to define it. And then we're going to see the setting in life where it occurs and other aspects. And we're going to look at how does the cultus function. Then we're going to be looking at aspects of it such as sacred sites, sacred calendar, sacred personnel, sacred actions, sacred objects, and so forth.

Definition of Cult [14:44-17:50]

But let's begin with a definition. Two of the main thinkers about the cultus in the history of the interpretation of the Psalms is Eichrodt and Mowinckel. I give you the definition of Mowinckel first. Sigmund Mowinckel was a Scandinavian Norwegian scholar. He wrote mainly between, well his major work, his first major work was in 1904. Then his Magnum Opus came out in the 1920s. He defines it this way. He uses another word for ritual, "Cult [or ritual] may be defined as the socially established and regulated holy acts and words in which the encounter and communion of the deity with the congregation is established, developed and brought to its ultimate goal." So, it deals with holy acts and words that establish a relationship between God and the worshipper.

Eichrodt put it in these terms, "The term cultus should be taken to mean the expression of religious experience in concrete, external actions preformed within the congregation or community, preferably by officially appointed exponents and its set

forms." So "officially appointed exponents" would be like Israel's priests. Its set forms would be like the Psalms or in sacrifices and so forth.

Kurt Goldamer comes at it differently. He looks at it as, to quote him, "structured experience, symbolic meaningful activity, it's "pattern effects, which have a reasonable connection with each other in the mind and attitude of the person who stands within it." So, we all engage in an external expression of religion. Moving from the religion has two aspects to it. It's the inner spiritual experience and feelings and emotions and thoughts that find expression in external actions. As soon as you have two people worshipping together, you're going to have some kind of form. Namely, you're going to have a place where you'll meet and a time that you meet. So immediately there is some kind of external form that has to be imposed upon congregational worship.

Modern Worship and the Cult [17:50-21:47]

But when we're in that worship, for example, where we're used to a certain pattern, normally we will begin with an invocation, inviting God and trusting Christ to be in our presence. In some communions, they actually carry the cross into the congregation. That's symbolic of Christ taking up his residence upon the songs of praises and being present with his people. Sometimes the Bible is held up and carried into the congregation and we invoke God's presence and we will sing his praises. We will bring our prayers before him at some point.

There'll be a reading of Scripture, prayer for illumination, the reading of Scripture, the preaching of the Scriptures and a response. In some communions, the highlight of the sermon is an invitation. More in evangelistic, the highlight of the sermon is the people make a decision. In other congregations, the highlight of the worship is the participation in the Lord's supper, in which they receive a gift, trusting God's forgiveness and participating in his presence through the supper and through the words that accompany the supper. In any case, it's all part of this external expression.

So, I write in conclusion on 256, that it's the material over against the purely inward and spiritual feelings with which we're thinking in this lecture. It's the regulated or

set forms over against spontaneity. Some people worship better with spontaneity, with less form, and others worship better with strict form. It's not a matter of right and wrong. It's a matter really of what best suits the individual. I think one of the strengths of the New Testament is that it has very little on set forms, so that Christianity is able to adapt itself to numbers of cultures. Because unlike the Old Testament, which is a very strict form in many ways; in the New Testament, there's less a form to it. It's the congregation over against the individual and its integrated structures, we've said, over against ideation of approach of simply data and reflection. So, that is, activity that has meaning to it.

Page 257, I apply this to the Psalter quoting first from Bab. "In the use of this literature, [that is, the Psalms] the individual became one with this group and shared the spirit, which moved it, whether the mood of the moment was contrition, trust or glad thanksgiving. He [and I would add, she] found themselves and they also found the God of their soul's desire through the unreserved participation in the acts of communal worship whereby the rich resources and aspiring traditions of this people's history were made available to them." I think that's a very useful quote.

Entering God's Presence [21:47-23:58]

I am not defining the cultus in Hegel's term. Hegel thought of it that you have infinite reality. You have God, he's the ultimate reality. It's the finite through the cultus entering into that infinite reality. That would be misrepresenting the Bible that you do not barge into the God's presence.

You come into his presence through covenant structures namely that's why we began with confession of sin. We do not barge into his presence. We find his forgiveness for we realized that we have broken the law by not loving God with all of our hearts and not loving neighbors as ourselves. So therefore, we need to confess. We have no right in sinfulness to come into his presence. The presence of God, entering into his presence, demands on entering it through the provisions of the covenants.

We saw in Psalm 1 before you get into the book of Psalms. It's the man who keeps the law, the person who keeps the law and finds the light in his law that enters into the

worship of the Psalms. Says the late Martin J. Buss, "In the Israelite cult the God-man relation is not natural in the sense that it is a given. There is a requirement for decision. Laws and decrees, threats and promises support allegiance in a personal way, God and man stand confronting each other." We must be right with God through the mediation of Jesus Christ in order to participate in this external expression of religion and the use of the Psalms within it.

The Place of Cultus: Temple Focus [23:58-25:58]

Well, I hope now you have an understanding what is meant when I speak of cult. I mean, this congregational external participation in religion. We then take up the *sitz im leben* for the setting of this worship. We noticed that the Psalms originally not necessarily be originated in the temple. They originated with David in his wilderness experience, where he was being prepared for kingship, where he was learning a life of faith. So, in his contesting against Saul and later on against Absalom, even Psalm 3 is composed away from the temple. Psalm 42 and 43, the Psalmist is in exile somewhere around Mount Hermon. Psalm 137 is written in the Babylonian exile. So, they were composed apart from the temple in some cases.

Some were composed for the temple. The grateful songs of praise were composed for the temple. The hymns of praise were composed for the temple. But even those that were composed away from the temple often had the temple at heart, like Psalm 3 he still prayed towards God's holy place. Psalm 42 and 43 they're looking, he's looking, forward to be able to return to the worship at the temple. And, in any case, the Psalms were handed over to the chief musician for the use in the temple. So, the principal site of the Psalter is the temple itself. So, I've developed that.

Historical Critics and the Superscripts, Psalms Post-exilic [Gunkel] [25:58-31:16]

Now what I've developed next on page 257 is the understanding of the cultus by the historic critics. The historic critics are those basically who reject the Bible's own claims about its faith and authorship, among other things and they debunk the

superscripts and what I think to be also a postscripts, but they see them as trivia, irrelevant. In his great work on, the introduction to the Psalms—massive. At the very end of it, Gunkel adds a little chapter, maybe two or three pages about the superscripts saying they're worthless for all points.

Audience: Bruce, by superscripts, you mean like the first line, the before the Psalm?

Dr. Waltke: Thank you. I mean what's written above the poem itself. So, you have like "a Psalm of David" or you have, I think, a postscript "to the chief musician." So, it's that prose section. Unfortunately, in the English Bibles, it's in italics and you get the impression, it's not part of the Psalm. When I discuss the historical approach, I argue they are a very important part of the psalm. But Gunkel uses the, what we've called, literary analytical approach in which basically you accept the Wellhausian hypothesis and to understand the critic, you understand most academia, you have to understand that they do not think of Moses behind the Pentateuch. They think the material that is attributed to Moses is a forgery. I mean, Wellhausen says that. It's a forgery by the priests in the post-exilic period. So, for them, there is no Mosaic regulation. And so therefore it turns the Bible on its head. So, you have no real "Moses." And the material attributed to Moses is actually dated a thousand years later and wasn't available to David.

Audience: So, you're talking about the Pentateuch, not the Psalms with Moses?

Dr. Waltke: Well, what I'm saying is that we understand the cult as we're going to see, we go back thinking of the priestly material and the regulations for the tabernacle, but I'll get to that. Well, for Gunkel, he recognizes that the Psalms are forms and all go back to the first temple. He recognizes the temple and the cultus. For him the Psalter itself, because of his Wellhausian background, originates in the post-exilic period. So, that it's imitating the poets in the post-exilic material/period who are imitating the temple material. But the actually they are writing prayers for the synagogue, not for the temple.

They're using the forms from the temple, but they don't really believe, he doesn't really believe, they were written at the time of the temple. They were written much later because he just does away with the superscripts and that would fit the Wellhausenian evolution of religion. So that's where Gunkel was coming from.

So, he says that they're rooted in the cultus, but much of the Psalter reflects democratization, that is there is no priest any longer, there is no king any longer. So now it's just the common people of the cult and dated to the exilic and post-exilic epics, employing imagery, such as the king and his battles of the pre-exilic period. So, you could see it's just the military language of the Psalter. It is simply imagery for the problems of the person in the post-exilic period, who is suffering usually from illness. I made comment that in his mind, the sufferers to some extent psychotic. They see the whole world against them. It's really a bit, if I'm not being too strong, diabolical, in my mind what's happening here.

So, the extant Psalter for Gunkel is from the synagogue consisting of writings, by private individuals and the unconnected with the cultus. That's Gunkel's view. And you can't be in academia, and this is an academic track and biblical training. You can't be in academia and not run across Gunkel and his thinking. He's just the fundamental thinker in our field. I think you should understand what he's saying and where he's coming from.

Mowinckel and the Enthronement Psalms and Fall Festival [31:16-32:44]

Now, Mowinckel was Gunkel's student and Mowinckel recognized they come from the temple. Mowinckel interprets the psalms, not by David, but from the temple worship period, from the pre-exilic period. He reconstructs what is called an enthronement festival. Now, as I'm saying, you have to understand that he doesn't have Moses in the background at all. So, where is his source of understanding? Well he looks at pagan literature, pagan cultus. For example, in Babylon, Marduk is the god who conquered chaos. Marduk was enthroned annually because in the pagan religions, they didn't have a sense of history with a beginning and an end and a meaning to history. Their concern was cyclical of recreating every year annually, bringimng back spring, bringing

back life out of the death of winter. Marduk was the god who conquered the abyss and chaos. So, they reenacted the creation annually.

Enthronement Psalms [32:44-40:21]

And for Mowinckel therefore, he holds that Yahweh, the God of Israel, was enthroned annually. He actually builds on his mentor, his teacher, Gunkel. Gunkel held that the expression Adonai Malak meant "Yahweh" or "the Lord has become King." And he understood it that he was crowned annually as King at the enthronement festival. That expression occurs in, five Psalms: Psalm 47, verse eight in English, verse nine, in Hebrew, in Psalm 93:1, in Psalm 96:10, I think, and then again, in 97:1, 98:1, and 99:1. You could see that it might be worth a while to look at it in the text. I'll just take those last ones in the Psalms 93 through 99, which are called Enthronement Psalms. You see how Psalm 93 begins, "the Lord reigns." Gunkel and Mowinckel would translate that "the Lord has become King." They would say annually, "the Lord has become King." You'll see it again in Psalm 96 verse 10, "say among the nations, the Lord reigns," or "the Lord has become King." Again, 97:1, "the Lord reigns" and Psalm 99:1, "the Lord reigns.". These other songs basically are celebrating God's reign. The Psalms 93 to 99, therefore are called Enthronement Psalms. And what they mean is that Yahweh was enthroned annually in a temple ritual and these are called Enthronement Psalms.

Here the view is then in a fall festival, they felt that this was in the fall renewal with the latter rains in connection with the proclamation Yahweh has become King. They're influenced by what is known as the Akitu festival where Marduk was enthroned annually. We also find now, of course, Gunkel and Mowinckel didn't have the Ugaritic texts. They're writing around 1900, 1925 and the Ugaritic texts weren't discovered until 1940, but we find these very similar, notions in the Ugaritic myths where now it's not Maduk, but it's Baal, the god of rain. Whereas Marduk was defeating Tiamat, the goddess of chaos; in Ugaritic myths it's Baal, the god of life-giving rain, versus either Mot, which in Hebrew means "death" or Yam, which means "sea" or nahar "river." But it's a what is known in the literature as a chaos kamf, a battle between the creating God over against

the gods of death, sterility, and chaos.

According to Gunkel on page 257, the cultist functions to reenact and to reactualize the creation of the world and of Israel. In other words, they believe that God reigns, but this was a necessary part, almost like sacraments. It is almost like the Roman Catholic view of the mass, where you sacrifice Christ in the mass. So, they are similar to that kind of view of the mass of the re-sacrificing of Christ through the ritual. They are recreating both the creation and Israel's history or Israel's redemption. Now as I say Gunkel limited himself to just these five Psalms. For Mowinckel almost the entire Psalter belongs to this ritual. It's a whole re-interpretation of the book of Psalms. He's very influential in academia. And again, you can't read far in the literature of academia and a university without hitting the name of Mowinckel.

On page 258, I'm trying to explain further the Enthronement Psalms. He interprets, therefore "Yahweh reigns" to be "Yahweh has become King." It's derived as the background in the myths of the chaos kampf, as I said, of the creation. So applied to Israel, it's the reenactment and of the creation and of the celebration of the Exodus from Egypt and the victory as the Red or the Reed Sea. So, it's both creation and redemption being reenacted within the cult. Yahweh's coming at the enthronement festival sets the world right again, and crushes every onslaught that the enemy might make on the city and the people. As they see it, normally Yahweh is represented by the King and the King is regarded as the God who enters into the city in triumph.

So, he sees this, as I say, in number six, it's sacramental that through this ritual, you're entering into participating in this re-creation's of nature and of history. It aims to discover the interconnections between Psalms showing what the congregation was experiencing and feeling through acts and words of the cultus. Now I quote from Mowinckel, "the power inherent in the act is also concentrated in the word, the holy word is effective and creative." Or again, this is a new quote, "and remembrance and reenactment of the cultus the historical effects of salvation are turned into effective reality." And again, "we shall have understood neither the Psalms nor its place in actual

life. It's cultus situation and its aim until we have connected it with the festival in question and with its ideas, and cultic forms." So, you could see this alters the whole way you think about the Psalms.

Evaluation of Mowinckel's Approach: Fall Festival [40:21-43:02]

What's my evaluation of it? Well, first some positive evaluations. I think probably the fall festival under monarchy became the primary festival, just like in the church's calendar, it seems to me Christmas has become the primary holiday. So, I think that under kingship, the fall festival became the dominant festival and Israel's calendar of the Passover and Pentecost. Then the fall festival, which consisted of Sukkot, New Year, Day of Atonement and so forth. He says, for example, Kings tells us that the dedication of the temple occurred at this time and in this way. "All the men of Israel came to Israel. All the men of Israel came together to King Solomon at the time of the festival and the month of Ethanim the seventh month." [1 Kgs 8] And there's your verses. We're told that when Jeroboam set up a rival cultus that Jeroboam, "instituted a festival on the fifteenth day of the eighth month, like the festival held in Judah." [1 Kgs 12] So evidently that was the principal festival in the North. And, of course, Jeroboam's cultus is totally a bastardization of the Mosaic cultus. Well, David's sacred site for Jeroboam is no longer Jerusalem; it's Dan and Beersheba. The symbolism of God is no longer the ark and the covenant, but it's a bull and so forth.

Well, Hosea speaks up on "the day of the festival of our king, the princes are inflamed with wine." And again, probably "the day of our king" is this fall festival, which probably also celebrated the house of David, and the house of David, and the election of Zion as the city of God. This would explain why we're told in Kings under the Josiah's reform, "not since the days of the judges nor through the days of the Kings of Israel and the Kings of Judah had any such Passover been observed." It seems as though the Passover was eclipsed in favor of the fall festival. So, I think there's some element of truth that the fall festival was the dominant festival in Israel during the time of the monarchy.

Chaos Kampf [43:02-44:12]

Against some, I would argue that it is grammatically possible to translate *adonai malak*, by "Yahweh has become King." In my mind, either one is a viable option. There's a third value that some Psalms are written in light of that chaos *kampf* they're using that imagery, not theology, but they are using that imagery for God's creative activity. In the myths, there are three essential elements. There's the protagonist that is the creating god. There's the antagonist, that's the god who is restraining creation. And then after the creating god is victorious over the hostile restraining god, then he's worthy of a temple. They build a temple in his honor. Those are the three dominant ideas, or they celebrate his temple because he's the victorious god.

Psalm 93 and Chaos Kampf Imagery [44:12-50:16]

Now look at Psalm 93 and see how these three elements come into play. I think, unless you understand these three elements, it's almost an unintelligible psalm. We read "The Lord reigns, he is robed in majesty; the Lord has robed in majesty and armed with strength; indeed, the world is established firm and secure. Your throne was established long ago; you or your throne from all eternity. The seas have lifted up, Lord, the seas have lifted up their voice; the seeds have lifted up their pounding waves. Mightier than the thunder of the great waters, mightier than the breakers of the sea--the Lord, and high is mighty. Your statutes, Lord, stand firm; holiness adorns your house for endless days."

You see there, you have these three elements and in a way they'll put in against this background to me, sort of destroys it. If we can, we have a second naivety, and come back to it again we can understand it better. But you notice that "the Lord is robed with strength" and it's in connection with his creating the world. So, he says, "the Lord reigns. He is robed in majesty." A double metaphor of the robbing of him as a double figure meaning a metaphor of his wearing a garment. And the majesty is a metonymy for the majesty he accrued from his victory as it were at the creation over chaos. "He is robed in majesty. The Lord is robed in majesty and armed with strength. Indeed, the world is established firm and secure." But you see it's "he reigns," but it's not thought of as

annually. It's been accomplished. And notice how he puts it, that I think, gives the meaning for the Lord reigns rather than "he becomes King." Your throne was established long ago. You or your throne from all eternity." There's nothing here about an annual reenactment. It's he's there from the beginning and from the beginning of when he created the light over the darkness, the land over the sea, for example.

But now note the adversary is represented by the sea. It's the sea, symbolic of death in the Old Testament. They hadn't gone through the romantic period of sea landscapes. Sea was again, hostile to Israel. You could grow nothing in it; and you could drown in it. They saw nothing good in it. "The seas have lifted up, Lord, the seas have lifted up their voice; the seas have lifted up their pounding waves." They're representing all that's evil. But mightier than the thunder of the waters, mightier than the breakers of the sea, the Lord on high is mighty." And he has a house that endures forever. But that house is characterized by holiness and by his covenant statutes. "Your statutes, Lord, stand firm, holiness adorns your house for endless days."

So, I'm saying this mythic imagery helps us in our interpretation. In fact, John Levinson says, and perhaps it's too extreme in his *Sinai and Zion*, very fine book, that unless you understand this, you don't understand some of the psalms. Maybe. I think it does help us understand Psalm 93 and what's going on there amongst others.

But negatively, the problem is it looks to ancient Near Eastern pagan religions to reconstruct the festival, not to the Mosaic law. For them it didn't exist. It participates in inherent heterodoxy of historical criticism to all reconstructions of the festival, a hypothetical lacking clear scriptural warrant. The variety of views calls into question, the method. Gunkel himself rejected Mowinckel's reconstruction on such a large scale. He says, it's purely imagination. There's no restraint. So he limits himself to just the five, but he began it seminally within the festival for these five.

Today, largely it's rejected. It's acknowledged there are these Enthronement Psalms, but the whole reconstruction to large extent is rejected. That's why I hesitated even to get into Mowinckel's Enthronement Psalms. But it seems to me, a person educated

in the Psalms should be aware of this material. Weiser, as I say, the other interpretation, Weiser sees a fall festival. In his excellent book in the Old Testament Library series. His is one of the best commentaries, I think. But he thinks of the Psalms all fitting in a fall festival. But he thinks they all celebrate the covenant, the making of the Sinai covenant. Again, it's a universalism, that's too broad a brush. So, I don't buy into interpreting all the Psalms against one festival.

Psalms as Private Prayers [50:16-51:43]

To me, I go with what's the plain sense of the Psalter. To me, the plain sense of the Psalter is that we should accept the superscripts. That would mean a song by David. For example, of the 14, when he fled from Absalom. In that case, many Psalms began as private prayers. This is a reversal of Gunkel. Instead of being from the temple and then private prayers; they started as private prayers, and then they became part of the temple worship. As I said, some Psalms so obviously are composed away from the house of God, but other Psalms are composed for the temple.

One of the questions you have, there's some Psalms that are wisdom. We're going to be looking at those later on. And exactly how did Psalm 1, for example, fit into temple worship or did it fit? Maybe it's just for the synagogue and meditation. But how do the wisdom songs, what was the setting in life for Psalm 49, for example, that we'll be looking at, which deals with theodicy and the problem of evil. Exactly, how did that fit into the temple life? That's more debated. I think it fits into it, but we'll look it back to that.

Cultic Functions [51:43-56:16]

I'm going to jump now into the function. How does the cult function? I'm going to look at it more generally, and then I'll apply it to the Psalms and we'll see that they are composed against the temple liturgy and worship. I suggest there are four uses of the Psalms. There are four or five. They are symbolic, on page 259. They are typical. They function typically. They function sacramentally. Fourth, they function as artistic

propaganda, that is, advocating a point of view. Not in a negative way as in Nazi propaganda, which was based on lies, but based on truth.

First of all, symbolic. It's a visible form that profoundly portrays the living stuff of religion. In other words, you have religious experience and now you give it concrete expression in external actions of man toward God from the inner spiritual reality to outward actions that are offered up toward God. The ascending smoke, for example, would represent the prayers, going up to God. The raising of the hands would symbolize offering up gifts to God and receiving his grace.

Or of God to man, now it's true that the individual could not enter into the Holy of Holies and only the high priest could enter there once a year. But there was no mystery about it. It was clearly revealed for all Israel. So, they lived by imagination. They could imagine what the high priest was doing within the Holy of Holies. In the Holy of Holies, it was all very symbolic. Carved on the walls were Palm trees and all forms of trees. It represented the garden of Eden and eternal life. At the very center of the Holy of Holies was the Ark of the covenant. In fact, if you went into Solomon's temple, all the doors are becoming more narrow, the main door, the entrance way, and then into the Holy of Holies where it's all focusing. The roof line is dropping. So, the whole focus is on the ark of the covenant. There's nothing like that, it's covered in gold, but there's nothing like that in pagan religions. In pagan religions, it was a nature deity. It would have been a statue of the sun or the moon, or, and that could be manipulated. But here at the heart of it all was the transcendent moral rule of God. It was ethics. It was a way of living. There's nothing like that. That's at the heart of Israel's religion is the transcendent moral will of God. It's ethics.

Then over the 10 commandments were in the ark of the covenant. And over it was the mercy seat with the blood that made atonement that made it possible for sinful worship, for sinful people to enter into God's presence. All over the lid were the cherubim. They were sphinx like figures that guarded the sanctity and preserved it. So that just as the cherubim protected the garden of Eden; so, sin could not enter his

presence. So, the cherubim protected the sanctity of God's Holy place. All of that is communicating. And then outside of it, you had the light that was penetrating the darkness. There was the showbread whereby you could eat and fellowship with God. Then outside of that, there was the altar of incense symbolizing prayer. So, it all was a symbolic teaching through symbolism, theology.

Psalm 73 and the Cult [sanctuary] [56:16-59:57]

I think, take Psalm 73, I'll read the whole Psalm, but, let's take this and read it. Notice what happens. See, it's in the sanctuary. I gather he sees the symbolism that his crisis of faith is resolved. This is now Psalm 73, usually referred to as a wisdom song, but he begins with, again, he's got profound questions, but he couches it all in praise. He doesn't really doubt God's goodness. He calls it into question, but he affirms his faith straight away. "Surely God is good to Israel, to those who are pure in heart." He's confident. That's the reality, whatever complaint, whatever questions he has, his bedrock faith is God is good and he upholds his covenant. But nevertheless, here's my problem because his experience conflicts with his faith. And so, what he does is he actually begins, he says, "But as for me, my foot had almost slipped. I nearly lost my foothold. For I envied the arrogant when I consider the prosperity of the wicked. They have no struggles; their bodies are healthy and strong. They are free from common human burdens; they are not plagued by human ills. Therefore pride is their necklace; they clothe themselves with violence. From their callous hearts comes iniquity; their evil imaginations have no limits. They scoff and speak with malice; with arrogance they threaten oppression. Their mouths lay claim to heaven, and their tongues take possession of the earth. Therefore the people turn to them and drink up waters in abundance. They say, 'how would God know? Does the Most High have knowledge, know anything?' This is what the wicked look like -- always free of care, and they go on amassing wealth.

Surely in vain, I have kept my heart pure; I've washed my hands in innocence. All day long I have been afflicted, and every morning brings new punishments. If I had spoken out like this, I would have betrayed your children. When I tried to understand all

this, it troubled me deeply till I entered the sanctuary of God; then I understood their final destiny. Surely you place them on slippery ground; you cast them down to ruin. How suddenly are they destroyed, completely swept away by terrors! They are like a dream when one awakes; when you arise, Lord, you will despise them as fantasies. When my heart was grieved and my spirit embittered, I was senseless and ignorant. I was a brute beast before you.

Yet I am always with you. You hold me by my right hand. You guide me with your counsel, and afterward you will take me into glory. Whom have I in heaven but you? And earth has nothing I desire besides you. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever. Those who are far from you will perish; you destroy all who are unfaithful to you. But as for me, it is good to be near God. I've made the Sovereign Lord, my refuge; I will tell of all your deeds."

This is Dr. Bruce Waltke in his teaching on the book of Psalms. This is session number 19: Liturgical Approach, Cultus / Ritual. [59:57]

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Psalms
Session 20: Sacred Sites, Seasons, Objects and Personnel
By Dr. Bruce Waltke

This is Dr. Bruce Waltke and his teaching on the book of Psalms. This is session number 20: Sacred Sites, Seasons, Objects and Personnel.

Psalm 73: Continued on Cultus: First Step Down [00:22-3:10]

In your notes [Ps 73]. I noticed the three steps that the Psalmist takes down the ladder of faith, and then the seven steps by which he walks back up to attain the highest levels of faith. The turning point comes when he enters into the temple. I assume he sees the symbolisms of God that restore his faith.

Logically speaking, his first step down is in verse three. When he says, "When I saw the prosperity of the wicked." In other words, he began his view of life with what can be called a keyhole theology. He was determining reality by what he could see within the limited horizon of his own experience, which would maybe be like 70 or 80 years. It's like a horse with blinders on and taking a view of reality from what he can see. What he sees in verses four and five is he sees the prosperity of the wicked in verses six through eight, he sees that they are ungodly and they're wicked and what they do and scoff and speak with malice. They're not only ungodly, they're are agodly without God, for all practical purposes. "Their mouths lay claim to heaven, their tongues take possession of the earth." Verse 11, "they say, how would God notice? Does the Most High know anything? So, they live without God.

And then he summarizes his problem in verse 12. "This is what the wicked like, always care free. They go on amassing wealth." Then his own contrast is that while he keeps the covenant he's being afflicted. His mistake fundamentally is, as Bishop Ross puts it, his basic mistake is that he was defining God by his problem, rather than allowing

God to define his problem. He started with his problem and then he defined God. And if you start with your problem you may conclude God does not exist. Or if he does exist, he's not necessarily good or just, or his other sublimities. So, you start with the problem. This is his first step down and away from God when did he defines God by his problem.

Second and Third Steps Down [3:10-5:13]

His second step down and away from God is that when he envied. In other words, he made their prosperity his god. He was envying them. It is not wrong to be perplexed. It is normal in Christian experience to be perplexed. Paul makes that point in 2 Corinthians chapter four, referring to the experience of the apostolic community. He says in chapter four, verses six, let's see, verses six through eight. We'll start with six, "for God who said, let light shine out of darkness, made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God's glory displayed in the face of Christ. But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us." Now note, verse eight, "We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed, perplexed, but not in despair, persecuted, but not abandoned, struck down, but not destroyed."

And so it's not wrong to be perplexed at our sufferings. That is the normal Christian experience, but to envy and make prosperity and our expectation; to make that our god is sin, because it's no longer being content with God and trusting him.

The third step down is he almost lost his foothold. That is to say he almost stepped out of the realm of faith, of trusting God who keeps us covenants.

7 Steps Back to God [5:13-9:04]

Notice his seven steps back toward God. In verse 15, he couldn't live with this philosophy of life that God rewards evil and punishes the good. "If I had spoken out like that, I would have betrayed your children." He couldn't teach it. His whole conscience could not go there. But it's one or the other. Either God is good and allows the suffering or there is suffering, and God is not good. He could not teach God is not good. His heart wouldn't allow it. He says that he was troubled by all this. "When I tried to understand all

this, it troubled me deeply."

But notice his second point: he entered the sanctuary of God. In other words, he went to a place where he could meet God in his crisis. The problem was some people when they're in the crisis, they walk away from God and never give themselves an opportunity for God to meet them and to help them through the crisis. But the critical one is that he entered the sanctuary. He's in the sanctuary. "Then I understood their final destiny." There he saw the symbols of God's holiness, of his mercy, of his everlasting life, of his final victory. When he saw all of that, he knew that was truth. Those symbols of God spoke deeply to him and that's why they're in Scripture, that we can live in imagination. When we see the truths of God in our imagination, we live in the temple and they all find their expression in Jesus Christ. We see his death and his resurrection, those symbols enable us to withstand and understand the end of the wicked, the final destiny of the wicked.

He realizes that when he was looking just at material things, he was no more than an animal. He was just a brute in the field. He says it, "I was senseless and ignorant, I was a brute beast before you." And then in verses 23 and 24, he recognizes that the Lord is taking him by his right hand and leading him to glory. "Yet I am always with you. You hold me by my right hand, you guide me with your counsel, and afterward you will take me to glory." So, he's able to transcend a key hole theology. He realizes that through all his sufferings, God has taken him by the hand and actually strengthen him and leading him to the point of glory, just as he took Christ by the hand and took him through the wilderness and took him through all the temptations and tests to the steel and prepare him for his final victories. He took Israel through the wilderness. He took David through the wilderness of his experience of being rejected by Saul, learning to live by faith. God takes us by the right hand, leads us through our crisis in order to strengthen us and lead us to the final glory in his presence. Finally, then in verse 25, he finds "whom have I in heaven but you? And earth has nothing I desire besides you." In other words, I have God.

I ask myself, why do I want to go to heaven? Well, I look forward to meeting my

parents again, some of my relatives and that's good, but if Jesus isn't there, I'm not really interested. It's Jesus that makes heaven, heaven and that's the beauty of heaven. It's Christ himself and all his loveliness.

Function of the Cultus: Typical [9:04-12:22]

Then finally, he has God now. So, left with the balance of the masses of riches or having God, which would you prefer? I'll take the eternal sublime God, over temporal riches that rust and fade and can lead us into evil behavior. But I've got into the song because the temple symbolized eternal truths. The next point I'd like to make about the function of the Psalms is that they are typical I mean, not of the Psalms, but of the cultus it is typical. It's a divinely intended, visible form to portray the eternal reality and what will become real or actual in the future. In other words, here we have in heaven, we have the eternal reality. It's spiritual. I don't think we can understand, it's a mystery. We could never fully understand it, but it's a reality in eternity. Something is, and what is, is "God the Father; God the Son; God the Holy Spirit who was and is, and will be ever more." That is what is. The temple portrayed that reality. It was a copy of the heavenlies. It was a copy of that. At the heart of it is God's transcendent, ethical will, as we were describing the temple. So, on a synchronic level, it is a type in that sense of heaven by which we can imagine heaven and understand it. But on the diachronic level, it's not only an example, a picture, a copy of heaven, but it's a type of the greater to come. So, the temple is the presence of God and so forth is a type of Christ in whom God dwells in all his fullness. It's a type of the church who is the temple of God, his holiness, his eternal life, his presence, and his sacraments. So, it's a type that finds its fulfillment in Christ and the church.

But there's more, there's still the consummation. When we come to the heavenly reality itself, when we come to the risen Christ with his spiritual body and we will have new bodies, resurrected spiritual bodies and will actually be in a reality that is beyond words for us to express. So, this is the function of the cult. It is a type of heaven. It's a

copy of heaven and it's a type of what is to come. That's what I'm suggesting is the second function of the cultus.

Function of the Cultus: Sacramental [12:22-15:00]

The third function is sacramental that actually by these physical realities, with spiritual words, you actually enter into communion with God, as the priests would eat the bread, as they would offer up the sacrifice, as they would find forgiveness. They were actually participating in the life and forgiveness of God. Finally, in addition to being symbolic and being exemplary and typical and being sacramental; a fourth way, I say it's artistic. It's propaganda. It's a, in the best sense of the word, promoting an idea, an ideology. Architecture can do that. I remember when I was just about I think four years of age, possibly five, my parents took me to visit an uncle who was working in Washington, DC. It made such an impact upon me those marble buildings, that classic Greek architecture. It spoke of power. It spoke of authority. It spoke of endurance. It really spoke deeply into my being. When I went back maybe 56 years later, even then I could remember where everything was, it made such an impression upon me.

That's why the church-built cathedrals. It spoke of the church's, permanence of its authority. That's why the universities in the enlightenment, they try by their grandiose architecture to replace the church with the secular state. For example, if you go here to the University of Washington and you go to their library, it looks exactly like a cathedral. It has triple arched, recess doorways, as you enter into it. It has stained glass windows. It has niches with statues on it, but instead of having statues of Paul, John, or the apostles or so forth, they have statues of Rousseau Voltaire, the rationalists. It's a new form of worship. They're trying, and when you're on that campus, to impact the student that this is the reality, and this is the value of architecture, it speaks of reality.

Psalm 48: Zion and Zaphon [15:00-18:08]

I'm suggesting that that's why we have the Songs of Zion, because they tell you to come to Zion and take a look at what God is doing, because it's a way of communicating

on another level besides words. Here is a beautiful Psalm, I think. Psalm 48, "A song, A Psalm of the sons of Korah. Great is the Lord and most worthy of praise, in the city of a God, his holy mountain. Beautiful in loftiness, the joy of the whole earth, like the heights of Zaphon is Mount Zion, the city of the great King." By the way, this too, is an allusion to the Ugaritic myths because the mountain of Baal was Zaphon. Zaphon also means the North. So just like the sea in Israel means the West and the Negev can mean the South, this mountain can mean the North. So, it's the mountain in the North where Baal was worshiped principally. It was thought to be what Zion was to Israel, Zaphon was to the Canaanite people who worship Baal. So, he says, "It's like the heights of Zaphon is Mount Zion." Zaphon in the Ugaritic literature was also known as "the city of the great King." "God is in her citadels; he has shown himself to be her fortress. When the kings joined forces, when they advanced together, they saw her and were astounded; they fled in terror [at Zion]. Trembling seized them there. They have pain like that of a woman in labor. You destroyed them like ships of Tarshish shattered by an east wind. As we have heard, so we have seen in the city of the Lord Almighty, in the city of God: God makes her secure forever. Within your temple, O God, we meditate on your unfailing love. Like your name, O God, your praise reaches to the ends of the earth; your right hand is filled with righteousness. Mount Zion, rejoices, the villages of Judah are glad because of your judgments." He says to the congregation, "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; he will be our God even to the end."

And so, you have these Songs of Zion that celebrate the greatness of Zion. They invite you to come and look at these buildings that for that time spoke of God's permanence, endurance, authority and strength.

Aspects of the Cultus [18:08-19:16]

Well, that's looking at the cultus generally. We have defined it. We've seen the major site is the temple sitz im leben. We've seen some of its functions. Now, we look at

the aspects of the cultus. Here we need to divide those aspects that were begun by Moses and those that were introduced with the temple. The aspects of the cultus began with the Mosaic tent and is replaced with the royal temple. In the Moses period, what they had was the sacred site that is wherever the tent or the tabernacle was pitched. That was the site where God was located. But it was never stipulated at one site where it would be. There were sacred objects. There was the ark; there was the tent; there were the vessels; there was the ephod on the priest; there was the Urim and the Thummim within his breastplate.

Sacred Seasons [19:16-21:39]

There were the sacred seasons of Passover that occurred in connection with the barley harvest. There was Pentecost that occurred in connection with the wheat harvest. There was Sukkot and the New Year, which was connected with the pressing of the grape and the pressing of the olive. There were sacred personnel. Moses gave all of that. And he also provided for sacred sacrifices and sacred offerings, but there are almost no words. There's no music. The only words we have is that when you brought your first fruit, you said, "A wandering Aramean was my father." You'll find that in Deuteronomy chapter 26.

David now greatly expands the cultus. He builds on that, but David transforms it. He transforms it into opera. He provides staging of the temple. He provided the libretto and the music in the Psalms. So now, accompanying the Mosaic ritual, we now have it almost, David is like a Mozart to me. More than that, he's a Renaissance man, but he took the Mosaic cultus, and he gave it the staging of the temple and he gave it the music and libretto of the Psalms that would accompany the ritual.

Moreover, the sacred site was now located at Jerusalem. The sacred personnel was now expanded beyond the house of Aaron and the Levites. The sacred personnel now include the king, along with prophets. With the King comes prophecy because the prophet represents God to the king. So now we have in addition to the priests, we now have a sacred king and the prophet who would speak to the king. We are going to hear the prophet speak in the Psalms in especially Psalm 50.

Timed Events: Weekly, Daily, Crisis [21:39-24:20]

Generally speaking, then we have the sacred site, which was the Mosaic tent replaced by the real temple, which made it into opera. There was the sacred calendar, that is, there was the added chronic continually annual acts of worship. There were the weekly Sabbaths. There was the sabbatical year. There was feast and sacred seasons and so forth. Then in addition to the chronic annual cultus, there was the critical moment when you had war or drought or plague. Without elaborating that, that's all in 1 Kings chapter eight, verse 31 through verse 51. Then your notes, I give you this, the seven different kinds of plagues and so forth.

We talked about sacred seasons and the normal cycle that could be the normal cycle of Sabbath, weekly Sabbath. There was a normal cycle of the festival days, the three festival days, three festival seasons of Passover, Pentecost and fall with this complex of Yom Kippor, Day of Atonement, a New Year, fall festival, celebrating of Booths and so forth. And there was also the year of Jubilee. All of that was chronic regular, but there could be critical moments of famine, drought, earthquake, all of these things and Solomon anticipated that when people would also go to the temple in their crisis.

There's some uncertainty about exactly how the sage fit into the temple worship. The sage was more in the city gate. So, it's more of a question: How does the wisdom teacher fit into the temple worship? And as we saw, there is wisdom material like Psalm 73. How actually did that perform within the temple? I myself think that the priest would have given this kind of instruction. He was the teacher in Israel. So, I have no particular problem with thinking of the priest at the temple teaching the people. I think maybe that could well be part of the temple worship.

Sacred and Profane [24:20-26:14]

We now turn to the aspects of the cultus in the Psalter. I begin by contrasting within the temple and outside of the temple. Within the temple covenantal benevolences are mediated to the worship, including the forgiveness through sacrifice. Within I say, all

is sacred. It's holy; it's set apart. Without is the profane. Actually, the word profane at a etymologically means pro--before, fanom--the temple. It means before the temple, outside of the temple, that is the profane. So, within the temple, you have the sacred, outside of the temple you have the profane. So, when you enter into the temple complex, you're entered into a sacred sphere into the holy sphere of God's presence. Within is eternal. It is infinite. That "glory be to God, the Father, Son, Holy Spirit, as it wasn't beginning is now and will be ever more." In this temple you're entering into the eternal; you're entering into reality; you're entering into the presence of God. Without it's finite; it's temporal; it's passing. It's fading away. Within the temple there is perfection. Outside of the temple there was imperfection and sin. Look at it more particularly then in the Psalms, we have the sacred site and we have already read one of those Psalms. So, we have the Songs of Zion. And as you read the Psalms, they refer to Zion, a house of the Lord, the holy hill, the sanctuary of God, the dwelling place in Zion. I give you a list of references that make reference to the temple as a sacred site.

Mount Zion [26:14-27:49]

Psalms, some psalms, celebrate the election of Mount Zion. That as God chose the house of David, he chose Mount Zion. In pagan religions the god is endemically related to a place. He's related to that mountain. He cannot move. Israel's God is transcendent. He met Israel at Mount Sinai and then he elected Mount Zion. It's not that he is endemically inherently connected with Mount Zion.

He chose it. So, we have the Songs of Zion. Here's Psalm 46, "God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore, we will not fear, though the earth gives way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, though it's waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging. There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy place, where the Most High dwells. God is within her, she will not fall; God will help her at the break of day. Nations are in an uproar, kingdoms fall; he lifts his voice the earth melts. The almighty, the Lord almighty is with us. The God of Jacob is our fortress. Come and see what the Lord has done. The desolations he

has brought on the earth. He makes wars to cease to the ends of the earth. He breaks the bow and shatters the spear. He burns the shield with fire. He says, be still and know and that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.' The Lord Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress." So, you have these psalms pertaining to the election of Zion.

Entrance Liturgies [27:49-31:03]

You have other psalms that speak of participation in the worship of who is qualified to go into the house of the Lord. This would be like Psalm 15 if you want to take a look. Psalm 15 is David's 10 commandments. I'll just read it quickly all these could take expansion but I think there's a point in reading, just reading these psalms. Psalm 15 "Lord," it's "A psalm of David, Lord, who may dwell in your sacred tent?" In David's day he had built his own tent for the ark before Solomon built the temple. It's one of the evidences for the Davidic authorship .is that his psalms speak of the tent as he does here. . "Lord, who may dwell in your sacred tent? Who may live on your holy hill?" Then he gives three generalizations, three positive statements. "The one whose walk is blameless" that is, has integrity with total commitment to God and his worship. It doesn't mean sinless but it means a whole hearted commitment to God. "Who does what is righteous," depends upon God, serves the community. "Who speaks the truth from their heart;" in other words there is no hypocrisy. And then negatively he picks up on that. "Whose tongue utters no slander, who does no wrong to a neighbor and casts no slur on others." There's no gossip. "He does no wrong to the neighbor." So, you have three positive, three negative, the seventh and critical one pertains to our relationship with God. And, that is, you show your relationship with God by those whom you honor, and those whom you reject. "Who despises a vile person, but honors those who fear the Lord." So, he shows, he fears the Lord by identifying with those. He honors those who fear the Lord, but the crowd of adulterers and crime and he rejects that. And he honors those who worship and pious and depend upon God.

Eighth, Ps. 15 "he keeps an oath even when it hurts and does not change his

mind." In other words, it's the person who keeps their marriage vows, who can enter the hill of God. For those who break their vows, of course, thank God there is atonement, there is forgiveness of God, but we must appeal for that forgiveness and renounce adultery. We renounce all forms of taking a life that violate the 10 commandments.

Covenantal Structure for Entering God's Presence [31:03-33:14]

And the fifth is made very, very pointed "who lends money to the poor, without interest who does not accept a bribe against the innocent. Whoever does these things will never be shaken." So that's a Psalm that shows who can participate in the worship at the temple. That takes me back to where I began that there are covenant structures you just don't barge into God's presence or assume that you can enter into the infinite reality of God himself because God is holy and he demands these which are the expressions of, David's expression ultimately, of the 10 commandments.

Dr. Mounce: Do you think by picking 10 David is trying to make us think about the 10 commandment and he's kind of rewording or getting at their heart?

Dr. Waltke: I think there is 10 because there are 10 commandments. All these commandments, I don't think he is trying to ape them one for one. He does mention keeping the vows to your hurt, but I don't think he says much here about the Sabbath day or so forth. I just think 10 symbolizes fullness and I think that is the point of it, it's fullness. They are very broad generalizations.

Dr. Mounce: But if you keep these ten, David's ten, you will be keeping Moses' ten.

Dr. Waltke: If you do what is righteous which is dependent upon God you're going to be also keeping the 10 commandments, I would think.

Sacred Seasons [33:14-34:40]

Having looked at references to the sacred site in the book of Psalms, now we look at the references to the sacred seasons. So, for example, there is reference to the Sabbath day Psalm 92 is meant for singing on the Sabbath day. Psalm 81 was recited at the new moon and then many of the Psalms were recited at the morning and evening sacrifices. As we'll see, Psalm 3 is a morning prayer, Psalm 4 is an evening prayer. Psalm 5 is a morning prayer. Psalm 6 is an evening prayer. I think probably those Psalms were recited in connection with the morning sacrifice and with the evening sacrifice.

The Chronicler [ch. 16] tells us, "then he appointed some of the Levites as ministers, before the ark of the Lord to invoke, to give grateful praise and to praise the Lord, the God of Israel. Asaph was the chief. And second to him was Zechariah, Jaaziel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Mattithiah, Eliab, Benaiah, Obed-Edom and Jeiel who were to play harps and lyres. Asaph was to sound the cymbals and Benaiah and Jahaziel the priests were to blow the trumpets regularly before the ark of the covenant of God. Then on that day, David first appointed that thanksgiving be sung to the Lord by Asaph and his brothers." But it was to be done regularly before the ark of the Lord. So, these Psalms were sung. I take it regularly at these daily sacrifices.

Sacred Actions [34:40-35:42]

So far as sacred actions are concerned, there's references to sacred offerings. I give you the verses that make reference to it. So, for example, Psalm 96 "Ascribe to the Lord, the glory due his name, bring an offering and come into his courts." Psalm 107, "let them give thanks to the Lord for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for mankind. Let them sacrifice thank offerings and tell of his works with songs of joy." Psalm 116. These are songs of grateful praise, "What shall I return to the Lord for all his goodness to me? I will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the Lord. I will fulfill my vows to the Lord in presence of all the people. I will sacrifice a thank offering to you and call on the name of the Lord. I will fulfill my vows to the Lord in the presence of all of his

people in the courts of the house of the Lord in your midst. O Jerusalem." So, there were then the sacred offerings.

Prophetic Oracles [35:42-36:39]

There was also prophetic oracles that were given at the temple. Psalm 50 would be an example of that. It's a Psalm of Asaph. He says, "the mighty one, God, the Lord speaks. And summons, the whole earth from the rising of the sun to where it sets." Then in verse seven, he says, "Listen, my people and I will speak; I will testify against you, Israel: I am God, your God. I bring no charges against you concerning your sacrifices or concerning your burnt offerings, which are ever before me." But what he faults them for is the failure to keep covenant and ethics. So, Psalm 50 is a prophetic oracle given at the temple against the people.

Sacred Procession [36:39-37:53]

So far as sacred, we've talked about sacred actions. We talked about the offerings, we've talked about prophetic oracles. There were also processions that you live in imagination. Here's Psalm 26 and the Psalmist says in his protestation of innocence, "I wash my hands in innocence, and go about your altar. O Lord. But claiming aloud your praise and telling of all your wonderful deeds, Lord. I love the house where you live, the place where your glory dwells." Then as Psalm 68, he describes a procession. Here's a description of how the tribes are entering. "In front of the singers, after them, the musicians; with them are the young women playing the timbrels. Praise God in the great congregation. Praise the Lord in the assembly of Israel. There is a little tribe of Benjamin leading them, there the great throng of Judah's princes, and there the princes of Zebulun and of Naphtali." You can almost see the procession as an enters, as the tribes enter into their worship.

Songs of Pilgrimage [37:53-43:55]

Again, there are songs of pilgrimage. In fact, Psalms 120 through 134 were sung

when Israel made pilgrimage to the temple. This is Psalm 84. It's not one of the Ascent Psalms, but it shows a journey, a pilgrimage, to the temple and the experience on the way to the temple. "How lovely," this is by, this belongs to the sons of Korah. I doubt they're, I think this means it belongs to their community and may be composed within their community, but it was performed by the Korahites. "How lovely is your dwelling place, Lord Almighty! My soul yearns, even faints for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God. Even the sparrow has found a home, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may have her young--a place near your altar, Lord Almighty, my King and my God." Of course, the birds built their nests there because there could be no killing at the temple and they were secure in there. That's the picture of, as the bird is secure in the temple of the Lord, one has protection and security. "Blessed are those who dwell in your house; they are ever praising you. Blessed are those whose strength is in you, whose hearts are set on pilgrimage. As they pass through the Valley of Baka [That means "tears"]. They make it a place to springs; the autumn rains also cover it with pools." So, their tears are transformed into springs of life. "They go from strength to strength, until each appears before God in Zion. Hear my prayer, O Lord God Almighty. [He Is now at the temple] Hear my prayer, O Lord God Almighty. Listen to me, God of Jacob." And what does he pray for? The King. "Look on our shield, O God, look with favor on your anointed one."

Then he reflects upon the beauty of this pilgrimage, "better is one day in your courts and a thousand elsewhere. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of the wicked. For the Lord God is a sun and a shield; the Lord bestows favor and honor; no good thing does he withhold from those whose walk is blameless. Lord Almighty, blessed is the one whose trust is in you." So, you could see this as a pilgrimage Psalm. And he looks forward to being in the presence of God. When he gets into the presence of God, he prays for the king, that God would look with favor on the king. Then he realizes, there's nothing better on earth than to be in the presence of God and in worship and in prayer.

Here's one of the Psalms of Ascent. Psalm 122, "A Psalm of David, I rejoiced with those who said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the Lord.' Our feet are standing in your gates Jerusalem. Jerusalem is built like a city that is closely compacted together. That's where the tribes go up--the tribes of the Lord--to praise the name of the Lord according to the statute given to Israel. There stand the thrones for judgment, the thrones of the house of David. Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: 'May those who love you be secure. May there be peace within your walls and security within your citadels?' For the sake of my family and friends, I will say, 'Peace be with you.' For the sake of the house of the Lord, our God, I will seek your prosperity."

So, you could see some of the sacred actions of pilgrimage and offering up of sacrifices, prophetic activity, and so forth. I think you could see why this is worthy of a separate treatment of another approach that we live in. The "we" live in the temple because that's where the Psalms were sung. We understand what's happening through that external expression of religion. I'm hoping that when you read the Psalms and you live in the temple, you'll have a better understanding and appreciation for them. They referenced sacred objects. There is the sacred altar, as in Psalm 84. There's a sacred cup. "I will offer up the cup of salvation." And in a Psalm of Grateful Praise they speak about banners. This is when the King is going out to war. They pray for the king in Psalm 20 as he's going out to war. They celebrate his victory upon his return in Psalm 21. But in Psalm 20, "May we shout for joy over your victory, and lift up our banners in the name of our God." So, each tribe would have its banner and it would be a sacred banner to the Lord and his victory. "May the Lord grant all of your requests" is said to the king.

There were musical instruments. I use here Psalm 150. This is the climax of the Psalms and the whole orchestra comes in to praise the Lord. "Praise the Lord. Praise God in his sanctuary, praise him in the mighty heavens. Praise him for his acts of power; praise him for his surpassing greatness. Praise him with the blast of the ram's horn." And then comes "praise him with the harp and lyre, praise him with the timbrel and dancing,

praise him with strings and pipe, praise him with the clash of cymbals, praise him with resounding cymbals. Let everything that has breath praise the Lord. Praise the Lord."

Use of Metaphor for God and Heaven [43:55-51:46]

There's not only sacred objects and sacred actions and sacred sites and sacred calendar, but there's the sacred personnel. As we commented that the temple was really an expression of heaven. There was no sharp dichotomy between God and heaven and God and the temple. The temple was a replica of heaven. It was a way of thinking about heaven. We cannot think about God. We cannot think about heaven, apart from metaphor. And the metaphor for God he's likened to, does he have ears? Does he who formed the ear? Not hear. Does he who formed the eye? Not see. And so, we are expressions of God to let us know that God hears our prayers, that he sees us. He sees us and he takes pity upon us and so forth. These are all, we are theomorphic. We are metaphors for what God is like. And the temple is a metaphor for heaven. And Israel itself and the temple and king is a metaphor, a picture of Christ and his church on the diachronic level. But the sacred personnel include the angels. "Bless the Lord. O you his angels. You mighty ones who do his word, obeying the voice of his word. Bless the Lord all his hosts, his ministers who do his will." And then there were the priests. "Let us go to a dwelling place. Let us go, let us worship at his footstool. Arise, O Lord, and go to your resting place. You in the ark of your might. Let your priests be clothed with righteousness and let your saints shout for joy. There are others: O house of Levi, bless the Lord; O house of Aaron, bless the Lord; O house of Levi bless the Lord." And then it extends beyond the priesthood. "You who fear the Lord, bless the Lord."

We'll be looking at the king in Psalm 2, who becomes his holy king. And Psalm 44 we met the army, at the temple. And then we have the God fearers and they are all part of the sacred personnel. Alright, well, we'll end the introduction to the cultus here. Now we'll look at a particular Psalm or two, which deal with the coronation liturgy of the king at the temple.

Dr. Mounce: Three questions. You said the temple was a replica of heaven. And now we

ourselves are. You used to word theo- something.

Dr. Waltke: Oh, yes. I use the word that I'm trying to describe what God is like Theomorphic -- M O R P H I C. Theo- made like God. So, we're the image of God. And so he gave us eyes that we may know, he can see. He gave us hears, so we know that he can hear. It's not that God has a corporeal eye or a corporeal ear. But we know he sees and he hears.

Dr. Mounce: Secondly, you were talking about how the heaven is a replica of heaven I mean the temple is the replica of heaven. It allows us to somewhat understand what heaven's like. And I'm thinking in the New Testament about the relationship of marriage and how Paul moves from a discussion of our relationship with God and the church into marriage or it's other way around, I guess. The same kind of thing.

Dr. Waltke: I would have to put it that way. It's another way of showing that marriage is to show the relationship of Christ and his church of how they relate. And really it must speak as Christ, whatever you want to say about headship, whatever Christ is to the church, the husband is to his wife, right? So, that therefore the husband dies for the wife and the wife obeys the husband in everything as we obey Christ in everything. It's a doctrine that's been lost.

Dr. Mounce: Well, the whole issue of, you were talking earlier about in architecture and how certain strands of Christianity understand there's a connection between architecture and helping us understand what worship is and what God is. So, cathedrals are laid out in the cross and this kind of stuff. Versus other strands of Christianity where the church building is a square box and it's just ugly. And there's no understanding of the relationship of forms to the reality, right?

Dr. Waltke: Yeah. And I think that we impoverish ourselves if we don't use the tactile, visible imagery of what a building can do. I think there is value in putting the pulpit where you read Scripture above the lectern, where you preach Scripture. So that the lectern is always under Scripture. I think that when you go into a church, it says a lot about its theology, its architecture. So, I think if you put a choir in the front and you put a

pulpit in the middle and that's pretty much it. It's just drama and it can turn into entertainment and you have the choir and they dress up and it's really entertainment. The preacher is the focus and not the word of God, whereas others will put the table at the center. It's the sacrifice of Christ that's a center. So, I think we can't escape symbolism.

Dr. Mounce: Is that what's going on in some traditions where the preacher preaches from the side and not the middle.

Dr. Waltke: Yes, and how often you have the Lord's supper in the center of it all. Yeah.

Dr. Mounce: And finally, the overall thing is striking me as you've been talking is, I know we're all different in how do we want to worship and how we respond to God. But there's a lot of formality in what you're describing in the Old Testament.

Dr. Waltke: In the Old Testament, it's pretty well defined. There isn't that much creativity. But in the New Testament, I find it relatively undefined that I think gives you a lot of liberty. So, one of my first ministries was back in 1955 and it was a summer ministry. One of the ministries was with the Quisadi Indians in Louisiana. The pastor who founded the church, he gave them almost no instruction. They just worshipped as they wanted to worship provided they kept the Lord's supper and baptism. Well, when I got there, they had all the women on one side, and I mean, that's just what they did naturally. They separated sexually. So, the women were in one side, the men were on the other side. Now the women were kind of scattered on the left side, but on the right side, the men were concentrated in the back two rows or three rows or in the front two or three rows. So, I said to his name was dear brother Lees. I said to brother Lees. I understand women and the men, but what's going on with the men? Well, he said the men in the back row are either unsaved or out of fellowship. And when you preach, you preach to the back row.

This is Dr. Bruce Waltke and his teaching on the book of Psalms. This is session number 20: Sacred Sites, Seasons, Objects, and Personnel. [51:46]

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Psalms
Session 21: Liturgical Approach, Coronation Psalms,
Psalm 2
By Dr. Bruce Waltke

This is Dr. Bruce Waltke and his teaching on the book of Psalms. This is session number 21 Liturgical Approach, Coronation Psalms, Psalm 2.

Introduction of Coronation Psalms [00:26-2:05]

We're looking at accredited methods or approaches to interpreting the Psalms and then zeroing in and zooming in on a given Psalm and handling that in more detail. So, we looked at Psalm 4 for the historical approach. We looked at Psalm 100, for the hymn of praise. We looked at the Grateful Psalms of praise. And now we are in liturgical. So, I thought, as in the Lament Psalms, I took a clearly messianic Psalm; one that's used in the New Testament with specific reference to Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ, that to illustrate the liturgical approach, I would take two coronation songs that is Psalms in which the King is coronated as David's son is coronated as King over Israel. Both of these Psalms are cited in the New Testament namely Psalm 2 and Psalm 110, on page 269 of your notes. We begin with a translation of the Psalm, by way of introduction. And then we'll look at an outline of the Psalm. And then we'll see that the setting of the Psalm is Zion presumably at the temple.

Translation of Psalm 2 [2:05-3:29]

First of all, the translation, "Why do the nations conspire and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers band together against I Am and against his anointed one, 'let us break their chains and throw off the shackles.' The One enthroned in heavens laughs; the Sovereign scuffs at them. Then he spoke to them and his anger and his wrath terrified them. 'But I installed my King on Zion, my holy

hill.' I will proclaim the decree: 'You are my son; today I give you birth. Ask me, and I will give the nations as your inheritance and the ends of the earth as your possession. Break them with a rod of iron, like a potter's vessel dash, them to pieces.' Therefore, kings be wise, be warned rulers of the earth. Serve I Am with fear and celebrate his rule with trembling. Kiss his son, lest he become angry and you'll be destroyed in your way, for his wrath will soon flare up. How blessed [or] how rewarded are all who take refuge in him."

Structure of Psalm 2 [3:29-6:00]

The Psalm of 12 verses falls into four stanzas with three verses in each stanza. The stanzas are marked off by different speakers. In the first stanza we hear the nations speaking. We hear them say in verse three, "Let us break," that is the Lord and his anointed King. "Let us break their chains and the throw off the fetters."

Then we're transported from the earthly courts of the pagan kings throwing off God's rule, we are then in verses fourth through six, lifted into the heavenly court and we see the One enthroned in heavens and we hear him speak in verse six, "but I install my King on Zion, my holy hill."

In the next three verses, verses seven through nine, presumably the King is speaking because he's proclaiming a stipulation of the Davidic covenant in which God says to him, "You are my son." So, the one speaking is the son of God, and that is the Christ and he recites what God told him. In the last stanza, the Psalmist is speaking and he's addressing the kings of the earth directly.

So, we have this outline of the hostile kings speak and we're taken into their own royal palace. And they resolve to throw off the rule of I Am and his King. In the second stanza, four through six, I Am himself speaks. And he resolves to install his King on Mount Zion. The third stanza of the king speaks and he resolves to recite the decree, granting him dominion over the earth. And finally, the Psalmist speaks. He steps on the stage itself and he admonishes the hostile kings to submit to I Am and his King.

Setting of Psalm 2: Coronation Liturgy [6:00-12:26]

I think it's quite clear that the setting of the Psalm is a coronation liturgy because it says in verse six, "I install my King on Zion, my holy hill." And then he says, the King says, "I will proclaim the decree," which says, "You are my son, today I give you birth." So "today" is presumably the day of his coronation in which he becomes, as it were, by adoption, the King, the son of God as he's installed as King on Zion, God's holy hill. Another setting is the setting within the book itself, using the German common language *sitz im buch* that this is part of the introduction to the Psalter. Psalms 1 and 2 are an introduction. They have no superscript they have no subscript and they're related.

They have many catch words that relate them. So, for example, Psalm 1 begins "Blessed is the man," or "how rewarded is the man" or "the person" rather, "who adheres to God's law." And you notice in verse 2:12, I've put it into italics. "How rewarded, how blessed are all who take refuge in him!" So, Psalm 1 begins with that word, "blessed" and Psalm 2 ends with that word "blessed." Notice also the verb "hagah" which means "to meditate." And it's translated in one case, the pious person is meditating on God's word. By contrast the kings in verse one of chapter two, they are meditating is translated "plot," they are meditating on overthrowing God's rule. Both employ the term "to mock," but in verse one, it's the ungodly who are mocking the righteous. In Psalm two it is God who is mocking the wicked.

The metaphor of way and perish is used in both Psalms. So, we have in Psalm 1 that "the way of the wicked will perish." And we have in Psalm 2 in 12B, "lest he become angry and you be destroyed in your way," same language. So, the editor probably used these two Psalms as a way of introducing the book, to prepare those who meditate on his anthology of petitions and praises and of instruction to interpret the Psalm both in respect to the King and to themselves as individuals within his kingdom. So, there was a double level to the way we read the Psalms, they are applicable to the King and they are applicable to us as individuals in our relationship to the King.

Finally, the setting within the canon itself, that the psalm has its fulfillment in

Christ and his coronation when he ascended into heaven and he sat down at God's right hand. That is referring from beyond the historical king is clear, in Psalm 2 because this King rules to the ends of the earth. David at his best ruled from the river of Egypt to the Great River, Euphrates. But the Psalms extends that dominion to the ends of the earth. The New Testament identifies this psalm with Jesus. In fact, as the kings rejected the historical King, when Peter and John healed the lame man at the temple, and he goes away rejoicing and it's done at the Gate Beautiful where Christ should have been received. The leadership reject Peter and John and the church again.

And so they say, quoting the Psalm: "You spoke by the Holy Spirit, through the mouth of your servant, our father David, 'why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain, the kings of the earth rise up and the rulers band together against the Lord and against his anointed One.'" And then they comment. And here's the irony that the religious rulers are lumped together with Pilate, with Rome, with the peoples of the earth, because originally 'why do the nations,' were the goyim, are non-Israel. And the Le'umim, the peoples are non-Israel. But they're all lumped together because they're part of the conspiracy against Christ and his church. Indeed, Herod and Pontius Pilate together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel of the city. "Conspire against your holy servant, Jesus whom you anointed. They did what your power and will had decided beforehand should happen." So, they recognize that this was all under divine sovereignty, this rejection of Christ and of his apostles and of his church. An early Protestant theologian, Amirolle said that we have to keep our left eye on the historical king and our right eye on the antitype, on Jesus Christ. So "we must keep a left eye on historical king and our right eye on the eternal Christ." So, when we interpret the Psalms, we're always looking at this history and this typology pointing forward to him. We'll apply this again and again of how does this speaks of Christ and his church because Jesus said the Psalms speak of him.

Exposition of Stanza 1: Psalm 2:1-3 [12:26-18:18]

Well, let's exposit the Psalm. Keep the translation in hand. Let's begin with the

first stanza, which is the hostile kings throw off I Am's rule. In verse one, we're told immediately by the Psalmist their plot to throw off the rule will not succeed. In verse two, he informs us that the rebellion is universal; it's worldwide. The third is the motivation for throwing off his rule.

First of all, their plot will not succeed. He expresses his amazement and indignation that they're devising a plot that's doomed to failure because it's against God himself, the eternal One and the King he has installed. So, when he says, "Why do the nations rage? He's not asking the real questions. He's not expecting to come back and say, "Well, here's the reason one, two, three, four." It's purely rhetorical. He's expressing his amazement. "Why in the world would they do such a thing as that? But this is the law of liberty; this is the way of life. It cannot succeed. Nevertheless, the world insists on it and the nations and the peoples originally referred to the Gentiles.

Probably in the Psalm, what happened in the ancient Near East, when you got a new king, then the nations would test the new king and try to overthrow his rule. So David is anticipating the coronation of his successes and he anticipates that each time the nations are going to test his rule and his power and refuse to submit to his dominion of salvation.

So, they conspire and they plot, which means they're getting together. They setting of the first scene then I take it to be in a pagan court. They are determined to kill God and kill his King. Just as I believe the people who have as their agenda one world government and a secular state, a secular global government is a reestablishment of Babel, if you please. They'll do it by the suppression of religions, suppression of conscience and suppression of speech. It's where I see, candidly, our administration taking us to world one world government, which will take away all liberty of conscious, liberty of speech, liberty of religion, and will call freedom of speech, hate speech, anything that opposes their ideology. They want to get rid of God and they want to get rid of the church because the church represents freedom, freedom of conscience, freedom of speech, and freedom to testify. So, it's the reestablishment of Rome's tyranny. That's where I see the world

going, to be candid with you, toward the one world government.

Historically, we know that this happened and we have with the El Amarna correspondence. This El Amarna is a site in Egypt during the reign of Tutakomen. Actually, in the 1300, about 1300 BC, we hear the petty kings, we have their correspondence in which the petty Kings are revolting against the king of Egypt. So, it offers a graphic description of the plottings and intrigues of the petty kings of Syria and Palestine against the Egyptian Suzerain and against one another. But he says, it's in vain. It will not succeed.

So, we have this tension, God allows this evil to demonstrate who He is and his victory over evil. Then he speaks about their universal rebelling and he speaks about the kings and the rulers of the earth, verse two, the kings of the earth and their rulers. They are representative of their people. So, all the kings of the earth, and they're said to be in the earth because that's in contrast to God who was in heaven. They take this stand in battle and they band together for they plot how to put their plan into action. Their rebellion is against I Am the God of covenants, the God of the 10 commandments.

When I look at what our Supreme court is doing and what our congress is doing to a lesser extent is to rid America of the 10 commandments and set up a secular state, independent of God, I believe they are setting us up for the judgment that is to come. I think most Christians discern what's going on in our country. They're rebelling against I Am. We said, that's God's name that he's the eternal one who makes himself known in history. He reveals himself by his victory over evil and through the revelation.

The Anointed One [18:18-26:05]

When it says "against his anointed One," that's a figure of speech known as metonymy and metonymy of adjunct. The anointed One in the Psalms is the king. There were three sacred persons in the Old Testament that were anointed. There was the king, there was the priest, and there was the prophet. The prophet, of course, was anointed by the Spirit. But anointed in the Psalms refers to the king.

There are several ideas involved in that anointing. The prophet would designate

him. You had to have prophetic designation. The prophet would come with a flask, or clay jar, or with a ram's horn. Let's take the ram's horn. The ram's horn would have the large end of that wasn't attached to the head at the top. And then the point would be hollowed out so that then he would fill the ram's horn with scented oil. Then he would come to the king designate and he would allow that scented oil to cover the king and from head to his feet. They did the same for the priest.

Now that anointing, that covering with oil, that was the king's cache. The word cache, I'm using it in the sense of the seal of authority. That's is what set him apart. Just like the president, has the president's seal. That if you have the president's seal, it speaks with authority. So, it is the king's cache. It is the king's validation; it is the king's legitimization that here's the king because a prophet has anointed him.

If you don't have prophetic anointing, you're not a legitimate king. So that in the case, when Adonijah set himself up as the king, even though he had Joab, the great general, like Moshe Dayan, but the greatest general was Joab and you also had Abiathar who was with David through all the hardships of David in the wilderness. They all supported Adonijah but he lacked one thing. He didn't have prophetic designation. Solomon had Nathan's, the prophet's, designation. So, he was validated as the king.

If you read the Minor Prophets, when it's during the dual monarchy, they will cite the Northern and the Southern kings, but they will not recite the kings who set themselves up on the throne like Pekiah or Pekah or Hoshea. They set themselves up with no authentic validation and the prophets did not recognize them. Hence they don't cite them at all. They are pretenders to the throne.

So, the king has the anointing that sets him apart. In that anointing, he becomes God's property. So, everything in the temple is anointed. All the pieces of furniture, the priest was anointed. By the anointing, it becomes God's property. Therefore, God's wrath is incurred. When you touch his property, you defile his holiness, his sanctity.

That is, for example, why David couldn't kill Saul? Because he said, touch not God's anointed. By the anointing under Samuel, Saul had become God's property and

David couldn't touch his property. God had to dispose of his property in his own way. That's what David recognized. He either will be killed in battle, or God will rid himself in some other way, because he knew God had also anointed him. So, we have this ambiguous situation where God anointed two kings, and it was a means of testing David, whether he would walk by faith and trust God to defeat Saul and not take matters into his own his own hands.

But anyway, the anointing set the king apart. I think that's why Saul/Paul said he was the chief of sinners because he kept the law and yet he says I'm chief as sinners. I think the reason is that he tried to kill God. He realized he touched God's anointed Christ. I think that it was like he took his fist into heaven and punch Christ right in the nose. He says, I'm chief of sinners because I rejected Christ; I persecuted his body; I persecuted his church.

Well, and then the third idea of the anointing is that he now is empowered to do the works of a king. It was a picture of the Spirit of God coming upon the king. So far as you can carry that over, you know I think you can see Christ has the cache of John the Baptist. All Israel knew that John the Baptist was of God. Jesus says to his rejectors, why didn't you believe John? All the people knew a true prophet was in their midst. And he says, in John five, this is one of the evidences for us being the Christ. He says, not that I needed that, but I tell you that for your sake. You could see that John was the prophet. He had anointed me and said, he's not worthy to unlatch the latchet of his sandal and so forth. And he was God's property, set apart to God. The fact of matter is until he handed over his life, no one could really touch him as we've noted elsewhere.

Well, he's the anointed one and he had the power of God. Similarly, we are anointed by the Holy Spirit we're set apart. The presence of God is in our lives that we live by God's grace, sanctified lives. It's that Spirit of God that is in us that is our cache, that we are the children of God. The motivation is to throw off God's rule. Whereas the pious and the saint said, to love God and fear God to them it is their delight. They meditate in God's law, day and night. For the unbeliever it's galling bondage. It's

restraining his liberty.

And so, we have in the first stanza of this plot. It's universal, and they don't want to come under the rule of Christ. They view it as a galling bondage of ropes and bonds. Whether it's like a yoke on the neck, or I give you a picture here of people being carried into captivity. In this particular case, the victor has punched holes in the tongue of their victims and put ropes through them to pull them by the tongue and totally control them.

Stanza 2: Psalm 2:4-6 [26:05-27:50]

We turn to the second stanza and I Am installs his King on Zion, his holy hill. Here in verse four, we learned that God laughs at the situation. We'll have to comment on that and when we talk about *shadden froide*.

God laughs in verse five, God is angry. And in verse six, he's resolved to set his king on his throne. Beginning then with verse four, 'the one enthroned in heavens laughs at them, the Sovereign scoffs at them.' I note that the poet frames, the second stanza by beginning with I Am sitting enthroned in the heavens and ending with the anointed King on my holy hill. The upper frame speaks of his universal transcendence over all the earth and the lower frame of his imminent presence to his charismatic King, who extends his kingdom over all the earth. So "he who sits enthroned" is again, a metonymy with a Sovereign who is transcendent in contrast to the earthlings. He laughs and I think there are two ideas to this. One idea, and I put the second, and the first idea of laughter it's the laugh of justice. It's the laughter of righteousness, of the triumph of justice over tyranny, the laughter of righteousness of wickedness. The laughter of the tyrant being defeated and the oppressed delivered.

God's Laughter [27:50-30:28]

It's used in two other times when we're told that God laughs. It witnesses in a Psalm 37:12, "there they are bellowing with their mouths with sharp words on their lips, but who they think they will,..." No, Psalm 37, it's "the wicked plot against the righteous and gnash their teeth at them. But I Am laughs at the wicked for he sees their day is

coming. So, he laughs at the destruction of the wicked who plot against the righteous. So, it's the laughter of the victory over injustice and tyranny, of righteousness over wickedness.

And then looking at Psalm 59, there they are bellowing with its teeth, mouth with sharp swords on their lips for they think "who can hear us?" That is, they are a-godly, ungodly, basically atheistic, "but you laugh at them I Am. You hold all nations in derision." I think that evolved in laughter. There's almost a comic aspect to it. So in my mind, it's sort of, I picture Gulliver, in Gulliver's travels when he lands on the Island of Lilliput. It's before daybreak, his ship is falling apart, he's in the sea, but it's close to the Island of Lilliput and he makes his way up onto the beach. On a grassy knoll he falls into a deep sleep. He awakens about 10 in the morning and he hears a knocking and he looks down himself and he sees the ladder coming up his side. His long hair is pegged into the ground. His arms out stretched with little strings around each finger. They're all is pegged down. Then he sees this ladder and he hears this knocking. Here comes the little Lilliputians and they're led by their king. The Lilliputians are the size of his little finger and the king is one fingernail bigger. So, this king of the Lilliputans is telling Gulliver what to do. And for Gulliver this is comic. He could just smash them like that and it'd be the end of the story, but he doesn't do it. He plays along with the game.

And so, in a sense, God is allowing this. There's almost a comic aspect to it in order that we might know that he triumphs over evil. Righteousness and justice will prevail and will not be defeated.

Shadden Froide [30:28-33:39]

But it does raise a question about what the German word is shadden froide. It's very offensive that we should laugh at the destruction of other people. The Bible tells us not to gloat over the destruction of other people. So, I thought we ought to discuss a little bit about the shadden froide in German which means "joy at damage" joy at seeing other people hurt.

Christian and non-Christian sensibilities commonly regard Israel's pleasure

derived from the misfortune of others, what the Germans called *shadde froide*, damaged joy, as expressed in Israel Song of the Sea and in David Psalms, as an unworthy emotion. In 1852 Archbishop Trench of Dublin in his study of the of words wrote: "what a fearful thing it is that any language should have a word expressive of the pleasure which men feel at the calamity of others." So, people today have trouble with *shadden froide*, that God would take pleasure at the damage of others.

Even the Schopenhauer, a 19th century, German philosopher and atheist found it too dreadful to contemplate. Friedrich. Nietzsche argued that malicious pleasure is illegitimate and makes one guilty because pleasure is derived from doing nothing.

Shadden froide is a dangerous emotion. I say, when injustice is celebrated, but not when justice served. *Shadden froide* is a dangerous emotion when injustice is celebrated, but not when justice is served as in the case of Israel songs and in Woman Wisdom's sermon at the city gate in Proverbs 1:20, where we are told "she laughed at the destruction of the fools."

John Portman, professor of Religious Studies at the University of Virginia in his recent book, *When Bad Things Happen to Others*, argued that justice is a virtue. So is the feeling of pleasure when we see law breakers low. In other words, if justice is a virtue, then joy at the triumph of justice is totally appropriate and a virtue. It's all to the good that we do because this pleasure reflects our reverence for the law. *Shadden froide* is a corollary of justice. And so, it's because God is just that he rejoices when the wicked are destroyed. So, we've been arguing that *shadden froide*, when it's the connection with the triumph of justice is a virtue.

Jesus and Shadden Froide [33:39-38:48]

But now we look at Christ and how does he respond to wickedness? And I do not find in Christ he's ever laughing at the destruction of the wicked. I think the reason is that in his first advent, it was not the time for justice. This is well known the way he handles his inaugural address that he's fulfilling Isaiah's prophecy from Isaiah 61, where Isaiah says, "the Spirit of the sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to

proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from the darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor and the day of vengeance of our God."

And this is how Jesus launches his ministry in Nazareth by reciting this prophecy and saying it's fulfilled in him. This is found in Luke chapter four, beginning with verse 16. "He went to Nazareth where he had been brought up. And on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. He stood up to read. And the scroll of Isaiah was handed to him unrolling it he found the place where it was written. 'The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the appointed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.'" So, our Lord sees himself as the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy. But what's of interest is what he doesn't read because in Isaiah. It says, "to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor and the day of vengeance of our God." But what did Jesus do? He read "the year of a Lord's favor." "Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down." So, this was not the day of vengeance. This is day of grace. So, I think that is the reason that you don't get this note in Jesus' preaching because this is the year of God's favor. This is the time of God's favor. This is the time of grace and salvation. The time of vengeance and death and the laughter of justice is still future.

Dr. Mounce: Is it kind of like you have in John where Jesus says, "I didn't come to judge, but to save.?"

Dr. Waltke: That's very good analogy, very, very similar to that. Also, John, John three. Yeah. That's where, that's found. He makes that statement. I think it's very much like that, and this is the year, this is the time of salvation. This is the time of grace.

Dr. Mounce: Because he doesn't judge. And he does say later on, I'm not going to judge you my words will, but that's the idea it is a different time.

Dr. Waltke: This is, do you get to get in John six, I believe. It's the same idea. I don't think it's appropriate for the church today to laugh when the wicked, are defeated. Let me

say this sounds strange, but Jesus, to me, that would contradict the Sermon on the Mount. "You've heard that it was said, love your neighbor and hate your enemy. But I tell you who love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you."

Now I give this, illustration where this year, finally Canterbury took a stand against homosexuality and silenced the Episcopal church. They could no longer really vote or participate in the Anglican communion. And I give the quote to that. At one level I do rejoice in the triumph, but I don't rejoice over in the triumph over those evil bishops. My heart wants to be, I want to pray for their salvation. I really believe it's true. I believe they don't know what they're doing just like those who put Jesus on the cross. I think those who are favoring, same sex marriage they really don't know what they're doing. They're destroying the home. They think they're doing good and they're doing evil and I want to pray for their salvation. I don't want to rejoice when they are defeated. I just, that's not my natural response. My natural response is to engage in shadden froide, but I don't think it's appropriate for me as a Christian is what I'm saying.

God's Anger at Sin [38:48-41:27]

So God, laughs at them and God becomes angry at them. And here's where Lewis is very helpful. In my judgment God's anger against sin is a very neglected doctrine in the church. We speak only of God's love, but we do not speak of God's wrath and God's wrath against sin. It's very real. Here I find Lewis very helpful. He says, "these expressions of anger are lacking in pagan literature because Israel had a firmer grasp on right and wrong. There the absence of anger, specially that sort of anger which we call indignation can, in my opinion, be our most alarming symptom, the absence of anger against sin." And I see an absence of anger in our society. It's due I think, to relativity, the loss of absolutes. No one's sure about what's right and what's wrong. We're becoming like Sodom and Gomorrah and a result is without God, without standards, you no longer have absolutes of right and wrong. Therefore, you can no longer be morally indignant because you have no firm grasp on what's right and wrong. I think it's an alarming symptom of our age. I think Lewis is right on. He says, "if the Jews" and I don't refer to Old

Testament saints as Jews. I think that's an anachronism. The Jew today is one who rejects Jesus too, as we define it. But the Old Testament saints look forward to his day. So I do not refer to them as Jews. Anyway, "if they curse more bitterly than the pagans, this was I think at least in part, because they took right and wrong more seriously. For if we look at their railings, we find they're usually angry, not simply because these things have been done to them, but because they are manifestly wrong and hateful to God as well as to the victim. The thought of the righteous who surely must hate such doings as much as they do, who surely therefore must, but how terribly he delays to judge or avenge is always there if only in the background."

And so, God becomes angry. He becomes angry when they change his glorious person into a grass eating, defecating bull of all things and they worship it. Incredible! And God is angry. Rightly so.

Jesus and Anger [41:27-47:04]

In the case of Christ, I don't find that it's ever said Jesus is angry in so many words, but it, to me, he expresses his anger when he raised Lazarus from the dead. And Bill, maybe you can help me here. But that, the Greek word *embrimomai* I think originally meant "snorted" when he's going to raise that Lazarus. It says, Jesus, I think it's equivalent to sternly rejected what's about to happen at this situation. I think he's angered by this situation that when he raises Lazarus from the dead, right under the noses of Jerusalem and the high priests and the leadership, he knows it's going to be his death. Thomas said, let's go with him to death because he's going to raise a man from the dead, they going to kill him for it. I think that's where Jesus is responding to that with --. Dr. Mounce I think the only actual time it says Jesus was mad, and it was a textual problem, is when the disciples couldn't exercise the demon out of the little boy. And there's a chance that if he was angry, he was angry at sin and how sin had destroyed his good creation. That's the only time that *orgizw* is actually used of Jesus. So I mean, we think of Jesus as an angry person, like the temple cleansing, but it doesn't say it. But he was deeply, deeply moved, which is the snorting.

Dr. Waltke: That's how that's translated. But I think the "deeply moved" is the move of anger as a way of it is deeply moved. It doesn't use those words, in so many words, but the word is used as I read the word; I think it's the expression of anger and displeasure. At any rate, and I also think the cleansing of the temple when he makes a whips out of the chords and he drives the money changers and the cattle, out of the temple and he scatters the coins and he overthrows the table. That's pretty violent action rejection. Yes.

Dr. Mounce: I would say it's violent in that it's zealous. It's not violent in that it's anger. Zeal for your / my father's house consumes me.

Dr. Waltke: Yeah. It's motivated by the zeal for his father's house.

Dr. Mounce: Anyway, it's an interesting discussion. I think a lot of people want to make Jesus mad as a validation for their own anger. I'm not saying that to you of course. But, it's just the safe way to say it is. It's remarkable how rarely the Bible says Jesus was angry.

Dr. Waltke: And as you say these expressions are against wickedness.

Dr. Mounce: Yeah, not against the people.

Dr. Waltke: Yeah. So far as the church is concerned, Paul says, "be angry and sin not." So, I think that that "be angry" there is a place for moral indignation. But I don't think it's limited to that. I think it could be angry because your spouse doesn't squeeze the toothpaste right or something like that. You're just angry at a situation, you're frustrated by the situation. So, I think there's a place, but "sin not" is when you lose control, you become rash in the midst of it is the way I want to understand it.

Dr. Mounce: Well, I would say looking at a situation where a girl is molested. Yeah. If it doesn't respond in anger, there's something wrong with you because anger is that tool that God gave us to deal with danger.

Dr. Waltke: I like that. Yeah. I think that's right. So, I think there is a place for moral indignation at the least. So, I write, make sure that nobody pays back wrong for wrong, but always strive to do what is good for each other and for everyone else. Rejoice always, pray continually give thanks in all things. So, in other words, "sin not" means you

wouldn't still be rejoicing in the Lord. That's going to qualify anger to a great extent it would seem to me. So, it's sinful not to be joyful, not to be thankful. It would be sinful to return evil with evil.

Well, so now the third thing, God does that we had God it's comic laugh of no, it's the laughter of justice and triumph. It's his moral indignation, which is very valid and needed. And thirdly, he installs the King on Zion. The "I" in the Hebrew text is highly emphatic. "I install" well by those words, he's installing the King. It's just like, this is what we call a speech act theory that the minister says, "I pronounce you man and wife" and those words effect it. And so, his word, "I install my King" in effect affects it, as in a marriage pronouncement, as I would understand it.

Zion and Jesus' Rule [47:04-52:22]

"On Zion," well, we don't really know what the word Zion means, but it refers to the hill between the Tyropeon Valley on the west and the Kidron Valley on the East of the city of Jerusalem. In most instances it refers to the Temple Mount where the Dome of the Rock now sits. It connotes invincibility, the name and use before David's conquests was "the stronghold of Zion." And so, Zion connotes invincibility that it can't be defeated. And it's called "holy" because it's where God dwells. It's set apart I think, as Levensohn says, "Zion is in history, but it's also apart from history, it transcends history. It's eternal and holy." The installation of Christ on Zion occurred. I think at his ascension.

I do not find in the New Testament that he's going to return and be installed on earth again, as King. I just can't find that in the New Testament. He says in John chapter 16 and verse 13, "When he, the spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into panta all the truth. He will not speak on his own. He will speak only what he hears. And he will tell you what is yet to come." There is no reference in the New Testament that Christ is returning to earth to be installed as a King on Mount Zion or in Jerusalem. The whole theory of my judgment is made of whole cloth. It's just isn't there. And if the spirit is to guide us into all truth, for me to establish some notion that Jesus is going to return to earth and set up an earthly kingdom is, anti- to Scripture as best I understand it. Again

there is no reference in the New Testament to Israel, being regathered as a political entity, after the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD, there's just no reference to it.

Now, I think the New Testament teaches Israel, all Israel, will be saved. And I think that's at the end of history in Romans 11. But there's nothing in the New Testament about Jesus returning to earth building a third temple, there's smoke here that you can say, maybe it's alluding to that, but no clear revelation.

Secondly, John 4 says that the earth is done away. We're now in the spirit. The Samaritan woman put her finger right on the issue between the Jews and Samaritans. And the issue was where do you worship? Do you worship on Mount Jerusalem or do you worship on Mount Gerizim? The rabbi said if the Samaritans would give up Gerizim and worship at Jerusalem, we could be brothers together. This was the dividing line between them.

The 10th commandment in the Samaritan Pentateuch pick it up material from the building of an altar on Ebal in Deuteronomy 27 and so forth. The 10th commandment is essentially you shall worship on Mount Gerizim and from that she picks up right on that issue. "Sir, the woman said, I could see you are a prophet, our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, [that is Mount Gerizim] and in Samaria, [present day Nablus]. But you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem. Woman, Jesus replied, believe me, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem. You Samaritans worship what you do not know. We worship what we do know for salvation is from the Jews. Yet a time is coming and now has come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is a spirit and his worshipers must worship him in spirit and in truth." So, we're in an age of the Spirit. No longer the cultus is done away, for all practical purposes.

Furthermore, Jesus ascended into heaven, and we're told it's at that time, he sat down at the right hand of God. "Exalted to the right hand of God, [says Peter, in the first sermon]. He has received from the Father, the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out

what you now see and hear. For David did not ascend to heaven, yet he said, the Lord said to my Lord: sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet. Therefore, let all Israel be assured of this: that God has made this Jesus whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ." And as I understand the New Testament it's from heaven that Christ is now building his church. We come to Mount Zion which is the heavenly Jerusalem and we do it in Spirit. Says the writer of Hebrews, "But you have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the judge of all men, to the spirits of righteous made perfect, to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel." for the blood of Abel cried out for vengeance, but the blood of Jesus cries out for forgiveness. But we have come to Mount Zion and that is the heavenly Jerusalem. So therefore, "when I install my king," best I can tell, it finds its fulfillment when Christ ascended into heaven and sat down at God's right hand. From there he rules, has authority over all the nations and builds his church.

Third Stanza: Psalm 2:7-9 God's relationships [52:22-52:22]

The third stanza the king recites the decree giving him the right to rule the earth. In verse seven, we have his relationship with God. In verse eight, his relationship to the earth and in verse nine his relationship to the nations.

King's Relationship to God [52:22-1:00:26]

First of all, his relationship to God: he's his son. Historically, when the one is speaking, "I will declare the decree." "I Am said to me," it must be the King and finds its fulfillment in Christ. And when he says, "I will recite it," that's a cohortative of resolve. I'm resolved to it because by reciting that decree and owning that he's God's King, he's accepting rejection and he's risking his life because he's willing to be the King and he doesn't run from it. He resolves to recite the decree. It took tremendous faith, knowing

that the nations are going to, and Jesus would know they're going to put him to death. Yet he recited the decree I'm the son of God, but didn't shirk it. Today I think with churches headed into persecution, I think it's very necessary that we recite the decree that "as many as believe in him have the right to be called the sons of God." He's going to recite it in the decree. The decree, is the stipulation, "decree" means it refers to a stipulation of a covenant. And the stipulation of the covenant is the Davidic covenant. And God has said to David, "when your days are over and you rest with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring, [namely Solomon, in this case] to succeed you, your own flesh and blood and I will establish his kingdom. He is the one who will build a house for my name. And I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his father and he will be my son. When he does wrong, I will punish him with the rod wielded by men, with floggings inflicted by human hands."

And that decree was not only for Solomon who became on his coronation, the son of God, in that sense, but it's a coronation of liturgy for all of Israel's kings. In the case of the King, we can think of him as the adopted son of God. Jesus is more than the adopted son, but the King was adopted as the son of God. He became the son of God, I take it, by adoption. He was not biologically begotten by God. He had a natural biological origin. So therefore, he must be a son, not by a begetting, but by an adoption. Israel is called the son of God. It wasn't that they had divine blood in them. It's that God adopted them or to make them as part of his family. He made Israel his family. He can be referred to as their father and in another metaphor he can be their husband.

David whose lineage is well known addressed God as Father. And I think the illustration of it is the case of a Boaz that Ruth begot physically. And she gave Boaz to Naomi, her mother-in-law, and we're told that Boaz was made the son of Naomi. It would be by adoption obviously. But Naomi became the mother and Boaz became the son of the Naomi to take care of her in her old age. So that's how I understand that the king is the son of God.

Christ is the son of God in four ways, three most important. The first one Luke

says that traces this lineage back to Adam that says, "the son of God," which wouldn't necessarily distinguish him. But he's the son of God because he's the son of David. Every king of David's line is by adoption, the son of God, but God rejected, he disciplined them, he removed them.

But Christ was the perfect obedient son of God. And God owns him as a son, but he's a son of God by David. And I understand that to be what is meant and Psalm 2, "Today, I have become your father." Today. I begot you. I think that's his coronation day because as the son of David, he is now coronated as the King and as such becomes the son of God.

He's the son of God by the Holy Spirit in Luke's theology. We all know the Christmas story that the angel said that the Holy Spirit would come upon her and he's begotten by the Spirit. So, he's the son of God as the son of David. He's the son of God, because he's begotten by God's Holy spirit. He's the son of God by his eternal nature. He was always with God. This is John's theology. This is the high Christology of John that this Word was with God in the beginning and always was God. And, on his ascension, God restored to him the glory he had before he humbled himself, and came into the world. So therefore, Christ is son of God as son of David. I frankly think that since, Nathaniel said, "You are the Christ, the son of God." He said that before Peter confessed, that "you are the Christ, the son of God" at Caesarea Philippi. This is right at the beginning of Jesus' ministry. I think Nathaniel was under the fig tree, the symbol of Israel. I think he was praying for the kingdom of God. He recognizes that Jesus is the Christ, the son of God. But in Johannine theology, it's fleshed out to its fullest meaning. I don't think Nathaniel knew all that he was saying, but I think in light of John's theology, he was saying something more than he understood that he's the eternal son of God.

Dr. Mounce: You know, Bruce on the adoption business, when Jesus was on the cross and he said, "Behold, your son" to Mary and to John. That's legal adoption language. So, it's the same kind of thing where...

King's Relation to the Nations [1:00:26-1:02:29]

Dr. Waltke: Very similar. Yeah. Very similar. The King's relationship to the earth. It's an inheritance from the creator of the earth who has the right to give what he created to whomever he will. And so, the creator of the entire earth says, it's your inheritance to this King. So, he says to the son, "Ask," and I say, although a son by covenantal promise and an heir of the earth by patrimony, the King must ask and depend by faith on God to fulfill the promise. So, God says, Jesus says I have all authority, but we must ask, we must pray, we must wrestle in prayer in order to fulfill the great commission. So, he's in prayer and he's praying to God who owns the earth by creating it. Then he says, "and I will give it," I think that's the right translation. It could be translated "that I might give it." The nations, of course, are those who have been in rebellion against him. The inheritance is an estate or property inherited from one's father without payment of a purchase price. "The ends of the earth" is beyond the limits of the Abrahamic covenant.

This is the close that Psalm 72, as Solomon is anticipating his future King and his universal rule in time and space. "May he [the merciful and just King that's coming] rule from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth. May the desert tribes bow before him and his enemies lick the dust. May the kings of Tarshish and of distance shores bring tribute to him. May the kings of Sheba and Seba present him presents, May all kings bow down to him, and all of the nations, serve him." Psalm 72.

King's Relationship to the Nations [1:02:29-1:04:30]

It finds its fulfillment in Christ. He saw Satan fall from heaven, who lost his ascendancy prior to that. God allowed him and in the former evil age to have rule. But now Jesus has conquered him in this age. He is bound him in other languages. And that is Galilee as Matthew closes Christ's ministry, he said, "All authority in heaven and earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them the name of the Father, and the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything I've commanded you. And surely I'm with you always to the end of the age." As far as the church is concerned, we are co-heirs together with Christ. So that's what

Paul says, "for those were led by the Spirit of God, are the children of God. The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again. Rather the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him, we cry Abba Father. The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Now if we are children then we are heirs, heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ. If indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory." And so, every day in our liturgy, Elaine and I pray we say, "Lord Jesus Christ, you stretched out your arms of love on the hard wood of the cross to bring everyone within reach of your saving embrace. So, clothe us in your spirit that we reaching forth our hands in love may bring those who do not know you to the knowledge and love of you for the honor of your name."

King's Relationship to the Earth [1:04:30-1:06:19]

Finally, the king's relationship to the earth is that he's going to rule and he's going to break them at his second coming as it turns out with a rod of iron. There's a textual problem here about the word "break." The Hebrew word is vocalized *tero'am*. And I give you the constants that T R and Hebrew's got an ayin. And then you get a M-- *tero'am*. And the issue is, does it come from the root *ra'a*, which means to break or does it come from the root *ra'ah*, which means to shepherd. So, that's a textual problem that you have here. The consonants are the same, the issue is how do vocalize it.

I think "break" is the original meaning because for one thing is you have an oxymoron. You're going to break them with a rod. You're going to shepherd them with a rod of iron. It's possible that doesn't seem to go very well with shepherding. The rod was there to protect the sheep. You don't shepherd sheep with a rod. That doesn't work for me. And the parallel is that "you will smash them." The better parallel to me is "break" and the word *ria'a* "to break" isn't an Aramaic word, which is much more difficult. But you have another Aramaism when it says, "kiss the son." The Aramaic word for son is "bar" like Barabbas and it's an Aramaic word. So, all it indicates to me is that it originally meant, to break with a rod of iron, and he's going to smash them. But this is at his second coming, when he's going to come.

Stanza 4: Psalm 2:10-12 Warning the Rulers [1:06:19-1:09:12]

And the church I've put in there is this church, this is on page 281. I had in mind, the movie War Room, where the wife saved her home and a marriage through prayer and she would not allow the devil to have the victory in her house. I think it's a good illustration of how we conquer through prayer. The Psalmist warns these rulers to submit. First of all, they're submitted to their relationship to the Psalmist, then the relationship to I Am and finally, in their relationship to the King. The relationship to the Psalmist is to be wise. Here's the logic: I'm telling you, it cannot succeed. God has set up his king. This King is the heir of the earth, and he's going to shatter you. Therefore, in light of those three stanzas get smart and submit to his rule. There's the logic of it. Their relationship to I Am is to serve I Am. And this is the word for worship and I discussed the word. I Am, it means fundamentally to be in subjection to or subordinate position to I Am as master.

And then I go on to say that because we're mortals, we will serve some master. We either serve sin and death and Satan, or we serve God and the Christ. So, when we step out from under God's rule, we come under our own passions and we come under satanic rule because that's who we are as mortals. We're just mortals. And that's what I'm trying to develop here.

It refers to a whole way of life. This is why Joshua says, "As for me and I house, we will serve the Lord,"-- total submission to the God of Israel's covenants. That's what the relationship should be. So, as far as the Son is concerned, they are to worship the Son. To kiss the Son means to worship him. On page 282, I give a picture of Jehu kissing at the ground of the Assyrian of the Assyrian King. And you could see the picture there. And if you don't, he says, it will be to perish, "but blessed are all who take refuge in him." God's final word is salvation and that's his desire. Okay. So that's the coronation and what a great coronation liturgy!

This is Dr. Bruce Waltke and his teaching on the book of Psalms. This is session number 21 Liturgical Approach, Coronation Psalm 2. [1:09:12] |

Psalms

[\[Jump to TOC\]](#)

Session 22: Liturgical Approach, Coronation Psalms, Psalm 110

By Dr. Bruce Waltke

This is Dr. Bruce Waltke and his teaching on the book of Psalms. This is session number 22, the Liturgical Approach, Coronation Psalm, Psalm 110.

Opening Prayer [00:25-1:28]

Prayer: God, we've been learning that we do not barge into your presence, but that we have to come within the structures of your covenant in a way that's pleasing to you. Thank you that you not only instruct us in the way we should have live, but by the power of the Holy Spirit, you empower us to live as you instructed us. We do not depend upon ourselves. We pray as our Lord taught us to pray, lead us not into temptation because we realize a weakness and we could not handle it apart from your grace. We need you. We are not strong in ourselves. So, thank you for your enablement and thank you for your cleansing. Thank you that you make us a holy people, both by blood and water and word and spirit. In Christ's name. Amen.

Review of the Liturgical Approach [1:28-2:43]

Alright, we've been looking at the liturgical approach to the Psalms in which we have considered what we used the word cultus, instead of liturgical, primarily, looking at the external expressions of religion. We've considered how the cult functions and different aspects of the cultus.

We've seen how the Psalms are composed as libretto to the cultus. Moses gave us sacred personnel and gave us sacred institutions and sacred seasons, and an assumed

sacred site. David had transformed all that into opera. So that the Psalms were the libretto accompanying the ritual that Moses had given the people. The Psalms were also set to music and the temple was so much grander than the tent. So, really, I say that David was like a Mozart and transformed the ritual into opera in a grand and glorious way to the praise of God and actually under the inspiration of God.

Psalm 110 and the New Testament and the Church [2:43-14:18]

Then as has been our pattern, we've taken a psalm or two to illustrate the liturgical approach. I have chosen coronation psalms, coronation liturgy in which the king is installed as God's King on Mount Zion. In the last hour, we looked at Psalm 2 where he installs his King on Mount Zion, which was a symbol of heaven. In Psalm 110, we have further the King being seated at God's right hand.

So, in your notes on, I don't have the page number, but on page 284, we take up Psalm 110, which is another Coronation Psalm. I begin by pointing out how it functions in the New Testament. It's a very important psalm, perhaps the most important psalm in the New Testament. There are three complete citations of one verse from Psalm 110. Then the whole Psalm in view in the New Testament.

So, for example, the first one is when Jesus is tested by the Pharisees and by the Sadducees. He tests them by Psalm 110. I think you remember the context in Matthew 22, that the Pharisees who disliked Rome, brought with them the Herodians who submitted to Rome in order to trap Jesus. They asked him the question, "is it right to give the imperial tax to Caesar?" And it's a trap because however Jesus answered it, he's on the horns of the dilemma. If he says, no, it's not right to pay taxes to Caesar then the Pharisees have brought along the Herodians because then they would report Jesus to Rome and they would accuse Jesus of treason because he refused to pay tax to Caesar. Whereupon the Romans would reject him.

On the other hand, if he says it's yes, you should pay taxes to Caesar. Then the Pharisees would accuse him to the people that he's disloyal to the nation, that he's submitted himself to Rome, from which they wanted to throw the yoke off. So, the people

would reject him. So whatever Jesus does is wrong.

Jesus said, bring me the coin. And he said, "render to Caesar what is Caesar's" and they with the coin "and render to God, what is God's," namely, your heart or your person, which is in the image of God.

Then he's tested by the Sadducees. And they questioned him about the resurrection. They don't believe in the resurrection. So, they have this story about a woman who had seven men who were brothers and they all die sequentially. The woman is married sequentially to these seven men, these seven brothers. And the question is: "in the resurrection whose wife is she?" Jesus says that in the resurrection, we will be like angels. We neither marry nor are given in marriage. Then he turns around and since the Sadducees only accepted the Pentateuch and not the rest of the Old Testament. His argument has to come out of the Old Testament. So very cleverly. He says, "God said, I am the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." And Jesus says, he's not the God of the dead. He's the God of the living, which he could argue. Therefore, that Abraham and Isaac and Jacob were still living.

Then the lawyer comes to test Jesus. What's the greatest commandment? Jesus gives us the two commandments of loving God with all your heart and your neighbor as yourself. But then Jesus turns the table on them. He asks them the question whose son is the Messiah. They were willing to grant a human Messiah, but not a divine Messiah, a God-man. So, then he said, "whose son is he?" They said, "son of David." But then Jesus pushes them. Then how did David the greatest King, say to his Lord? How did David say to his Lord? He says, "the LORD said to my Lord," David is speaking. David is the greatest of Israel and yet there's one greater than David. Jesus is arguing the one greater than David is not just the son of David; he's the son of God. That story is very basic to the Christology, the identification of the Christ as the son of God, that he's more than a man he is God incarnate. So that story is repeated both in Matthew, Mark, and Luke.

It's quoted again in the very first sermon along with Psalm 2. You have in Peter's great sermon after his ascending to explaining the phenomenon of Pentecost. And he says

that "he ascended into heaven and he sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high." And from that position, he poured out his spirit on his church that enabled the church to expand universally. So again, a full text is cited in the very first sermon.

Then, of course, the writer of Hebrews says that "after he had made purification for sin, he sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high." Having set down on the right hand of the majesty on high, he inherited, a more excellent name than the angels. And then for which of the angels, did he ever say, "you want my son, today, I begotten you." So, the writer of Hebrews puts these two songs together with reference to our Lord Jesus Christ.

And, of course, Hebrews really develops the whole idea of Psalm 110 in verse four, where God says to him, "you are a priest like the order like Melchizedek." So you have a whole argument of Hebrews chapter seven to show how Jesus is like Melchizedek. So, this Psalm, this statement that Jesus sits on the right hand of God and he's like Melchizedek, that psalm, that theology is minted in Psalm 110 and circulated in the New Testament. And, in fact, this Psalm has whole verses cited these three to five times.

And then there are 25 allusions to the psalm in the New Testament, more than any other psalm. So, it's very important to the Christology of the New Testament.

It's also found and I also call attention to Mark 14 when he's on trial before the high priest. And on the bottom of page 284, I cite Mark 14:61 to 64. "The high priest asked Jesus, are you the Messiah, the son of the blessed one? To this Jesus replied, "I am." And then you will see the son of man seated at the right hand of power and coming with clouds of heaven." To this confession, I add the high priest responded. "You have heard the blasphemy that he calls himself, the son of God, making himself equal with God." And so that confession of this Psalm leads directly to the crucifixion.

On page 285. I cite passages from the epistles, both from Paul and from the writer of Hebrews and as well from Peter. We've already mentioned the importance of the Psalm as one of the three Psalms in which the writer of Hebrew's bases, his argument and his Christology about Christ on this Psalm.

And in Paul, we read it as part of the early confessions of the church that Romans 8 was probably an early hymn celebrating the continually present intercession of Christ at God's right hand. Paul says, "he is at the right hand of God interceding for us." 1 Corinthians 3:1, probably a baptism of formula, reflecting on the heavenly identity of those who share in Christ's death; Paul says, "Since then you have been raised with Christ, set your heart on things above where Christ is seated at the right hand of God." And again, in Ephesians a worship hymn exclaiming and acclaiming the universal kingdom of the risen Christ "who sits at God's right hand when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at the right hand in heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority." So, you could see this whole theology that Jesus is ascended into heaven and sits at God's right hand is crucial to New Testament Christology.

In 1 Peter 3:22, again, probably a baptismal context for those trusting in the risen Christ, who as he says of him and those being baptized, who has gone into heaven and is at God's right hand with angels, authorities, powers in submission to him."

In the church, this Psalm has played a crucial role. We all know it from the apostolic creed and from the Nicene creeds, both of them, the Apostle's Creed, the seventh confession "that he ascended into heaven and is seated at God's right hand." Most of us recite that every Sunday as one of the confessions, many of us do. All of them are going back to this minting of this coin in Psalm 110. Often it is used for Ascension Sunday, and so forth, in the history of the church. So, the point I'm making here, this has been a very important psalm in church history, both in the Gospels, in the Epistles and throughout the history of the church.

Translation of Psalm 110 [14:18-16:10]

Now we want to look at the Psalm itself. And first of all, we're going, next thing page 286, let's translate the Psalm. Here we see the importance of the superscript; that is, a "Psalm of David." The whole thing is that David is saying to someone that he is his Lord. And who can be David's Lord, which means David is his slave. Everybody is a slave of the King, but this King, David, is a slave to someone much greater than he,

which is the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ. So, he says, "the LORD says to my Lord: 'Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies, your footstool.' The Lord sends forth your scepter from Zion, your mighty scepter. And he says, [presumably] 'Rule in the midst of your enemies!' [End of quote] Your people will offer themselves freely on the day of your power and holy garments from the womb of the morning, the dew of your youth will be yours. The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind: 'You are a priest forever.'" I think this should be translated "like" Melchizedek" [end of quote], the Lord is that your right hand; he will shatter kings on the day of his wrath. He will execute judgment among the nations, filling them with corpses. He will shatter the head over the whole, [or, the heads or chiefs] over the whole earth. He will drink from the brook by the way, therefore he will lift up the head."

Poetic Form of Psalm 110 [16:10-17:42]

By way of introduction as to its form, obviously we are dealing with poetry and poetry is filled with imagery. So, God's army is likened to the dew of the morning. The King's victory is likened to, and his endurance is likened to, taking a drink from a wadi along the way. So, it's filled with that kind of imagery.

It's full of parallelism. And in form, it's a psalm. It's sung to the accompaniment of stringed instruments. In fact, this is a prophecy. So, often music was used for the inspiration of a prophetic utterance. The context, the setting, seems to be a coronation liturgy when God says to his King, "sit at my right hand." If we keep our left eye on the historical King is when he sat at God's right hand. I'll talk more about that why he's at his right hand on that level. Then it is a picture of Christ's ascension and he is in the position of authority, who will judge the earth. He is at God's right hand. That it's a coronation liturgy also finds support from Assyrian coronation poems.

Comparison with Assyrian Coronation Liturgies [Hilber] [17:42-25:13]

Here I'm dependent upon a doctoral dissertation by John Hilber, who formally taught at Dallas. His doctor's dissertation at Cambridge is called "Cultic prophecy in the

Psalm." He compares Psalm 110 to these prophetic poems for the coronation of the Assyrian King. He's mainly dealing with texts from the time of Esarhaddon, about 675 BC.

Here are some of the parallels between them, that is: both begin with an introductory formula, such as we have in verse one. "The Lord says to my Lord," and that's how these Assyrian coronation liturgies begin. Secondly, they are divided into two parts with a sub-oracle. So also, in this psalm, you have the Lord speaking twice. First in verse one, "the Lord says to my Lord, sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool." Then the second half the Psalm in verse four, "the Lord has sworn and will not change his mind." Again, God speaks this time, adding not only is the King sitting at God's right hand and he will make all the enemies his footstool of his feet, "but you are a priest forever, like Melchizedek." And so as in the Assyrian Royal prophets coronation liturgy, we have a subdivision into two parts. One of the difficulties we have in this Psalm is the changing of speakers. That's what happens, according to Hilber, in the Assyrian coronation liturgies, there's a change of speakers. And so, for example, in this song, the Lord speaks in verse one, "sit at my right hand," but then in verse two, David speaks, the prophet speaks: "The Lord sends forth from Zion, your mighty scepter." So God is speaking in verse one. And the prophet or David is speaking in verses two and three. In verse four, God is speaking again. And he says to him, "you are priest forever, like Melchizedek" -- end of quote. Whereupon the prophet addresses the king. And he says, "the Lord is at your right hand." So, it's God who speaks to the king in verse four. Then it's the prophet who speaks to the king in verses five through seven. So, you have verse one, God speaks to the king. Two and three the prophet speaks to the King. Verse four, God speaks to king. Five through seven the prophet speaks to the king.

And not only do you have the change of speakers, but you have the change of addressees. So, for example, when the prophet responds that "you are a priest like Melchizedek." Verses five through seven, we have the prophet addressing the king as he did in verses two and three. "The Lord is at your right hand. He will shatter kings on the

day of his wrath." But now he talks about the king and he's talking to the congregation. "He will execute judgment among the nations," and he's talking not to the King, but he's talking about the king. So you have this kind of shift from addressing the king to addressing the congregation. According to Hilber, you have the exact same thing in the Assyrian coronation liturgy, where you have the change of speakers.

If you're doing this in a temple ritual, it would have been antiphonal and there would have been different speakers. I didn't make this point in Psalm 2, but there probably were different speakers in Psalm 2, someone was representing the nations when they said "throw off his yoke from us." Someone is speaking for God, probably the priests "I've installed my King."

Then the King is speaking in verses seven through nine. Then the Psalmist himself is speaking. And so probably it's antiphonal. You would have understood the change of speakers by the change of voices from someone representing the nations, the priest representing God, the king representing himself, and then the Psalmist addressing the nations again.

So, I would understand this as someone is representing God, probably the priest who would have said that "sit at my right hand," and you will be a priest like Melchizedek. Then you had the prophet himself who would have spoken to the congregation.

Dr. Mounce: Bruce, are you aware of the history behind responsive reading? And whether it is a modern reflection of antiphonal Psalms.

Dr. Waltke: In modern Israel?

Dr. Mounce: A modern responsive reading, when we go back and forth.

Dr. Waltke: What about it?

Dr. Mounce: Was that done to mimic antiphonal Psalms? Are you aware of that?

Dr. Waltke: I'm not aware. I mean, it seems most plausible to me since there are no antecedents to these pronouns that there must have been change of voices in order to indicate the changes, otherwise the antecedent to the, "you" with the "he" and so forth.

It's just not given; it's just kind of assumed. I think it'd be hard in a listening if there wasn't a change of voices. So, I think it's something I'm inferring, along with most others, that there is the antiphonal. That would indicate that it was part of a liturgy if it is antiphonal that it assumes a congregation participation.

Again, in the Assyrian annuals, it's a letter D. I put down for the legitimization of the realization between the deity or the king, the city, at the god's right hand. Again, the enemies are going to be at his feet. That's also in the Assyrian material. The promise of the destruction of the enemies, as you might expect, is also in the Assyrian material. The promise of universal dominion is parallel to the Assyrian prophecies. The presence of loyal support, your people will be willing on the day of your power. Psalm 110:3 and the divine promise accompanied by denial of lying. "The Lord has sworn will not repent." The affirmation of priestly responsibility and the eternality of royal prerogatives that "forever, you are a priest forever." All of that finds analogy in the Assyrian coronation liturgies and prophecies. [Dog: Can we lock him up? Sorry, he's barking at you].

Rhetoric and Structure of Psalm 110 [25:13-30:10]

Alright. Now we tried to show the background to this form of the Psalm. We've talked about the importance of the psalm in the New Testament. Then we translated the Psalm. We talked about the form that is a coronation of liturgy, similar to the coronation prophecy at the coronation of the Assyrian king, all of which is obviously pre-exilic. I now want to talk about the rhetoric of the psalm and the way it is structured, or its logic and outline. This dividing between God speaking and then the prophet reflecting upon that speech is in two parts. You have an introduction to divine citation for what is said, and then you have the divine citation "sit at my right hand." Then you have the prophetic reflection on that, that he's to rule in the midst of his enemies and his people will be willing on the day of his power.

Then you have the introduction to the next citation. "The Lord has sworn he will not change his mind." Then you have the statement, "You are a priest forever after the like Melchizedek." And then you have the conquests and victories of the king that follow.

So they are, this is what we call alternating parallelism that in both halves we have an introduction to the divine citation, a prophecy for David's Lord. "The Lord says to my Lord." Then you have the divine citation to the Lord Messiah, 'sit enthroned until I make your enemies the footstool of your feet.' Then see, we have the prophetic reflection on that divine citation, which is addressed to the Lord, to the Messiah that the Lord initiates the Holy War. "The Lord will extend your mighty scepter from Zion." Then the King says, "rule in the midst of your enemies and the Lord's Messiah, or his troops, will be willing to fight on the day that he manifests his power. So, he says "your troops will offer themselves freely on the day of your battle, arrayed in holy splendor. Your young men will come to you like dew from the womb of the morning."

In the second stanza again is an introduction to the citation, an irrevocable oath: "The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind." The divine citation: "You were a priest forever like Melchizedek." And then the reflections on that citation that is first he's addresses the Lord that the Lord is at your right hand. Perhaps already here, he's addressing the congregation and he says of the King, "he will shout at kings on the day of his wrath." So, what's going on here instead of directly addressing the king to embolden the king and spiritually strengthened the king. He talks about the king. And, of course, the king is overhearing this. And through the overhearing of it, if you hear other people speak about you, that itself can be empowering and have spiritual benefit. So, while he's addressing the congregation, the king is hearing it and receiving spiritual strength from the confession. So, they're not, they kind of hold together quite well. So, the Messiah judges the whole earth, he will execute judgment among the nations, still bury them with corpses. It will shatter chiefs over the whole wide earth. And then "he will consummate his victory. He will drink from the brook by the way. Therefore, he will lift up his head."

We'll talk in the next lecture about rhetoric, but one of the structures in rhetoric is alternating structure. So, you could see this as an ABC introduction, citation reflection, A' introduction, B' citation, C' reflection. You could see how they're parallel to one another and that helps really, I think, to understand the psalm better.

It's also interesting that the two halves fall into equal parts. In the Hebrew text, there are 74 words in verses one through three; and 74 words in verses four through seven. This is not unusual to get that kind of symmetry in the Psalm, just like Psalm two had three verses, three verses, three verses, three verses. All of that kind of structure and symmetry, is to show us God is a God of order. And that he is ruling and controlling.

Exposition of Psalm 110:1 [30:10-39:27]

Looking at the part two, then the exposition and the superscript that's by David and I argued that's crucial to Jesus' argument. That that Messiah is Lord, because it is the king that's calling him his Lord. So, he's greater than just the son of David. David is here a prophet prophesying a future. He's talking to the king, but he's talking about someone who's going to rule the entire earth again. So, he's a prophet anticipating what will be fulfilled in Christ and consummated. It's being fulfilled today in his resurrection and his ascension. It will be consummated, at the second coming when he will indeed judge the world.

Those who deny Davidic authorship reach no consensus about the date. It's a Psalm, we said, and like much prophecy, it's accompanied with music. So, the introduction to the citation, we have the name of God. Again, it's Yahweh the Eternal One. So, he is the one who is eternal. Who's on changing. "Glory to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as it was in the beginning is now and will be ever more." We confess.

I Am who I Am has incommunicable attributes. That is, there was none like Him, I Am who I Am. There is none who was eternal. There was none who was aseity, who is not derivative. He's totally existing from himself. He's God. And not only his omnipotence and his omnipresence and his omniscience, but there's none like him, who is a pardoning God like you full of grace and mercy, as well as justice.

And when it says, "the Lord says," there are different words in Hebrew for speaking. If it's the act of speaking, they'll use the word *debir*, to actually speak. If they're referring to the content of what a speaking they'll use the word *amar*, this is what he said. The act of speaking *debir*, the content of what is spoken then you used the word *amar*.

This word is different. This word *ne'um* means prophetic speech. It's used normally of God. And, of course, the only way we know what God says is through a prophet. So *ne'um* really refers to prophetic speech. It's someone who speaking in the Spirit.

That is how Jesus must have understood this word because he says to those who were trying to trap him, "how then did David in the Spirit say," and he knows he's "in the Spirit" speaking this because of this word *ne'um*. It's not the normal word. It's a prophetic word. I give you some other verses where this word is used with prophets. It's used for Balaam when he gives his oracle. It's used for David in Psalm 18, and 2 Samuel, I think that should be 2 Samuel 22 instead of 2 Samuel 23. The writer of Hebrews says that David was a prophet, but he was a prophet and knew that God had promised him in an oath that he would place one of his descendants on the throne.

Turn into the next word. "And he said to my Lord," that means David is his slave. He is the master. He's the Lord overall.

We thereupon come to the citation itself. And the citation empowers him to rule. He's given the authority and the power to rule. So, he says, "sit at my right hand." Sitting is the posture of authority. When Moses taught, he sat, when Christ taught, he sat on the Sermon on the Mount. The pope speaks *ex cathedra*. He speaks from the chair. We talk about the Bishop's See which comes in abbreviation from seat. The position of his authority is sitting down. So, he says to his Lord, "sit at my right hand."

I got into that somewhat because I was asked to introduce Tremper Longman when he was given the chair of Old Testament at Wesmont's Theological Seminary. So, I wondered, where did this idea chair come from? Well, I discovered that back in the 15th century, the first reference to chair, it comes from the Regis Professor of Old Testament. Now the second reference to chair is for the Regis professor, the royal professor, of Old Testament at Oxford. He was literally given a chair on which he would sit. Therefore, he had authority in that classroom because he sat on a chair. I also discovered that in the noblemen's home, there was really only one chair and that was for the nobleman. Everybody else sat on stools around him. So, they actually gave a chair that he would sit

on that symbolized his authority. This is what it's talking about. "Sit," which is the position of authority and rule.

Then he says "at his right hand." And I think since this is the temple is, a copy of heaven. What you have here in the temple complex is the temple complex has a wall around it. There was one wall around the whole thing. You had the temple facing to the East. And on the South side, on the right hand, there was the Portico of Justice. The king sat on his throne at the Portico of Justice and made the judgment. So, in the temple you have the 10 commandments and the ark that represented God's rule. And then at his right hand, you have the king who implemented the covenant, who implemented the rules. That's how I understand the right hand.

It helps us to understand heaven itself. That God is the one who gives the law. Jesus is the one who expedites and upholds and administers the law and justice. So, he's the one that will judge the earth. That's the best I can understand "sitting at my right hand" that he is the judge of all and he's under God.

I give some illustrations of why this is the highest authority of sitting at the right hand. That is, for example, when Bethsheba enters before Solomon, he says, "sit at my right hand." He gave her the highest honor, but yet he was smarter than, to listen to her. So even though she had the highest honor, he exercises his own royal wisdom and saw behind Adonijah's scheme to get the throne by wanting Abishag, the concubine, David's concubine, as his wife.

Again in Matthew chapter 20 verses 20 through 24, the mother of Zebedee's sons, that is James and John, she wanted them to sit at his right hand and left hand. This would be the highest authority. Jesus said, that's for the Father to give. And first of all, you have to be willing to drink the cup of which I drink, which is the cup of willing to die for other people. All of that would show the place of the of the authority of sitting at God's right hand. And that the right hand is the place of judgment and the execution of the 10 commandments. And I point out a parallel on page 291 to the Egyptian coronation liturgy. In the Egyptian coronation ceremony, it had two parts, there were two

coronations. One was at the temple and other was at the palace. He was conducted to his palace where he ascended his throne, where in more or less threatening way. He announced *Urbi et Orbi* at the start of this rule. That is what is meant by that: "The rule over city and rule over state," his universal rule over the city and over the universe.

So, I understand that to be a type fulfilled in the ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ into heaven where today the son of man sits at God's right hand and is given a kingdom and he's pouring out his spirit, establishing his kingdom. Today his kingdom is universal. In almost every language, there are people worshiping the Lord Jesus Christ.

God's Kingdom in SE Asia [39:27-44:43]

And I think that we don't realize how great God's kingdom is and what power he's doing, what he's doing, especially in Southeast Asia. I mean, it seems to me that the Spirit of God will move where he will, but it started it seems to me at Jerusalem and Judea and Samaria, and then to Rome, and then to Europe and includes the US. But today, the major spiritual movement is in Southeast Asia. It's in East 60% of all evangelicals are in Southeast Asia. There are more evangelicals in Southeast Asia than in all of Europe and the English-speaking world. It is very powerful there. What's interesting to me is so many of our Chinese students have it in their hearts to bring the gospel to Jerusalem and back to the Jews. I think that's kind of at the end of the age. So, the gospel will have gone around the entire earth as I just look at church history and the way God is moving.

When he says, "until I make your enemies a footstool of his feet." In English, when you say "until" it means, then it's going to stop; but that's not, what's meant by the Hebrew "until." It means it's a continuing state of affairs even after it reaches a fulfillment, a termination point. He will continue his reign forever and ever. And God says "until I make the enemies a footstool of your feet." So that while God uses the king to establish his kingdom, ultimately as in Psalm 92, if you recall the center four words, "the Lord is on high" and behind it all is God the Father, to use New Testament theology.

I make your enemies, the enemies are the same as the Psalm 2. It's those who are opposed to God's rule, those who are opposed to the 10 commandments. As I commented

our Supreme Court tragically, the majority are opposed to the 10 commandments. You can see the apostasy of our country because all over the Supreme Court there are the 10 commandments that they are violating and no longer uphold. I mean, it's a vivid, dramatic change. On the corner piece of the Supreme Court, where all the jurists are looking to a central figure, most who interpret that see the iconography of the temple. They identified that as Moses and the 10 commandments. So, you could see the apostasy of our country and where we're going.

When it says the "footstool of your feet," the footstool was actually part of the throne. It went right with the throne and what we can see from the footstools in Egypt, is that the footstool had the heads of the Pharaoh's enemies. He put his feet literally on their heads as they were portrayed there. They were under his rule and that is the imagery being used here, that his enemies, are, as it were, painted on the footstool and here's the sovereign who's ruling over it all. So, I comment on Tutankhamen's footstool, a representation of foreign captives. They're prostrate with their hands behind their back to depict symbolically his enemies as already bound and under his feet. From the victor's perspective it connotes, the stain and judgment. From the victim's perspective, it connotes, shame and humiliation.

Paul says of Christ "for he must reign until he puts all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death," for he has put everything under his feet. Now, when it says that everything has been put onto his feet, it is clear that he does not include God himself who put everything under Christ.

So, the final enemy that he will conquer is death itself. And whereas the grave swallows up everybody, Christ's victory swallows up death. He's greater than death itself says Paul in Ephesians, "And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way."

So, we looked at the introduction "the Lord says," we looked at the citation itself

of "sitting at my right hand until I make your enemies the footstool of your feet." And we've commented as we go slowly through the psalm on every word.

Exposition of Psalm 110:2-3 [44:43-56:11]

And now we come to the citation itself, I mean, to the reflections on the citations and the prophet is now speaking. He says, we'll go back to the translation on the page, I should have that before me, on page 286, And now the prophet speaks, "the Lord sends forth from Zion, your mighty scepter." And he quotes the Lord "rule in the midst of your enemies." The scepter is the mace, which was the badge and symbol of his authority and it's mighty. It's elsewhere in Psalm 2, it was called a scepter of iron that could not be broken. And he says, "send forth." The picture is he is to extend his sway over and ever widening circles to encompass the entire earth as we've been noting. And, Zion is conceptualized and said to be such in Ezekiel 38. It's conceptualized as the center of the earth from which this kingdom expands to the ends of the earth.

He's told to rule, that is to say, he's to initiate this Holy War and to bring people into submission to the gospel of freedom, the law of freedom that frees people from sin and death and brings them salvation. Today, I say he rules through the suffering church, filling up his sufferings. The church relies on prayer, the Lord's prayer, for example, "your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven." And through that prayer, as we've prayed in many traditions, Elaine and I pray it three or four times a day, "your kingdom come, your will be done." And it's an answer to prayer that God is establishing his kingdom, as well as through our witness.

In verse three, he says, "your people will offer themselves freely." Here, I think "the people" are as elsewhere that people can refer to troops as in Psalm 44. Remember that it's the army they've called "the people," but it was the army that repaired to the temple that went down in defeat. I think primarily here it's referring to the young men, the young warriors who go out into battle. The word "freely" is the word used for a freewill offering. That is, this army is totally volunteer. They move spiritually. The word is often, I say, used of the free will offerings. They're not required. So they're represented

as dedicated fearless warriors to support their king on the battlefield. They love and trust their king and know their cause is just. Today it's found with his disciples. We do not fight today with a literal sword. We fight with the sword of God's word. Ours is not to establish a carnal kingdom. Ours is to establish a spiritual kingdom, the rule of God in the hearts, and that in turn will affect the world politically.

This is true to the Holy War rules of Deuteronomy chapter 20, the rules of Holy War, are a given that only volunteers could fight. There was no drafting. "Then the officers shall say, [as they weed out, those not fit to go to battle] 'Is anyone afraid or fainthearted? Let him go home. So, his fellow soldiers will not become disheartened.'" That's part of the rule of Holy War. To participate in Holy War you must be totally dedicated to the cause. You're a freewill offering.

This is how I bring in here 1 Corinthians 15:29, where Paul says, "and what shall we say of those who are baptized for the dead." And this has been misunderstood by the Mormon sect that we can be baptized for someone who isn't baptized. We can be baptized in their place. And so, we can have a surrogate baptism. So, they have a baptism for the dead. So, you'd take the place of the dead person. That is certainly not what Paul has in mind. He's talking about the resurrection of the dead. If there's no resurrection, then he's saying, why would anyone replace the martyrs and accept baptism into martyrdom, if there's no resurrection from the dead. So, therefore, these martyrs in the apostolic community went down in death. The early church went down in death. They were martyred. Why would anybody step into their place and be baptized to replace them in this army, if there is no resurrection from the dead. It makes no sense as Paul says. And that's how I understand that verse. I argue that in my doctor's dissertation at Dallas, where I worked on the two prepositions, *huperanti* and *huper*. They're both translated "for" where "he gave his life a ransom for many," and "he died for our sins." Anyway, so I will get into that verse.

Philippians 2, and Paul talks about himself as a drink offering poured out as a sacrifice. Then I quote from a recent article that was in the Wall Street Journal. And I

comment, "Wars are not won or lost on the battlefield. They are won or lost in the minds of men. The pen is mightier than the sword." The Wall Street Journal reports that after driving ISIS out of the town of Kavna in Syria, the Kurdish commander said, "we only survived because we believed in our cause." So, they had total confidence that the cause that's in our famous national anthem and our cause it is in God we trusted or our cause it is just and it must triumph. It's that faith that we have that Christ is the victor and that righteousness will prevail. The day of his power is the day when he executes that power, and I take it that's at the time of his ascension when he poured out his Spirit and they're arrayed in holy garments. This is they're pictured as priests in holiness and righteousness. So here you have this mighty army on the day when Christ extends his rule, which began at Pentecost. He poured out his spirit and his army is clothed in white and righteousness and holiness. And they are said to be from the womb of the dawn-- a wonderful metaphor. The new age gives birth to this dedicated army, I'm suggesting. So that after the darkness of the old age, there's a new age and it's like the dew of the morning. In fact of the matter, each generation of the church to me is like the dew of the morning.

I used to feel that way when I was teaching and every September new class would come in the first week of school and they came with the same spirit, the students came with the same spirit, the same faith. And to me, they were like to dew of the morning. Kind of mysterious, where did they come from? But God raised them up year after year after year. He will build his church as he said. So, when I think of the dew after the night, I think of its heavenly origin.

That's used in Micah, where he talks about that the dew does not wait for man, but it waits upon God. It's God who sends the dew. It is God who raises up his army. We're dependent upon him. When I think of dew I think of a myriad. I picture the dew on the cobweb. I picture, you never have dew one drop. You always have more. Usually there's a little rainbow to my mind, it reflects the beauty of the Lord himself. It's refreshing. I smell it on the clover. It's mysterious because of its heavenly origin. Says Micah, "the remnant of Jacob will be in the midst of many people like dew from the Lord, like

showers on the grass, which do not wait for anyone or depend on man." So the dew does not depend upon man. The dew depends upon God. And God will always build his church. Jesus promised "I will build my church." So, no matter how discouraged we've made become with the way the Western world is going, we know that God will always have his dew to refresh the earth. I'm just filled with joy that I can be part of that dew. In the Lord's army, it's his grace that makes us such.

qI thought it fitting to bring in here, the famous Joyce Kilmer poem "On Flanders Field"

"Flander's fields the poppies blow,
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky.
The lark's still bravely singing, fly.
Scarce heard amid the guns below.
We are the dead, shot days ago.
We lived, felt the dawn, Saw the sunset glow,
Loved, and were loved.
And now we lie in Flanders field."
And here's the part why I'm reciting the poem.
"Take up our quarrel with the foe;
To you from failing hands we throw.
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die,
We shall not sleep though poppies grow in Flanders field."

And so they died for freedom and they throw the torch on to a new generation that we might be willing to fight for freedom. They will not have died in vain, but I fear the way our country's going that we're in danger of losing our freedoms. As I see the political landscape today.

Exposition of Psalm 110:4-7 On Prophecy and Oaths [56:11-59:44]

Looking at stanza 2, the stanza begins with the eternal priesthood and ends with

the King's eternal victory. "You are a priest forever," and he's going to drink from the brook in the way in his march to victory. The introduction begins with an oath. "He swears and will not change his mind."

There is a difference between prophecy and promise and an oath. It's often said if God's prophesies something, it's sure to come to pass. That's not really necessarily true. You have a template for prophecy in Jeremiah's temple sermon in Jeremiah chapter 18, in which God said, "if I prophesy good, and the people do evil, the good will not come to pass. If I prophesy evil and the people do good, the evil will not come to pass." God never transgresses his moral rule and prophecy is always contingent upon the behavior of people.

So there's always an opportunity to repent or to apostatize. So, prophecy is always conditional on the human response to the prophecy. The intention of the prophecy of judgment, well, it doesn't say so, but the intention of it is to bring repentance. So, for example, when Micah prophesied that Zion would be plowed as a field and totally destroyed, the right response was of Hezekiah. He repented, and averted the judgment. Now Micah never called for repentance. It was an assumption or presumption that if God prophesies judgment, it was understood that if you repent, that judgment will not come to pass. They have the same thing with Jonah that Jonah preached, 40 days Nineveh will be destroyed, but he didn't want to go because he knew if the people repented, the judgment would not come. It was a presupposition. It's an assumption of prophetic literature that it is always conditional.

But when God swears on an oath, then it's irrevocable. This is nicely developed by Richard Pratt and I cite, his, bibliography there. It's in the essays that were very kindly written in my honor in *The Way of Wisdom*. And so, he has a whole essay on the conditionality of the prophecy and the unconditionality of oaths.

So, this is an oath and "he will be forever a priest like Melchizedek," is not changing. The priest, of course, was the one who mediated the rule between God and the people and the people and God.

After this recitation that the Lord says, "you are a priest forever like Melchizedek" and what's involved in all of that. This is a priesthood that antedates the Aaronic priesthood. This is the eternal priesthood and so Jesus is like the eternal priesthood of Melchizedek. But I don't have time to develop that, that's the book of Hebrews and I up going to have to skip that.

Psalm 110:4-7 [59:44-1:03:39]

But now we have the prophet's reflection. "The Lord is at your right hand." And the Lord now has a different word than "Lord" in verse one. In verse one, "the Lord says" well in verse one, it is "Yahweh says to Adoni [my master]." But now when it says "the Lord has sworn" in verse four, that is the LORD. And now the "Lord is that your right hand," that should also be in capital letters. And it's the word Adonoi, which refers to God as the Lord of all. The ending "i" indicates, par excellence, he's the Lord of all. "And he's at your right hand," which is the position of power. "And he will smash or shatter kings on the day of vengeance" that we've been talking about. The King will execute judgment among the nations. The Messiah, I say, will judge the earth and the nations, "and he will fill the valley with corpses." The emphasis is on his punishing the nations, which is fulfilled at his second coming. Then it says that "he will shatter the head over the wide earth." It could be a reference to Satan, though I don't think so. I think it's a collective singular and refers to the rulers of the earth.

"He will drink from the brook by the way", that is to say he will consummate his victory. The brook is the Hebrew word for wadi, and the image connotes that even in the desert areas of the broad earth, God will supply the Messiah with an abundant amount of water to quench and refresh his thirst; so, he can complete his task. So, he's going to drink from a wadi that's full of gushing water. So, he can complete the work. He's going to do it along the way as he's going along as he marches triumphantly in his worldwide conquest. He will drink because on his way the picture is, he takes a momentary break to refresh himself.

So, I write, neither desert nor fatigue will stop him in his zeal to end tyranny. I

quote from Livy, the Roman historian, he said, "the terror of the Roman name will be such that once the Roman army has laid siege to a city, nothing will move it. Not the rigors of winter nor the weariness of some months and years. That it knows no end but victory and is ready. If a swift and sudden stroke will not serve, it will persevere until victory is achieved." And that's the picture of this King. He will take a drink in his march to establish God's kingdom to the ends of the earth is the picture. Tremendous, tremendous, metaphor I think of the King being refreshed and pursuing to the end, whatever rigors are demanded of him. So then at the end, he lifts up his head, which is a sign of his victory.

So, that's Psalm 110 another great coronation liturgy.

This is Dr. Bruce Waltke in his teaching on the book of Psalms. This is session number 22, the Liturgical Approach, Coronation psalm, Psalm 110. [1:03:39]

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Psalms
Session 23: Rhetorical Approach, Poetic Techniques,
Psalm 49
By Dr. Bruce Waltke

This is Dr. Bruce Waltke in his teaching on the book of Psalms. This is session number 23, Rhetorical Approach, Poetic Techniques, Psalm 49

Review [00:23-2:22]

We continue to add various methods or approaches to interpretation of the Psalms in order to get into the mind and heart of the inspired poet. So, we've looked at the spiritual approach. We looked at having the right attitude, the right spirit toward God and his inspired writer. We looked at the historical approach and the importance of the king in the interpretation of the Psalms. We looked at the forms of Psalms and we've batched the Psalms, according to their common form. We looked for what was typical between a cache of Psalms so that the Psalms of Praise had the, the mood of praise, Grateful Psalms had a mood of gratitude. They had the vocabulary of praise like hallelujah or praise the Lord. or we will give thanks to the Lord. They had distinct motifs. We looked at common motifs. So that in the Hymns there was a call to praise and there was cause for praise and then a renewed called praise very often. In the Laments, they had distinct motifs. They had invocation. As soon as you read, O Lord, O God, or O shepherd of Israel, you knew you were dealing with a Lament or a Petition Psalm. They had the motif of confidence. They had the motif of lament. They had the motif of petition and they always had a motif of praise. So, we looked at them, batching them broadly as they would fit into these different kinds of categories. We also considered the temple setting in which these psalms were recited.

Introduction [2:22-4:08]

In this lecture, we will be looking at how an individual psalm is constructed, not for its form as typical of other psalms, but the poetic techniques that made it a unique psalm and that the poet employed; the kinds of techniques they used to put their material together. So, I introduced it by this quote from Phyllis Tribble, who defines it by the contrast form and rhetorical criticism. She says, "whereas form criticism studies the typical and so groups, literature, according to its genre; rhetorical criticism studies the particular within the typical."

So, as we approach the psalm, we're not only aware of it's a form and its similarity to other psalms, but we must be aware of how the psalm itself is put together. What were the techniques that the poet used? We also call this "poetics" from the Greek word poiew "to make," or "to work." How do they actually compose? What were some of their techniques by which they've put their literature together? I'm not going to go into levels of signification again. I don't want to get bogged down in that; we discussed that levels of signification, in the syllabus. We saw that when we're dealing with the texts, there are some that pertain to lexicon, some that pertains to grammar, and some that pertain to poetry.

Stanzas and Strophes [4:08-7:04]

But we're really looking now at the whole poem with its stanzas within it and within the stanzas, we have strophes.

So that usually a poem has, as we saw in Psalm 110, stanzas. So, there were two stanzas. And within the stanzas, there is the introduction recitation, recitation, reflection done twice in two stanzas. There were strophes that are the parts of that. The smaller units within it, are called strophes in the literature. So, you have the poem, then you have the stanzas, then you have strophes, and then sometimes you have units within the strophes. We're looking at how the strophes are put together to form stanzas, how the stanzas are put together to form a poem of the psalm itself. This is called poetics, and we're going to be looking at different techniques.

So, when I went through my university training, I was given the lenses by which I could identify sources and I could atomize my material and break it apart into a J document or P document or D document. I was given that kind of a lens. I knew source criticism. It wasn't until really the work of Robert Alter in about 1980, *The Art of Biblical Narrative* that he began to open our eyes, to view things holistically and to see how material was put together. He also came out with *The Art of Biblical Poetry*. James Kugel did something similar too with *The Art of Poetry*. And so, literature since about 1980 has been concerned about this holistic way of viewing the literature. So, I've had to learn to put on lenses, a new way of looking at my material. I kind of meant to encourage students. I kind of jokingly said it wasn't until I was about, 55 that I began to learn how to read the Bible and became ever more skillful at it until about the age of 65. I began to feel I had a little bit of confidence in knowing how to read the poem according to poetics and understanding how it's put together. I meant to discover, I encourage the students when I said at about the age of 65, I'm beginning to know how to read the Bible. They said, "Oh, great."

Survey of Techniques of the Rhetorical Approach [7:04-8:22]

So anyway, I'm not going to give the techniques of poetry and on page 299, we'll be talking about the keyword that may hold material together. On page 300, I talk about refrains and how... See all of this really is various forms of repetition. So you have a repetition of a keyword. You have a repetition of a refrain that puts it together. And I'm going to illustrate that from Psalm 49, the importance of a refrain. On page 302, this should be, C, contrast, that you learn to look for contrast. And D, you learn to look for comparisons between the material. You watch for logic and you watch for climax and you look for various kinds of structure. So that's the kind of material we're going into in this lecture.

Poetics [8:22-11:04]

Having introduced broadly this subject, part two is poetic, which means how is it

put together? The definition is: "the literary devices that an author uses to construct his composition and to communicate his evaluative point of view." In other words, like the narrator, the poet has a point of view. He has a message and he communicates his message through aesthetic, through artistic forms, artistic ways. We're looking at the artistry by which he puts the poem together to communicate his message. Usually, in the literature, it's referred to as an idea, but since the message has an important moral imperative about it, since the idea demands of response to truth, I'd rather talk about its message than it would about an idea.

Says, Adele Berlin and her book on poetics. It's an inductive science that seeks to abstract the general principles of literature for many different manifestations of those principles as they occur and actual literary texts. So, it's by the comparison of numbers of texts that we learn to abstract the techniques by which the poet wrote and composed his material. Its essential aim of poetics is not to elicit meaning from a text, but rather to find the building blocks of literature and the rules by which they are assembled. As she says elsewhere, "we do not know what a text means until we know how it means." And we'll be looking at these building blocks that enable us to understand how it means in order to get at what it means.

She says, "Thus poetics is to literature, as linguistics is to language. That is, poetics describes the basic components of literature and rules governing their use. Poetics strives to write a grammar, as it were, of literature." So, I paraphrase her here. We must first know how a text means before we can know what it means. I'm going to skip those other quotes. The idea of they are authors and not redactors is more appropriate for narrative than for poetry.

Keyword and Refrains [11:04-13:38]

I'm now jumping down on page 299, and I look at the techniques themselves of how the literature is put together and what we should be looking for. One of the techniques is a keyword that runs through the material and holds it together. And the keyword also contributes to understanding the message. Martin Buber coined the word

"Leitwort," which means "the leading word" that guides the literature. He defines it as a word or word root that is meaningfully repeated within a text or a sequence of texts or a complex of texts. He continued, "Those who attend to these repetitions will find a meaning of the text revealed or clarified or at any rate made more emphatic."

So for example, in Psalm 2, the key words are the Lord and the King. Every stanza talks about the Lord and the King. The rebellion of the heathen is against the Lord and the King. It's the Lord who sets his King upon Zion, the King recites the decree of the Lord to set them upon Zion. The Psalmist exhorts the kings to serve the Lord and kiss the son. And once you see that, that begins to open that psalm a little bit more clearly. It's about the Lord and his King and their relationships.

Another thing you watch for is not only a keyword, but you watch for a refrain that is repeated. So, for example, we already saw this in Psalm 42 and 43. The refrain is that this King is in exile. He longs to get back to the temple, but three times he says, "Why my soul are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God." So, all three times with all three stanzas, he ends with that refrain that yes, we're discouraged; yes, we're away from the temple. I long for it. I hate the situation in which I find myself. Nevertheless, my soul, wait for the Lord, hope for the Lord. He finds healing for his distraught state.

Psalm 49 and Refrains [13:38-17:00]

I'm now going to look at a Wisdom Psalm to show the importance of a refrain. I invite you to turn with me to Psalm 49. I think I've written, I don't think I wrote the whole thing out here, so we need to read it. I'm reading from the NIV and Psalm 49. This is by the sons of Korah and this is a Wisdom Psalm. So, we're going to be taking up Wisdom Psalms in a lecture or two, but let us taste one ahead of time, which will illustrate the importance of a refrain.

Let me read the psalm first. It belongs to the sons of Korah and it was sung to the accompaniment of stringed instruments. "Hear this, all your peoples; listen, all who live in the world, both low and high, rich and poor alike: My mouth will speak words of

wisdom; the meditation of my heart will give you understanding. I will turn my ear to a proverb; with the harp I will expound my riddle: [literally, open my riddle].

Why should I fear when evil days come, when wicked deceivers surround me-- those who trust in their wealth and boasted of their great riches? No one can redeem the life of another or give to God a ransom for them-- the ransom for life is costly, no payment is ever enough-- so that they should live on forever and not see decay. For all can see that the wise die, that the foolish and senseless also perish, leaving their wealth to others. Their tombs will remain the houses forever, their dwellings for endless generations, though they had named lands after themselves.

People, despite their wealth, do not endure; they are like the beasts that perish. This is the fate of those who trust in themselves, and of their followers, who approve their sayings. They are like sheep and are destined to die; death will be their shepherd (but the upright will prevail over them in the morning). Their forms will decay in the grave, far from the priestly mansions.

But God will redeem me from the realm of the dead; he will surely take me to himself. Do not be overawed when others grow rich, when the splendor of their houses increases; for they will take nothing with them when they die, their splendor will not descend with them. Though while they live they count themselves blessed-- and people praise you when you prosper-- they will join those with gone before them, who will never again see the light of life. People who have wealth, but lack understanding are like the beasts that perish."

Opening Stanza (Ps. 49:1-4) [17:00-20:02]

This Psalm has three stanzas. The first stanza is the introduction. And we learn that IT is a Wisdom Psalm. These four verses have two strophes. First of all, in verses one and two, he introduces us to the addressees. In verses three and four, he introduces us to himself as the author. He's clearly a sage who is teaching the people. So, by way of introduction, by the way of the addressees, he begins by addressing all peoples. This is true of wisdom literature. "Hear this, all you peoples; listen, all who live in this world."

Then after that broad statement, he thereupon narrows down to a merism of two different kinds: the low and the high, the rich and the poor.

So, he's going to have but one proverb, as we shall see, one lesson, but readers will respond differently. In other words, we all hear the text differently. According to our own situation. It's not that the text changes meaning. It's that the audience differs in the way they hear the text. So, for example here, the low, whatever their situation may be, they're going to be comforted. The high in an exalted position, they're going to be warned. The rich will be sobered; and the poor will be consoled. So, some will be comforted and some will be warned. Some will be sobered and some will be consoled. Depending on your state you're going to hear the proverb differently.

So that's why it's very hard for me to say, what do I expect to occur amongst students when I'm lecturing. Because I know the Spirit will apply it differently to each individual. My responsibility is to teach the truth of the text and then allow the Spirit to apply it appropriately to the audience.

But now we're introduced to the author. Having said we have these extremes of people, but it's to all people. Then he says of himself that "I will speak words of wisdom; the meditation of my heart will give you understanding." That will be the substance, but the form of it is going to be in the form of a proverb. "I will turn my ear to a proverb with the harp I will expound my riddle." So, it's going to be a proverb. And the proverb is going to be somewhat enigmatic. And it's going to force us to think about it, to tease out of its meaning.

Stanzas 1 & 2 Refrain (vss. 12, 20) [20:02-24:16]

Having introduced his poem in the first stanza, we now come to the two stanzas that are divided by refrain. And the refrain is found in verse 12 and verse 20. You can see it. It's almost replicated "People, despite their wealth, do not endure; they are like the beasts that perish." And again, in verse 20, "People who have wealth, but lack understanding, are like the beasts that perish." The word translated "are like" is the same word for parable, for proverb. The Hebrew word for proverb is *mahal*. This is a verbal

form. It's Nimshal and so the proverb is a comparison. So, he's comparing people to beasts, to beasts that perish. But he's going to play with that. And this refrain is crucial. This is the proverb. It's repeated twice. It divides the psalm and the poem into two halves. So, you have eight verses for the first stanza that is from verses 5 through 12, that's eight verses. Then you have eight verses for the second stanza, which is from 13 through 20.

Now, what he does is he's going to elaborate upon this comparison of people to animals that perish. In the first stanza, his point is that everyone dies like an animal. They all perish. And you will notice he says, this is true in verse 10, "For all can see that the wise die, that the foolish and senseless also perish, leaving their wealth to others." So, and it's very similar to Qohelet that death is a leveler, and that everyone is going to die like the beasts. But the second stanza is limited to the wicked. Everyone dies, but the wicked die permanently, but not the righteous.

In the Hebrew text, there's one difference between verse 12 and verse 20. And everything's the same, except where it says, "people, despite their wealth." And then it says, "do not endure." I give you this on a page 301. I think a better translation is: "mankind in his pomp will not remain" or "endure." The Hebrew word for "will not remain" or "not endure" is the Hebrew *bal yalen*. *Bal* is a form. It's an ancient form found in Ugaritic. It means "not." They will not and *yaline* means "endure." "He is like the beasts that perish."

Now, if you turn to the next line, the second refrain in verse 20. This is now on page 302 at the top of the page, "whereas it is man in his pomp," but now it changes from *yaline* to *yavine*. And to highlight it uses a different adverb for "no," instead of *bal*, it uses *l'o*, but they are synonymous. The real difference is one letter. And this is why it's enigmatic. There's a riddle. This is the way the sage works, that will not endure *yaline* that refers to everybody, but "not understand" that's the fool. That's the *l'o yavine*. And so, in the Hebrew, you could see this very clearly, this pun that's going on, "everyone does not endure," but the ones that died permanently are those with no understanding. And so that's the difference all die, but not all die forever.

Stanza 1 on identifying our god = security and significance [24:16-27:40]

Now, once we get that refrain, then we can understand the proverb that what is going to develop in the first stanza is that all people die like animals. And on page 301 I give my own translation. And what happens is that what a god is, is that which gives you security and significance. That's how I understand a god, whatever in your life gives you security and gives you significance. That is your god. That's what you live for. That's what you trust in. And for most people, it's money. It's money that gives them security. It's money that gives them significance. When you're younger, it's sex appeal that gives you security and significance.

If you don't have sex appeal, you don't have security within your group, and you don't have significance in the group. That's how it works in the world. And if you're like me and you have no money and you have no sex appeal, then you might find your security and significance in preaching and in teaching. And that can become your god. And that gives you your security. But he's talking here about making money, which is, in the world, I would say, 99.9% will say, if you're rich, you were successful. He did well in life. That's how the world will judge it. And that's what he's dealing with.

This is really theodicy. How do we handle this when rich people succeed as the world defines success? So, he says, "Why should I fear in times of trouble? When the iniquity of those who cheat me surround me. Those who trust in their wealth and boast of the abundance of their riches." So, there you see their trust and you see their significance in their boast and they are willing to sell their souls to get it.

Then he goes on to say, "Truly no man can ransom another or give to God the price of his life for the ransom for their life is costly, and can never suffice." So, if the sun was a coin of gold in one pocket and the moon a coin of silver in the other, where the milky way is pearls on a necklace around your neck or were the bright stars diamonds in a crown or in a tiara, in the day of death it's got no value. It's unrighteous mammon. It cannot save us from our greatest enemy which is death. So, no amount of money is going to save you. "That he should live on forever" and see, this is true of everybody "for he

sees that even the wise die, that the foolish and the stupid all alike must perish, and leave their wealth to others. Their graves are their homes forever. Their dwelling places to all generations, though they had named lands by their own names." You might just as well write your name on water. It has no permanence in this world. So, he comes to the refrain: "Man in his pomp will not remain, he is like the beasts that perish."

Stanza 2 (Ps. 49:13-20) [27:40-30:53]

But now the fool dies forever, all die, but the full dies forever. He has no life. "This is the path of all those who have foolish confidence yet after them, people approve their boasts." Then you have this tremendous simile. "They all like sheep that are appointed for sheol and death shall be their shepherd." Picture that. Death is your shepherd leading you to corruption, death, and decay, and no life-- that's your shepherd. But now note: "the upright shall rule over them in the morning." Here we have the distinction, the upright in a new day will rule over them. He has no clear revelation of resurrection yet that is brought to light by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. But he knows there is a better day coming. When the upright, those who conformed their lives wholly to the word of God. "They will rule over them in the morning." But then he goes back to the wicked. "Their form shall be consumed in sheol with no place to dwell."

But now note, whereas the third line five, six or seven, and he says, "truly, no man can ransom another." Now in the third line, he says, "but God will ransom my soul from the power of sheol. So, no man can save us from death, but God can save us out of sheol, out of the realm of the dead. "When the glory of his house increases, "for he will, for he will take me." This is the word used for Elijah that the Lord took him. So, he has shelah.

So, he says, "Do not be afraid when a man becomes rich, when the glory of his house increases, for when he dies, he will carry nothing away. His glory will not go down after him. For though, while he lives, he counts himself blessed though you'll get praise when you do well for yourself, his soul will go to the generation of his fathers, who will never again see the light, which is the light of life." And so "Man in his pomp without understanding is like the beasts that perish."

So, the refrain, and I'm saying, you do not know what a text means until you know how it means, and this refrain as it Psalm 42 / 43, "put your hope in God," this refrain is the key to understanding the psalm that we all die; but those without understanding die forever. Thank God he will redeem ransom my soul from the grave itself. So that's the importance of the refrains. So, I've talked about techniques and you watch for refrains that give you insight into the meaning of the psalm. They are very important.

Contrast and Comparison [30:53-36:38]

Page 302 this should be C. and you have contrast. It associates or juxtaposes things that are dissimilar or opposite. So, for example, all of this can be illustrated in narrative and in prose, as well as in poetry. One of my favorite illustrations of contrast and comparison is at the end of the book of Judges followed by 1 Samuel, we have the time of the Philistine superiority over Israel. The last judge of Judges is Samson. His father is Manoah. His mother is only known as Manoah's wife. Manoah's wife is being contrasted and compared to Hannah. Hannah is the next generation after Samson.

Note the comparison here is Manoah's wife. She has no children. She's barren. She can have no children. Here is Hannah, the next generation in the Philistine occupation or superior hegemony. And she has no children, but note the difference. Manoah's wife doesn't pray. In fact, she probably doesn't want a child. Hannah prays. Manoah's wife has the most charismatic judge that Israel knew. Singlehandedly, he could defeat the Philistine army. He did it with Goliath; he did it again with-- no David did it with Goliath. I mean, he did that with the jawbone of an ass. He slew thousands of the Philistines and in his death, when he pulled down the temple, he killed the leaders. He killed thousands of Philistines. There was no one as charismatic as Samson. So, you have Manoah's wife with no prayer, rather an angel of the Lord appears to her. It's a true miracle and she has this most charismatic figure. Yet he does not deliver Israel. Then we have Hannah, no angel of the Lord, no miracles, simply prayer. She wants a son and she prays for a son related to the king. You listen to her prayer in 1 Samuel 2 and she's praying for the Lord's anointed, for the king. Her son is going to install Israel's first king

and install kingship. Well, there, you see comparison and contrast of two mothers in the same situation. One mother has a miracle. She has a great charismatic, but she and her husband are failures as parents. Then you have, on the other hand, Hannah, no miracles, simply prayer. Samuel is a prophet. What he has is not the great strength of Samson. All he has is the word of God. His is moral strength, and he saves Israel.

So that comparison and contrast gives you tremendous illustration, insight, into how the kingdom of God comes. So, you watch when you reading your material for comparison and contrast.

So, the very first Psalm was filled with contrast. We said there were three stanzas, the cause for happiness or blessedness. Then we had the picturing of the prosperity. So, the cause was against the wicked in contrast to the word of God. The illustration was the tree of life versus the chaff. And the consequence was that "the wicked will not stand in the judgment;" they will perish. But there will be the righteous who will stand "for the Lord knows the way of the righteous." So, you see the tremendous comparison and contrast that's going on there. That is very typical of poetics that you should put on the lens, looking for comparison. and for contrast.

We saw a comparison in Psalm 23. We saw the three different settings that the Lord is likened to a shepherd. As a shepherd he provides for his sheep. He restores his sheep. He protects his sheep. And then in the fifth verse, he becomes like a sheik in a tent and it's all repeated, but escalated. Now, he provides them with a table spread before them. He restores them. He pours oil upon his head and all of this is protected. All of this is in the presence of his enemy. Then he moves climatically to the final scene. It's good to be a sheep in the pasture; better yet to be a guest in a tent, but the reality is "I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever" with eternal life.

Logic, intensification and escalation [36:38-37:50]

So, we have this comparison for developing the material. Also, we should watch for the logic of how the material is developed as in Psalm 2, when we pointed out the logic of how the stanzas hold together. Also, we watch for intensification. Normally there

is an intensification as in poetry, within the lines, the formula is X minus one, three transgressions, and then comes to reality, four. There's always escalation. So, you could see that in Psalm 23, there is escalation and you watch for escalation. So, you have in the Psalm 1, it ends triumphantly that "the Lord knows the way of the righteous." They therefore they are in harmony with the eternal One, but the way of the wicked alienated from God, they perish. So, one watches almost always, there's a climactic moment at the end of your psalm that you want to watch for.

Structural Patterns [37:50-38:56]

Now, we talk about structures, there are some patterns of structure. There are three typical patterns by which the material was put together. There can be an alternating pattern. As we saw in Psalm 110, you get A, B, C // A', B', C'. You can have a concentric pattern. And that is, you go A, B, C, // C, B A. And you can have a chiasmic pattern. You go A, B, C, X, C', B', A'. And so, I liken that to water imagery that the alternating pattern, ABC // A' B' C', they all like the waves coming in, with one wave on top of another. The next wave is always more intensive than the wave before. So, the tide is coming in and we saw that in a Psalm 110 until he finally ends up conquering the whole earth. And he will not fail until he is going to pursue it, and he is going to be refreshed with water until he ends his triumphant march, for example. So, then a concentric pattern is likened to the tide: tide in, tide out. Then you have a chiasmic pattern that's like throwing a rock into a pond and then it ripples out from there. So, the beginning and end match and on down the line. But the critical moment is where the rock hits, the pivot.

1 Kings 19: Elijah at Mount Horeb [38:56-43:43]

This is really important for the interpretation of all the Bible. For example, let me illustrate symmetrical or alternating pattern. As for example, the famous story of Elijah on Mount Horeb and like Moses he's in the cave. He's going to get a revelation from God. Notice the alternating pattern that interprets what the vision is. It starts off that Elijah is at a cave, and the word of the Lord, we're told, came to him. That in turn is followed by the

Lord's question. "What are you doing here Elijah?" And then he answers, "I have been very zealous for the Lord of Hosts." And then he ends that "they are trying to take my life away." Then the Lord comes back to him and says to him, speaks to him.

Then we have the scene. We have the wind that tore the rocks apart, but God was not in the wind. Then there was the earthquake and God was not in the earthquake. And then there was the fire and God was not in the fire. But then we have this oxymoron of the sound of sheer silence. It was so sound you actually could hear it, so to speak, a whisper.

The question is, what does the fire, the earthquake, what does the wind, and the sheer silence symbolize? What's the point of it? We get it in the alternating parallelism. For we read again, now the story continues. The setting we're told, he's at a cave, when the voice came, the question, "what are you doing here, Elijah?" The answer is: "I've been very zealous for the Lord. And now they are trying to take my life away." Then the Lord said, and then we have the anointing of Hazael King of Syria, the Aramaeans, anointing Jehu, king of Israel and then we have the anointing of Elisha. And they are destructive because parallel to that, we're told that Hazael is going to kill, what Hazael does kill doesn't kill Jehu will kill. And what Jehu doesn't kill Elisha will kill as he killed the 42 children. For example, yes, the 42 children at Bethel, for example.

By the parallelism, I think it's quite clear that the wind of destruction is Hazael. The earthquake of destruction is Jehu, who brings death. The fire is Elisha who is characterized by fire. But now we have, what's the sheer silence of God? The 7,000 who have never bowed to Baal. And what happens is people just read the story and they make up a connotation. This is your still small voice. But if you study the literature, this is not what it is. It's not your conscious. It's the silent majority, this silent minority, and seven is the number of completion. So, it's the divine number. It's the perfect number and a thousand. Isn't an innumerable number. It's a large number, a perfect large number. And that I understand by the alternating parallelism is the interpretation of the still small voice.

So, you don't know what a text means until you know, how it means. And what they're doing here in narrative we also get in the poems that we've been looking at. I've been pointing out alternating parallelism.

1 Kings 1-11: Solomon's Rise and Fall [43:43-47:17]

Or take another one, take a concentric parallelism. No chiasmic, I illustrate this in prose in 1 Kings 1 through 11, notice how it begins with A -- a prophet intervenes in the royal succession. That is Nathan intervenes. So, it's not Adonijah who is king, but it is going to be Solomon who's king. But notice the, A' on page 305, that at the end of Solomon's reign a prophet intervenes and determines the royal succession and a prophet is going to take away 10 of the tribes from Solomon. And he's going to appoint, the successor to Solomon named Rehoboam.

Chapter two, that was chapter one where we have the prophet intervenes in the royal succession. And then in chapter two, Solomon eliminates threats to his security and the keyword there, the refrain is, as Solomon's throne was established. So, he removed the threat of Joab. He removed the threat of Abiathar. He removed the threat of Adonijah and his throne is established. Notice the B ' in chapter 11 before a prophet determines the royal succession Yahweh raises up threats to Solomon's security. He raises up Jeroboam. He raises up the Syrian king, and they disestablish his throne is being undone, instead of being established; it is being disestablished. He raises up some threats to Solomon's security.

Notice the, C. in the early promise of Solomon's reign when he prays for wisdom. C' the tragic failure of Solomon's reign when he marries the foreign wives and he trusts in money, and he violates the Deuteronomic legislation of not to multiply wives and horses to yourselves.

D again, in chapter three to chapter four, Solomon uses his gift for the people. D' Solomon uses his gift for himself. He lives luxuriously as illustrated by the Queen of Sheba and all he has on his table to eat.

E you have the preparations for the building of the temple. E' Solomon dedicates

the temple, and he's warned by God and chapter eight. F Solomon builds the temple. F' Solomon furnishes the temple.

And so, you could see the chiastic pattern. Notice the X it's 1 Kings 7, 1 through 12 Solomon stopped building the temple. That's where he builds the palace for the Egyptian queen and he builds his own palace. And he didn't put God first. The turning point of Solomon is not marrying foreign wives as is normally said. The turning point for Solomon is when he stopped putting the temple first and he put his own house first. From there on in it is more or less downhill for Solomon. That's chiastic parallelism and chiastic structure rather.

Janus or Hinge [47:17-49:16]

We saw this in Psalm 92. We could see the chiastic structure that at the center, God is ruling over all. And on either side of that in a tricolon, God eliminates through his king his enemies, and we illustrated it there. So, we look for a keyword. We look for refrain. We look for different kinds of structure, namely alternating, or concentric or chiastic.

And another thing you look for is a Janus. If you're outlining material, and if you don't know whether it goes with the stanza before or the stanza after, or the material before or the material after, that's very deliberate. That's the Janus. It can go either way. And a Janus is from the god of doorways. One head that looked two different ways. It's our month of January that looks back to the old year to the new year. Normally there is a transition period. That's looking back and looking ahead. As for example, we saw it in Psalm 23, under the motif of God is a shepherd. And it's all in third person. "The Lord is my shepherd. He leads me beside quiet waters," he, and so forth. But then he shifts the second person. "Yeah though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death. I will fear no evil for you are with me." He's no longer talking about God; he's now talking to God. And that makes it so smooth so that when he now presents God as a sheik in a tent, he says, "you prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemy." And so, at the end of the shepherd motif, he shifts to second person to transition you into the second stanza,

which is he's the guest in the Lord's tent. That's a Janus. It's very, very common to have these kinds of transitional moments into Psalms.

Other Rhetorical Techniques 49:16-52:03]

Another technique they use is generalization and particularization. So, the generalization would be "praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits." And that's the generalization. Then he lists all his benefits, "who heals all your diseases" and so forth. There's also preparation and foreshadow. That is, for example, often in the introduction in the Lament Psalms, he will have an introductory petition, and then he will develop that. This was seen in Psalm 51, for example. He says, "Blot out all my transgressions and launder me, cleanse me and make me clean." That was the introductory petition. But then in the main introductory petition, he asks God to cleanse him with hyssop and make him clean. And he asked for forgiveness. So, you could see that.

Well, let's just take a look at Psalm 51 to make the point more clear. You could see the introductory petition. And he says, after having mercy, the petition is "blot out, all my transgressions." And verse 2 "cleanse me from my impurity" de-sin me, make me pure. And then we have his main petition and verse seven "cleanse me with hyssop and I will be clean, wash me and I will be whiter than snow." So, he asked for cleansing, and then also for forensic forgiveness, he says, "hide your face from my sin and blot out all my iniquity." So, he had an introductory petition. And then in preparation for the main petition. Again, these are all techniques that you find throughout literature, the biblical literature.

There are summarizations, as we saw in Psalm 73, that there's a summarization. "This is what the wicked are like, they were always carefree" and so forth. You can have interrogation, that is, you start with a question and then you answer the question. We saw that in Psalm 15. You have inclusios that you begin and end, as an envelope. This is very, very common. So we had it in Psalm 8, "O, LORD, our Lord. How majestic is your name and all the earth." And that frames, the entire psalm.

Intercalation Insertions [52:03-53:47]

You have intercalation that is you can be on one track and then just stop and introduce entirely new material. For example, in the story of Judges and Hannah, that it's presenting the six major judges ending with Samson. Then it's going to move on in chapter seven with the next judge who is Samuel, but in between you get an intercalation to give you more insight into the material. And the book of Judges ends with the real problem is not only the judges who have feet of clay as Gary Henry would put it, but the real problem is the priesthood.

And so, you have two stories of the failure of the priesthood. You have the apostate priest, who is the grandson of Moses who establishes the false cult at in Dan. And then you have the callous wicked priest with this concubine. He murders her and he leads the whole nation into a civil war that decimates, almost destroys, the entire tribe of Benjamin. The real problem is the priesthood, because they're not gatekeepers. They're not upholding the word of God. And so, you have the apostate priest, the Jonathon, the son of Gershom, the son of Moses. Then you have this wicked callous priest who has a concubine. He murders her and leads the nation at the civil war. And then you go on into 1 Samuel and we end up back with a judge, the last of the judges, who is Samuel, and you have that kind of intercalation.

Psalm 24 [53:47-1:01:24]

This is common in the Psalms. Many times, source critics want to say, we have two Psalms, and I'm not convinced of that. Take a look for example, that Psalm 24, and this will make more sense in light of what we said about Enthronement Psalms, and God's rule. It is a famous Psalm, a Psalm of David. "The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it; for he founded it on the seas and established it on the waters." See, that sounds an awful lot like Psalm 93, to me, where the Lord is robed in majesty and might, he established the earth. and it's at that point where the Lord has been victorious and established the world and the creation. He founded it on the seas, the symbol of chaos, and he's mightier than the waters.

I'd expected at that point that the King of glory would go into the city and be crowned. Verse seven, "Lift up your heads, you gates; be lifted up you everlasting doors." But it doesn't do that. It stops that and introduces a whole new scene. Now not only is the Lord entering triumphantly into a city, but now his people are also entering with him. But who are the people who enter? "Who may ascend the mountain of the Lord? Who may stand in his holy place? The one with clean hands [that's behavior], a pure heart [in his motives], who does not trust in an idol or swear by a false god. They will receive blessings from the Lord and vindication from God their Savior. Such is the generation of those who seek him, who seek your face. O God of Jacob."

So, he stops about the Lord and his triumph, and he matches it with the people going into a city. And then he comes back with "Lift up your heads you gates." I could just stop here for a moment. I'm trying to figure out where I discuss the meaning of "lift up your heads. O you gates." Let's see, where did I discuss that? Oh yeah. I discussed it earlier. It would be under yeah, under and Enthronement Psalms under Psalm 110. You've got to go back to that lecture on Psalm 110. I think that's where I discuss it. I'm trying to find it. It's on page, yeah, page 296 of your notes. It's there that I discussed this what it means "to lift up this head" and the significance is that he's a victor.

I'm illustrating this from Psalm 24. It's talking about intercalation. So, going back to Psalm 24, after the intercalation of the people ascending the mountain of the Lord and in triumph with the Lord because they keep covenant with him and they receive blessing and they are the ones that seek your face.

He goes back to the king coming in and he says, "Lift up your heads you gates be lifted up, you ancient doors that the King of glory may come in." So the question is, what's this have to do gates with heads? They didn't know in the ancient Near East, they didn't know doors that lifted up as they do today. I forget what you call that kind of gate, but they lifted up the gate. You've seen pictures of it that did not exist in David's day. The door swung on hinges. He's not talking about the lintels of a gate. He's personifying the gates and he's using imagery from the Ugaritic material I assume.

So, I discussed this, what it means to "lift up your heads you gates; be lifted up you everlasting doors, that the King of glory may come in." This is on page 296 of your notes. The circle of gate towers is personified, which like a council of elders sat waiting the return of the army and its great warrior, gone to battle. They have sat bowed and anxious. In the Ugaritic texts we find a picture of the council of the gods assembled on the mountain of El, that is, Zaphon. On the approach of the emissaries of Baal's arch foes Prince Sea, the gods are bowed and fearful. Quote from the Ugaritic text, dropping their heads onto their knees down on their princely throne, sitting in fear and despair. Then Baal, the young king enters and they shout, his emissary shouts, "Lift up, O gods your heads." So in that Ugaritic texts, it likens Baal to his holy mountain and his counsel of other gods they're dispirited because they think he's gone down in defeat before Prince Sea, the symbol of chaos and death. But now comes the announcement. Baal has been victorious and they say, "lift up your heads," which refers to the council. I take it Cross is right here, my professor at Harvard, that the city gates that surround the city are personified as a council. The king has gone out to battle and they fear that he's gone down in defeat, but now he's been victorious. And he says, "lift up your heads you gates." And they are being personified to welcome him.

It goes on in Psalm 24 "that the King of glory may come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, you gates. Lift them up you ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord Almighty -- He is the King of glory." He is the one that defeats all of his foes.

So, you have this intercalation between God who has been victorious and creation. And then you have the intercalation of the army entering with them. And then the gates are told to be lifted up, personified, drooping, discouraged, but here comes the King of glory in all of his victory. This is normal. This is normal to have intercalation in the midst of hymnic material. It's not unusual.

Psalm 100 and Intercalation [1:01:24-1:02:38]

And that would illustrate, you had in Psalm 100. And in Psalm 100, "Be joyful in the Lord all you lands. Serve the Lord with gladness; and come into his presence with a song." So, you're invited to come in and be joyful in the Lord. But then he stops, before you enter know this, "the Lord himself is God." Know this, the Lord himself is God; and we Israel, are his people. We are his, we are his people and the sheep of his pasture" and having intercalated that confession that the Lord, the God of Israel's God and that Israel is his people through whom he mediates his kingdom; then he continues not only be joyful in the Lord. Now he says, "enter his gates with thanksgiving, go into his courts with praise, be thankful and call upon his name for the Lord is good, his mercy is everlasting and his faithfulness endures from age to age." Again, this kind of an intercalation there between entering to worship, but then before you enter, know this, confess Israel's confession that the Lord himself is God.

Intertextuality and Scenic Depiction [1:02:38-1:08:20]

On page 307, another technique is intertextuality. They make allusion to other material. So that as we saw in Psalm 8 it is almost Genesis 1, put to music, put to poetry. And he said to mankind rule over the cattle and the herds and even the wild animals and so forth. The recites Genesis 1, as we've seen.

Also pay attention to scenic depiction. So that you know, in scenic depiction, I was just thinking you have, for example, in Shakespeare, in, Henry the Fourth. It starts out, you have, the King of Wales and the King of Scotland are rebelling against Henry and his son Harry. And how does Shakespeare begin that scene? It's been leading up to a climactic battle between these Dukes and Henry and his son, Harry. The way he begins it, it begins with a looking at the sun and it's blood red. And the wind is howling through the trees, it says, like a trumpet sound. It's all being set up for the battle day: Bloody sun, wind sounded like a trumpet in battle. It's a day of gloom. It's a day of storm and that's in his imagination.

But God orchestrates, not in his imagination, but in real history, in providence, he

sets the appropriate setting. So, for example, when David flees from Absalom and he meets three people, he meets Hushai, he meets Ziba and he meets Shimei. This is all in 2 Samuel 15 and 16. Hushai is a loyal friend. Ziba is mixed. He's loyal to David by being disloyal to his master Mephibosheth. He lies about Mephibosheth. So, at any rate, and then the third one is Shimei.

Now Hushai is a loyal friend and he is sent to defeat the counsel of Absalom; he's sent to defeat the council of Ahithophel. And so Hushai is sent back.

Ziba, I say, is mixed loyalty. He comes to David with donkeys, laden with raisins and, and bread and wine and food to sustain them. But he does it by betraying his master Mephibosheth because David asked him where's Mephibosheth and Ziba says, he's hoping that the kingdom will be returned to him is a straight out lie, as you study the story. And then the third one is Saul's descendant Shimei, who curses David and throws rocks at him and calls him a bloody tyrant because what he did to his ancestor, Saul.

But notice how God stages all this. Hushai is on the top of the mountain closest to God. Ziba is down the slope he's mixed. And at the bottom of the mountain is Shimei. So, it's definitely orchestrated to show who is closest to God and who is totally removed from God, because Shimei, is basically off the mountain entirely. And so, you have scenic depiction very deliberately. There's nothing in here that's just an accident.

So, you have David, he's going to, where he does it in Psalm 5. Where does he pray? It's in the morning "I will wait, in the morning like a century waiting for the answer to a prayer." And so, he's praying in the morning and the morning, and the ancient Near East was the time of judgment after the night. The God of justice in the ancient Near East was Shamas, which is the sun. And so, the setting is the morning sun, which gave hope for justice, in the light of the new day.

And you watch for naming as well. Finally, as it Psalm 91, he uses four names from God, the Most High, the Almighty, and the Lord God himself.

So, these are some of the techniques by which they embed and hide their meaning. All right. So that gives you some insight into what poets do in order to compose. It's

really has a hidden meaning that you have to be aware of these techniques. You have to put these lenses on by which you're able to see it. Until you have these lenses you don't see it any more than I think I saw it in 1 King 7 that that was the turning point of the whole story, because I learned to look for chiasms. All right, God bless you all.

This is Dr. Bruce Waltke in his teaching on the book of Psalms. This is session number 23, Rhetorical Approach, Poetic Techniques, Psalm 49. [1:08:20]

Psalms
Session 24: Messianic Psalms
By Dr. Bruce Waltke

[\[Jump to TOC\]](#)

This is Dr. Bruce Waltke and his teaching on the book of Psalms. This is session number 24, Messianic Psalms

Review and Introduction 00:23-3:52]

So, we've been looking at different methods that have been used to enter more fully into the mind of the Psalmist. And we've looked at the spiritual approach, if you want to put it that way. We looked at the historical approach. And we've been in form criticism and the various branches of form criticism. Then we looked yesterday at the rhetorical approach. Now we're up to the Messianic approach, reading the Psalms with reference to the Messiah or as Amirauld, put it, keeping our left eye on the historical king and keeping our right eye on the ideal King that he represents.

But before we go any further, let's begin our lecture with prayer: "Father, as the Psalmist has said, 'the lines of fall into us in beautiful places,' namely, you are our portion. You are our inheritance. We have no good apart from you. Today we have the delight of thinking about the Son in whom you are well pleased. And you've said to us, 'this is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased listen to him.' We desire to do that. And so, as we meditate upon the Psalms and we meditate upon our Lord, we pray that you will add substance to our faith, order to our virtue, confidence to our confession and strengthen our fidelity when we have tested. You are the author of all these good things and we praise you for it. So, Lord we, with the Psalmist, we take refuge in you. In Christ's name. Amen."

All right. I have divided the lecture into several parts. This is now on page 314 of your notes. We will, first of all, look at the definition of what we mean by Messianism. And then we'll look at the historical background to it. And then third we'll look at in the

New Testament, Jesus Christ as the fulfillment of the ideal of the Messiah. First of all, and then later on the second part of the lecture, as we're going to look at the Messianic Psalms in particular one that deals with his resurrection, and that will be Psalm 16.

Definition of Messiah [3:52-5:36]

But first of all, the definition of Messiah and I failed to put in your notes the etymology of it; where the word originates. Messiah, the Hebrew is Meshiah. It's translated through the Greek, into English as Messiah, but the Hebrew is Meshiah. And that comes from the root mashah. Mashah means to paint, to smear, to dab, or to anoint. We saw yesterday how the king is anointed, that the prophet would come with his flask or ram's horn of oil and he would douse the king. He would anoint the king with the scented oil. By that, we said, the king became God's property. He was anointed and therefore set apart to God. Also, he was validated as the king appointed by God. And thirdly we said that with that anointing there came empowerment upon the king. So that's the root meaning of the word of the Messiah which means "the anointed one."

Messiah as the Ideal King of Psalms [5:36-13:49]

Now, when we talk about a Messiah, however, we're talking about the ideal King. We're talking about the King that will bring in at the end of history, the ideal of a universal righteous kingdom. So, I wrote in your notes, it's the realization of God's promise to give Israel an ideal King who will establish a universal rule of righteousness and peace at the end of the ages. I shouldn't have said at the end of the ages well it's better than at the end of history, I guess.

Now we look at the historical background to this theology that God is going to send an ideal King who establishes his rule according to his 10 commandments, according to righteousness at the end of the ages. According to the biblical narrative, the origins are already found in the garden of Eden.

When God said and sentenced the serpent, he said that the woman who on her own had identified with the serpent and his lie, that God would intervene and he would put a

new spirit in the woman. He would put enmity in the woman. So that she would reject the serpent and would identify with him. It was purely sovereign grace. So "I will put enmity," God said to the serpent, "between you and the woman and between her offspring and your offspring." So already here, we have that there's going to be a seed of the woman and that seed of the woman is going to destroy the serpent and destroy his seed.

And so, he goes on to say that of this seed of the woman, "he will crush your head" and destroy you, but in the process, "you will crush his heel that is, he will establish this kingdom through sufferings. We already get that right in the garden of Eden.

As you know, the rest of Genesis is pretty much a matter of identifying that seed, of separating out the seed of the woman, that will be victorious over the seed of the serpent, referring to those who are antagonistic to the kingdom of God. I think that Eve thought it was going to be Cain. He turned out to be the seed of the serpent. Instead, it's Seth. Then you have the whole line of Seth down to Noah. And then out of Noah's sons, it's going to be Shem, not Ham or Japheth. Then out of the sons of Shem, it's going to be Abraham. And out of Abraham, it's going to be Isaac; Isaac and not Ishmael. And then Isaac's son is going to be Jacob and not Esau. Then Jacob has the 12 tribes and we're told it's going to be the tribe of Judah, that the scepter will not depart from the tribe of Judah. That's where Genesis ends.

And we don't know who it will be in the tribe of Judah until we come to David. There we have a decisive moment when God anoints David to be the king and then enters into covenant with David and assures David, that his house will endure forever. That is to say that his dynasty will be an eternal dynasty. That will be realized because it's going to be realized in an eternal Son. All dynasties eventually die off, but his dynasty never died off.

The serpent constantly tried to destroy the house of David. In fact, at one point he blew out all the candles on the birthday cake, as it were, the right of kings likens David's seed or offspring to a lamp or a light. I think of it as a birthday cake. He blew out all the

candles except a little Joash, and God preserved his kingdom through that one flicker.

Finally, it ends up with the son of David being Jesus, the son of David. He becomes the eternal son. I think of Jesus as a trick birthday candle that Satan blew him out, but he came back to eternal life and he lives forever. He's assured not only of an eternal dynasty, but he is assured of an eternal kingdom, that is a sphere or rule, but will be ruled by the 10 commandments, a moral kingdom. That kingdom has endured right onto the present age in the church, which is the kingdom of God today, which establishes the rule of righteousness. He's assured an eternal throne, the symbol of his rule.

So, God took the throne away from his offspring for a while. Yet it really always belonged to the house of David. So, it's very similar to what I did with my children. When my boys, were young, I gave them a Lionel train set, but they always turned the transformer all the way up. They like to see the locomotive race around the track. Then invariably it went flying off the rails. Since they didn't know how to use it, I took it away and put it on a shelf until they could use it responsibly. So, it was theirs, but it was taken away for the time being until they could use it responsibly.

And that's what happened in the history of Israel that David's sons lost the throne in the intertestamental period, but eventually Christ, as we saw in interpretation of the Liturgical Psalms the Coronation Psalms today the reality is God's throne is in heaven, Christ's throne is in heaven at God's right hand. And so, it is an eternal throne.

Well, that is the background for the house of David that your dynasty will last forever and that kingdom will last forever; and that throne will last forever. That is the real origin of the hope for an ideal king from the house of David that will establish a universal righteous kingdom. But people like Mowinckel, because of their presuppositions, that Genesis is late. Therefore, they begin with the house of David as most academics do. But the biblical narrative takes us back to the garden of Eden. Well, that is the origin and somewhat of the development of the Messianic hope.

Psalter and Messianic Hope [13:49-24:06]

We now look at the Psalter's contribution to this messianic expectation, messianic

hope. And as we saw that the Psalms largely pertained to the king. Many of the Psalms praise the King and present him in very idealistic terms. So, we saw, for example, in Psalm 2, that he says, ask of me, my son, I'll give you the heathen unto the ends of the earth. And you are to break them with a rod of iron and you are therefore to establish the righteous kingdom. Or in Psalm 110 we saw another coronation liturgy expectation of David's son and he's going to be seated at God's right hand. He's going to be a King and a priest who establishes a universal kingdom.

Gunkel did not interpret those as an expectation of a real person. He did not interpret it as a reference to a future king and to a Messiah. For Gunkel, the German word was the *Huffstiel*, that is to say, it was "court hyperbole." It was exaggeration of an idea, but never really with the expectation that anyone would fill such a large image. Mowinckel by contrast thought it referred to the Messiah in his book, *He That Cometh* and I cite that in your footnote.

So, the Psalter glorifies the king with these Psalms of Praise for the king and elaborates upon his rule from sea to sea and shore to shore. So that actually it expands the Abrahamic covenant, which was from the river of Egypt to the great river Euphrates. It expands it from sea to sea and shore to shore and makes it a universal and a righteous kingdom.

On C. On page of 315, I move from the Psalms themselves, which were sung like at the coronation, maybe even the birthday of the king, and at other moments to celebrate the ideal King and expectation David a prophetic expectation of the ideal King. They were really sung for the historic king in the first temple period. But what happens when the Psalter is completed, it's completed in the exile when Israel has no king. So, therefore, these Psalms that were sung for the historic king and painted in the idea of what would come, they now become the reference to the king in the future. And they are, these Royal Psalms, are draped upon the future Messiah.

So, the way I picture it is that at the coronation, for example, these Psalms were put on the shoulders of the historical king, who presented to sight and sound the hope for

the ideal. But all of the kings, their shoulders were too small and the purple robes slipped off them. So, they were put upon their successor. But each successor was smaller than, to a large extent, smaller than his predecessor until eventually there is no king at all. So, Israel is left with a wardrobe of these Royal Psalms waiting for a King to wear them. And that it isn't until Jesus who is worthy to wear the Psalms. He's draped in this Royal Messianic expectation and ideal.

Another contributing factor to Messianism is apocalyptic literature from the intertestamental period. Apocalyptic literature is characterized by a dualism, a radical dualism. So, in apocalyptic literature, you thought about the present age as radically distinct from the future age. Furthermore, the present age is thought of as the time of sin and death and evil. The future age is an age without sin without death--the ideal age. The present evil age is under the rule of Satan. The future age is under the rule of Messiah. In this literature, it's expected now that this Messiah that Jesus identifies himself, as the Son of Man was with God from the beginning. He will bring in this new rule of righteousness upon the earth. So, they had a radical dichotomy between this age and the age to come. They saw it as a cataclysmic event that would separate the old age under Satan from the new age under Christ.

So, Christ will say, as he's introducing the new age, "I saw Satan fall from heaven" which means that's Luke 10.18, that he loses his ascendancy and that he is greater than Satan and he would triumph over him. He's introducing a new age. Of course, that's why John the Baptist comes preaching, a message of repentance for "the kingdom of heaven is at hand," that is, this cataclysmic event that's associated with the Messiah is going to be a time when you destroy the wicked. And those who repent of sins are prepared to enter into the kingdom of righteousness under the Messiah. So, he pictures the crisis coming with the Spirit, making people holy and he pictures it as a time of fire when there will be the judgment and the chaff will be burned up and the righteous will enter into the kingdom. So, they are baptized with repentance and being prepared for this new age under the Messiah.

All of that then is entering into this Messianic expectation. Then we come to Christ, and John the Baptist said this is the ideal king and I'm not worthy to untie the latchet on his sandal. When Christ comes it becomes apparent that there is going to be two advents of Christ. There's his first advent when he comes and he's going to suffer. He's going to suffer for sin and take the penalty of death upon himself. It's going to be at this second coming that he establishes his universal ideal kingdom.

But it is in this era of his first advent, when he's going to suffer for sin and he's going to experience death at the same time he's already inaugurating the new age. And so you have what is known as realized eschatology. He's inaugurating the new age but it's not a radical dichotomy.

Jesus talks about the mysteries of the kingdom what had been hidden and what in the old model of the apocalyptic the present evil age and the future age of righteousness. It now becomes more extended. So, you have the Son of Man who is sowing the seed of wheat but at the same time Satan is still operative. He's inferior to Christ but he's still operative. He is sowing the weeds and the two are growing together until a future when again at that time, there will be the radical separation of the wheat from the weeds or the tares as we put it.

So, we have a new model now, instead of just a simple dichotomy, we have a first advent when Christ suffered for sin and death, but at the same time, he's ascended to heaven and he's establishing his kingdom, but it's mixture. We wait for the consummation at the end of the age. So that's kind of the outline and in the New Testament when I have the other two advents of the Messiah and the two aspects of his fulfillment and then this reform.

Role of the Psalter in the New Testament [24:06-25:30]

Then I talk on page 316 of the role of the Psalter in the New Testament. The Psalter speaks of the sufferings of the Christ and also of the glories of the Christ. And as Peter says to the church of the diaspora, he says before the Christ, they didn't put together clearly how the Messiah was going to both suffer and yet he's going to reign. They

couldn't put together the sufferings of Christ with the reign of Christ. But the New Testament appropriates the Psalter both for the passions of the Christ and also for the triumphs of the Christ and makes it clear that they've belonged to these first coming and the second coming.

I say the New Testament directly quotes the Old Testament 283 times. And of these, 116 times are quotes from the book of Psalms. In other words, 41% of the quotes from the Old Testament are taken out of the book of Psalms.

Direct Fulfillment [25:30-30:19]

I also note that the book of Psalms is used in three different ways in the New Testament. It's used as proof text, God, showing he is sovereign over the career of Christ and that he had predicted crucial events in the life of Christ. So, Christ is fulfillment of these Psalms, which made predictions about the Christ. So, for example, and usually to some extent, it's an apologetic because you could be offended by the fact that they expected the Messiah to bring in this new age, this political age that would have destroyed Rome. Yet the truth is this Christ is going to die. How do you explain that?

Jesus, for example, gives to the Pharisees and the chief priests, the parable of the landowner with his vineyard. So, he says this landowner had a vineyard, and he dug, he put a wall around it to protect it. He dug a wine press within it for the crushing of the grapes. He built a watchtower take care of it. So, he had everything prepared for the vineyard. Then he went away. He rented out the vineyard while he went on a distant journey. But when it came time to reap the harvest from the vineyard, he sent the servants to the tenants in order to get the fruit from his vineyard. Whereupon the tenants seize the landowner's servants, and they beat them up. They killed them. They stoned them. And so he sent more servants and they did the same to them. Then finally the landowner said, I'll send them my own son. I think the servants represent the prophets such as John the Baptist that they had rejected. Now here comes the son himself, and with Jesus Christ. But they did the same to him. They seized him and put him to death.

And Jesus says, this is fulfillment. "Have you never read" what was in this is

Psalm 118 about verse 23 I think, "that the stone the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone." I should have continued the vineyard a little bit more because he said, what will the land owner do? But he will take the vineyard. He will destroy the tenants. He will take the vineyard away from them, and he will give it to new tenants, new people. That's the history of the church because he took the kingdom away from Israel and he gave it over, if I interpret it properly, he gave it over to the Gentiles, mostly Gentile church. So that by the second century, the church was almost entirely Gentile and he gave it to a new people. He says, this is fulfillment of the prophecy that "the stone the builders rejected," namely the Messiah "He has become the chief cornerstone" of the kingdom. So that even their rejection had been anticipated.

Again, you have another, I'm just giving illustrations of direct fulfillment, you have it in the case of Judas. Here is one that Jesus chooses and he betrays him. He betrays Jesus. Jesus says, that's the fulfillment of Psalm 41, where out of David's experience, when he was sick on some occasion and his enemies slandered him and talked against him, then he says "my own close friend, my trusted friend, with whom I shared my bread turned against me." And that was a type of prophecy of Christ and Judas. He shared his bread with him and he turned against him. So that psalm becomes a prophecy that's fulfilled in Judas. So that's one way the Psalter is used. It's used as fulfillment of a prophecy proof texting the career of our Lord Jesus Christ.

On Typology [30:19-36:05]

Dr. Mounce: This might be too big of a question to ask, but if you look at David's psalm about "my friends, turn against me," you would never read it as a prophecy. No, but Jesus says it is a prophecy, right? How do you put those two together?

Dr. Waltke: Because the question arises that when you are reading a Psalm originally, when David, is giving those words that "my own trusted friend betrayed me," the question is, did David understand in that case that it was a prophecy? I think when he's spoke in the coronation liturgies, that "sit at my right hand" and he's going to have a universal kingdom that was real prophecy. We're going to see it in Psalm 16, where he

says of one, "he will not see corruption." It could be not of themselves. So, you have real prophecy on one hand.

On another hand, you have topology. When you go in through a type, you do not know that the type is intended as a prophecy for a future event. So, you have, for example, with Balaam and his donkey, and Balaam and his donkey is a type of the king of Moab and Balak with Balaam the prophet. So that as the donkey was to Balaam, Balaam is to Balak. So, Balaam is like the donkey. So, the donkey is a type of Balaam and Balaam is a type of Balak. So, what happens is the donkey could see the angel of the Lord. He had supernatural vision, but Balaam couldn't see it. So, in the fulfillment of the type Balaam can see what Balak, the King of Moab, cannot see. Furthermore, there are three times the donkey sees the angel of the Lord and the first time he, let's see, what does he do the first time? He goes off into a field. The second time he crushes Balaam's foot against the wall. The third time he just lays down underneath him. Each time it gets more painful to Balaam. The same thing, Balaam gives three prophecies. His eyes are wide open, he says. He sees things. Each time the revelation becomes more painful as he sees the ascendancy of the king of Israel over the king of Moab. Then the text says the third time this happened, the donkey saw the angel of the Lord and responded painfully to Balaam. It says the third time Balaam got angry. In the fulfillment of the type, the third time he gets his prophecy we're told that Balak got angry. And the climactic moment is that upon when he wants to beat the donkey, the donkey speaks miraculously. This a type of Balaam who now speaks miraculously. It says that God opened the mouth of the donkey, and now God opens the mouth and puts the words into the mouth of Balaam. And so, it's a real picture.

My point is that while Balaam is going through this experience, he does not know that he's being a type of a great event. I think that's how typology works, that while you're going through it, you're not aware that it's under the superintendence of God to be a picture of a greater event. So, therefore, I don't think David knew in that particular case that he was a type. It's only in later revelation in Jesus' experience that you realize that it

was a divinely intended type and he's the fulfillment of the type. So maybe that's, that's helpful, Bill, a helpful question to clarify the matter.

Okay. So, we go back to the role of the Psalter that it is cited as proof texts in the career of Christ. The Psalter is also used in by the apostles to teach doctrine. So for example, when Paul in Romans 3 wants to talk about the universality of man's corruption and sin, he cites several psalms to do it including Psalm 14, and the synoptic parallel, which is Psalm 53. So, the Psalms teach prophecy. And this seated at God's right hand becomes part of the liturgy in the confessions of the church. Those are the three ways that the Psalms are used.

Psalms Speak of Christ [36:05-39:09]

On page 316, I'm talking about the role of the Psalter it's used in three ways. And then we said, Jesus Christ alluded to the Psalms over 50 times. Then, finally, I make the point that Jesus said the Psalms speak of him from Luke 24, when he meets the disciples on the Emmaus Road. He said to them, "this is what I told you while I was still with you. Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me and the law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms." So, it is Jesus who asks us to read the Psalms with reference to himself. I'll say more about how they speak of Christ at the end of this lecture. But at any rate, Jesus said, we should read the Psalms with reference to Christ. Yet, I'm astounded when I read even commentaries by evangelical academics, how little they read the Psalms in the light of Christ, as we're told to.

On page 317, I cite some of these 50 passages. I divided it up into Christ's passion, his fervor and his glory. So, we take up Psalms that referred to his passion. So, when he says in John, "my soul is troubled." He is citing Psalm 6. When he asks on the cross, "Why have you forsaken me?" he's citing Psalm 22. When he says, when John says, "they divided his garments" it's a reference to Psalm 22. On the cross when he says, "into your hands I commit my spirit." It's a citation from Psalm 31. Without going into it, it's all written down there and there's no point in my reading it all to you.

But the point is you can see that he is seeing David as a type of himself or

prophetic prophecies about himself. So, he sees himself as the fulfillment of the royal expectation. So, this is far more than 10 Psalms that deal with the king. The whole Psalter is, not the whole, but much of the Psalter is about the king and therefore they are referring to Christ. So even when he cleanses the temple, it is the zeal for his house. That comes out of Psalm 69. So, constantly you have in the New Testament that they see the Psalms as a prophecy or a type of Jesus Christ in it.

Kings of Messianic Psalms: 1) typical [39:09-40:08]

That takes me to page 318. And I talk about kinds of Messianic Psalms. And I divide that and this is following from Delitzsch. There are four kinds. One is called indirect and typical. So, I say, David, the earthly king foreshadows, his greater son, the heavenly King. I don't think David necessarily knew that he was a type as we explained earlier, but in the light of the total revelation, you only see typology in light of the total revelation. In light of the total revelation, you could see how the historical king is a type of his greatest son, of Jesus Christ. So, these Psalms that referred to the king are indirectly at the least are typical of Jesus Christ, because that's how the New Testament reads it.

2) Typical-Prophetic [40:08-41:23]

Secondly, it is what you might call typical-prophetic. That is, David is a type of Christ, but he uses language to refer to his experience that is exaggerated to some extent, but finds its fulfillment uniquely in Christ. This would be for example, Psalm 22, when David is probably going through some crisis and feels abandoned by God. Yet, he describes his experience in terms of the cross. So, he pictures, his thirst, he pictures, they're dividing his garments among them and the language as we looked at Psalm 22 transcends his own historical experience. It actually becomes prophetic of the Christ when it is fulfilled literally in the life of Christ. So, I call those typical-prophetic and David's sufferings and glories typifies Jesus Christ, but his language transcends his own

experience and finds its fulfillment in Jesus Christ. So, there's the second kind. It's a mixture of type and prophecy.

3) Purely Prophetic, and 4) Enthronement Psalms [41:23-42:04]

Some Psalms are purely prophetic, and that would be like Psalm 110. "When the Lord said to my Lord, sit at my right hand until I make the enemies your footstool of your feet." You could read a typical-prophetic, but it is uniquely fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

There are the Enthronement Psalms that we saw the Psalm 93 and 99, where the Lord reigns. They are interpreted in the New Testament as a reference to Jesus Christ and his reign. And so, these are the four ways I see the Psalms being used.

Questions [42:04-46:30]

Well, I think that gives you some orientation to a Messianic approach in interpreting the Psalms. So, this is time for questions. If you want to ask any more questions. Bill, I'm anxious for your input and for yours.

Dr. Mounce: Was it that clear? Is it that clear? It was that clear back on prophecy. One of the things that I don't know if I learned it, or just thought it out, that so often on these prophecies that don't seem like it's your first category and direct and typical it's I mean, I'm thinking of the Hosea "out of Egypt, I've called my son." So, I mean, this is a general question. Is part of it just that God does the same kinds of things over and over? So, the first time something happens that because God does things cyclically that then it becomes a type of what's going to happen. I mean, is that I guess, the question I hear a lot from people is that they'll read a passage to go, well, that's not a prophecy. The New Testament says it is a prophecy. So, I'm always looking for ways to explain and so type is a good way to do it.

Dr. Waltke: Type is one way doing it. I think that the idea that a Hosea "out of Egypt I have called my son," I see, I think that's a reference that Israel is the son of God.

Dr. Mounce: And Israel typifies the ultimate son of God, the ultimate son?

Dr. Waltke: Yeah. So, I see it as a type and that's the whole six birth narratives of Matthew. They all find fulfillment in prophecy. So, some of them are very direct by Bethlehem with the Wiseman of Bethlehem. But then with the slaughter of the innocent he sees it in Jeremiah that as Israel is going into captivity, he sees it as a type. But a type is a divinely intended picture. It takes the full revelation before you could see it as a divinely intended picture.

Dr. Mounce: So, a type is a divinely intended picture of a greater event, of a greater event in the future. Okay.

Dr. Waltke: That's what I understand by typology. It's a picture of a greater event. But it's a divinely intended picture. The issue that's raised, of course at this point is, do we follow Marsh that the only legitimate types are those that are given to us in the New Testament? Or, are we free to see types that are not articulated in the New Testament? I'm of the opinion that it's a way of interpreting Scripture, that we are free to see types. The problem with it is you have no control over that. But there's another way of hearing God, I think, in poetry. And, so I think it's more than just a scientific method that we can fully control. I think there's an openness to the Spirit at this point.

Dr. Mounce: So, what you have with Paul and Galatians and the two mountains that there are types in his mind.

Dr. Waltke: Yeah. Well, actually, that's I think those, he says he's allegorizing that is to say it was not. Yeah, I think what he's saying there when he's allegorizing he's saying this is more than what is in the text. Okay.

Dr. Mounce: So that'd be beyond type.

Dr. Waltke: That's I think the case of that with the Sinai and with Jerusalem and Hagar and Zion and Sarah, I think that's taken us beyond what's in the text itself. I'll have to look at that more, but that's what my initial response to it is.

This is Dr. Bruce Waltke and his teaching on the book of Psalms. this is session number 24, Messianic Psalms. [46:30]

Psalms [\[Jump to TOC\]](#)
Session 25: Messianic Psalms, Psalms 16 (part 2)
By Dr. Bruce Waltke

This is Dr. Bruce Waltke and his teaching on the book of Psalms. This is session number 25, Messianic Psalms, Psalm 16, part two.

Introduction [00:24-2:03]

We want to exegete and exposit Psalm 16. As we said, with each approach, I've narrowed down on a particular Psalm. So that with historical, we looked at Psalm 4. With the Hymns we looked at Psalm 100. With Lament we looked at Psalm 22 and so forth. We've already looked at several Messianic Psalms because they are great psalms for the Christian faith and Christology. And we looked at these psalms in other connections. So, as I said, for the Lament Psalms, we saw the great Messianic Psalms of Christ on the cross and suffering. That's a Lament Psalm. He's not protesting particularly, but he's suffering on the cross. We also looked, in connection with Liturgies, we've looked at the great Coronation Liturgies and the ascension of Christ and the exaltation of Christ and his title of the Son of God from Psalm 2 and Psalm 110.

Another great prophetic Psalm is Psalm 16. It plays a crucial role in Peter's first sermon in explaining the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It's also used by Paul in evangelizing the Jews at Antiochian Pisidia.

Psalm 16: a translation [2:03-4:10]

But let's look at Psalm 16. First of all, we have the translation. It's "a miktam of David" and these genre types like "miktam" we're not exactly sure. Perhaps it means "inscripturation," which is the way it was understood in the ancient versions.

Dr. Mounce: What does that mean "inscripturation"?

Dr. Waltke: Well, "a writing of David," "Keep me safe, El, because I take refuge in you. I

say to I Am, 'you are the Lord; I have no good thing apart from you.' As for the holy ones in the land, they indeed, the noble people, are those in whom is all my delight. Their pains will increase who have acquired another god, I will not pour out to them libations of blood, or take their names on my lips. I Am you are my allotted portion of my cup, you hold my lot. The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; indeed, the inheritance is beautiful to me. I will bless I Am, who counsels me; indeed, at night my conscience [literally: my kidneys] instructs me. I place I Am always before me. Because he's at my right hand I will not be toppled [or moved]. Therefore my heart is glad and my liver rejoices [literally. It's just what it says]. Indeed, My body rests secure, because you will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you allow your devoted one to see corruption. You will make known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand."

New Testament Quotations: Acts 2 [4:10-6:41]

On the next page. On page 315, I discuss something of the history of interpretation. As I said, the apostles see this psalm as a prophecy of Christ's resurrection, and you can see it in Peter's sermon at Pentecost.

Peter quotes the psalm and he says to the Jews who want to understand what's happening with the people speaking in tongues and other languages and so forth. He tries to explain it to them. "David said about Jesus." "David said about Jesus." See, he sees it as a prophecy of Jesus. "I saw the Lord always before me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest in hope, because you will not abandon me to the realm of the dead, you will not let your holy one see decay. You have made known to me the paths of life; you fill me with joy in your presence."

Peter now explains "Fellow Israelites, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried and his body is here to this day. But he was a prophet and knew that God had promised him on oath that he would place one of his descendants on his throne. Seeing what was to come, he spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, that he

was not abandoned to the realm of the dead, nor did his body see decay. God has raised this Jesus to life and we are all witnesses of it." And so, he sees this as a prophecy that since he will not be abandoned to the grave and his body will not see corruption, therefore this Messiah has to be raised at least within three days because corruption sets in on the fourth day. And so, therefore he will be dead at the most for three days maximum now.

New Testament Use in Acts 13 [6:41-7:31]

Paul also used it in the same way. "We tell you the good news: What God promised our ancestors he has fulfilled for us, their children by raising up Jesus.... So it is also stated elsewhere. 'You will not let your holy one see decay.' And when David, Paul explains, "Now when David had served God's purposes in his own generation, he fell asleep; he was buried with his ancestors and his body decayed. But the one whom God raised from the dead did not see decay. Therefore, my friends, I want you to know that through Jesus the forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you."

Psalm 16:10 Corruption/Decay or Pit? [7:31-8:55]

But with the effect of historical criticism, the New Testament was no longer used for the interpretation of the Old. And in this particular case the keyword here is in verse 10, and it's the word "corruption" or the word "decay." The Hebrew word is "shachat." And the Septuagint interpreted shuchat to mean "corruption." But under the influence of historical criticism that definition of the Septuagint as rejected. Instead of that, the word shachat is interpreted or translated to mean "the pit." And so that, it's an expectation that at least in this crisis, in which the Psalmist finds himself, that he's not going to see the pit, but he will triumph over death for the moment, but eventually he will, of course, die.

Driver's Support for "Pit" [8:55-16:26]

So here's S. R. Driver. For example, and this is in Expositor, and he's trying to make the best of it that he can. "The Psalmist did not speak explicitly of a future life." In

other words, the apostles were wrong. Their argument, their polemic, will not hold water. "The Psalmist does not speak explicitly of the future of life. For verse 11 does not refer to it at all as something beyond the grave. But he expresses the hope of superiority over death, grounded on the personal relationship in which he himself stands toward God and which he cannot believe will be interrupted by death." In other words, in the Psalmist, he's had this very close, personal relationship with God, and so therefore he cannot think that that relationship is going to be interfered with by death, but it will continue. The psalm is thus messianic, not in being a prediction of Christ's resurrection, but in expressing an ideal, a hope of superiority to death, which transcended experience and was fully realized by the Christ. So, it's not a prediction that Christ would not see decay.

Dr. Mounce: If it's not a prediction of a future life, how will his relationship continue in a way that superior to death is for the moment is I know it's gobbledygook. I was afraid of my coffee hadn't kicked in yet this morning.

Dr. Waltke: Yeah, no, it just, in my mind, it's for that moment, it's a superiority over death.

Dr. Mounce: So, it's a present perception that is? Dr. Waltke: As I understand Driver, yes. In other words, he is confident that that relationship cannot be interfered with. So, he's triumphant over death and he lives in hope, but eventually he's going to die. So, you can see it just undermines the New Testament. It says were the apostles wrong then in their interpretation of the Psalms? And this is out of, our, with Professor Houston and I, in our book on the Psalms as Christian Worship and Houston says, "Yes, argues Driver because of their use of the mistranslation of the Septuagint and the word corruption."

I remember as a student, my first year in Hebrew, when I encountered this, I really didn't know what to do with it, because our standard lexicon at that time was Brown, Driver and Briggs. It's the same Driver. If you look under shachat in his lexicon, the only meaning you're given is "pit." And so that was the authority. Then I'm just a first-year student, and so to my mind, but I've always had enough faith that I didn't trust scholarship that called the Bible wrong. I just never could go there. I didn't have answers to

everything, but I knew I couldn't go there. It was just that my own faith carried me through.

I didn't have, I mean, if I have to have answers to everything, then my only logical conclusion is to be agnostic. I can't believe to all my questions are answered. So, I lived with some ambiguity. I still don't have answers to all the questions, but I don't demand that because I've recognized my finitude. I've recognized the finitude of humanity in general.

Dr. Mounce: I think it's an interesting point because we, especially beginning students, tend to think that dictionaries are non-interpretive and they can be trusted. And a great example in Greek is in BDAG their definitions of *xeir* is "hand" and it goes on and on and on and on at the very last, it says "finger" because in the story of the prodigal son he puts a ring on his *xeir* and you put rings on fingers not on hands. But the problem is the word doesn't mean "finger." But there it is in a dictionary so the *xeir* it must mean "finger." But that's a good example in Old Testament. Do you find that happens a lot in Hebrew where there's more question about what words mean that personal biases or interpretations are reflected in dictionaries more? Oh, unquestionably, unquestionably. It does integrate to it. I can't give you them off hand but I'm aware of it that that does occur.

Dr. Mounce: So, dictionaries are interpretive at some level.

Dr. Waltke: Yeah, that's why you're always interested in the data itself. I, myself depend more upon a concordance. So, for example, when I wrote the commentary on Proverbs, every word I looked up, every use of it and only then did I define it. So, I could really taste and feel the word and know I had my own feeling for the word.

I think by and large, they try to be objective. But I think that in this case, well, I think that for Driver he probably feels the word doesn't have any other meaning than *pit*. I think that it's probably what he thought, but I'm going to come back to that because now that I've become, somebody said to me, I hear you're an expert in the Old Testament. And I said, I don't know if I'd say that, but I wish I got paid for it. So now I get paid for it. I think I could challenge it a little bit, which I hope to do.

Jim, Professor Houston, goes on to show how this has impacted even more evangelical scholarship without reading this quote. But it really takes away the power of the New Testament and even in evangelical commentaries. Now in the New RSV or the old RSV, in the new RSV, it translates that shachat by "pit." I was attending at the time, several years back, I was attending a Presbyterian USA church and they use the New RSV. So, the woman, preacher, she was a very capable communicator, she got to this, she was doing this psalm. She just skipped this verse entirely because I don't think she knew what to do with this. In the New RSV, she didn't know what to do with "the pit." So, she concentrated on this relationship with God. But I thought it greatly weakened her whole sermon, frankly.

Psalm 16: Forms Approach [16:26-19:29]

All right. So, let's take a look at this Psalm and we'll eventually get around to, how do we understand the word shahat. Does it mean "pit" or does it mean "corruption"? One of the first things you do, of course, as you look for the form and broadly speaking it is poetry, and we know it's going to be full of figures of speech. It's not to be interpreted literally.

So, we have David with a cup, allotted portion, boundary lines and so forth. It is just full of figures of speech. It could be classified. I think it is a Petition Psalm because it's addressed to God. He says, we should have the translation in front of us here, "Keep me safe El." It's addressed to El or God. It begins right away with a petition, which is asking God to keep him safe. Interestingly enough, most petition psalms ask to be saved or to be delivered. He is not asking to be delivered from death. He's asking to be safe in death, interesting enough.

There's confidence in verse two, "I say to I Am, you are the Lord; I have no good thing apart from you." In other words, I have total confidence in you. I have no other source of good apart from you. Then there was praise in verse seven and he says, "I will bless I Am who counsels me." I acknowledged that you were the source of all my good and in acknowledging that he blesses the heart of God and enriches God's experience in

his relationship with the Psalmist.

But it's not only a Petition Psalm since there's only one verse of petition, it's often classified as a Song of Trust because as I say apart from verse one of the psalm confidence and praise dominate the song. It's almost all confidence and praise. So, it's almost like Psalm 139. Yes, it's a Petition Psalm at the very end, but you had three whole stanzas of confidence. So sometimes it's classified as a Psalm of Confidence.

But fourth, we now bring in the eschatological or messianic interpretation that it's a reference to Christ and a prophecy. So, we can classify it as a Petition Psalm. We could classify it as a Song of Trust and Praise, and we classify it as a Messianic Psalm. And I think those are all legitimate classifications.

Rhetoric of Psalm 16 [19:29-24:11]

We thereupon turn to rhetorical criticism and rhetorical criticism shows the logic of a Psalm amongst other things. Here we have the outline of the psalm. It begins immediately with this introductory petition for safety, not for salvation. And thereupon we fall into this confidence with praise. This section of the psalm, the bulk of the psalm has two stanzas to it. First of all, there's the confession of trust before death. That's in verses two through eight. Secondly, there's the commitment of his corpse to God in verses 9 through 11. That's how I would read this psalm. Looking first of all, then at his confession of trust before death, he confesses his loyalty to the covenant community. And, of course, his loyalty to the covenant community assumes his loyalty to God. I divided that into the confession of loyalty or trust of covenant community in verses two through four; and the cause for trust and loyalty in verses five, six, seven, and eight.

Looking at the confession of loyalty to the covenant community. It begins with his sole loyalty to I Am that's verse 2. And he says, "I have no good apart from you." And then his sole loyalty to the people of God. Verse three, he delights in the people of God and at verse four he refuses to join apostates. So, you have the positive and you have the negative. His cause for trust and loyalty in verses five to eight is twofold. First of all, his inheritance is from, I Am. In fact, I Am himself is his inheritance. He is sort of like the

Levites who had inherited no land but they inherited I Am. But in that connection, he also has an inheritance or possession. Also, he has cause for trust and loyalty, not only because of his inheritance from I Am, but because of the instruction from I Am. He praises God for his instruction and he praises God for his presence and protection. Whereupon he commits the corpse to God. He's confident of God's presence in death. He's confident of his presence with God after death and forever more is where he ends. His confidence of God's presence in death, he's emotionally full of joy facing death for his body is secure and his body is going to be secure with reference to the grave in verse 10.

This is terrific psalm for someone going into death, and you want to give comfort and hope. I can't think of a better psalm that he goes with joy into the grave, confident of his relationship with God.

I'm going to skip the symmetry and the other material. The message itself is on the bottom of page 318, the message is that the chosen King, namely David, and fulfilled in his son, the Christ, petitions El or God to keep his corpse safe in and beyond the grave. He is confident that God will protect his body so as to enjoy him forever, because God elected his King to have God himself as his inheritance, to instruct him and to be at his right hand.

Interestingly enough, it has no postscript handed over to the chief musician. Neither did Psalm 22 and neither did Psalm 110, perhaps because they are uniquely prophetic and messianic.

Analysis Psalm 16:1 [24:11-28:20]

Alright, going into more detail, keep the translation in front of you. The genre is a miktam. This word occurs six times. In all of them it's used of Petition Psalms that celebrate salvation of the righteous. But that occurs with many, many psalms so it certainly cannot mean that. I mean, it could, but why the six and not all the others that are saying something similar to it. So, I think it means like enscription, some form of writing.

And it's important that it is by David because as David is also charismatic. As Psalm 18, the Spirit speaks by David and the word of God is in his mouth. You could see that in psalm in Psalm 18, and it's a quote from 2 Samuel 22. Notice how David begins it. It's "of David, the servant of the Lord. He sang to the Lord, the words of this song. When the Lord delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, from the hand of Saul, he said, I love you, Lord. My strength, the Lord is my rock, my fortress, and my deliverer. My God is my rock in whom I take refuge, my shield and the horn of myself salvation."

I thought that it mentioned his inspiration here. Let's see what the second passage says. 2 Samuel 22 let's see. I guess not, I made a mistake. I thought it was there, but I'm not finding it. I'll have to look that up elsewhere. It's not in Psalm 18 or the synoptic 2 Samuel 22. So that's my error and I'll try to find out where it comes from.

As I said, his petition is that "God will keep me safe." And there you have the shamar reney, in the Hebrew. And "to keep the word" means to exercise great care over someone or something. And it assumes he's in grave danger. He's asking God to keep him in extreme care, to take care of him. I think the grave danger is death itself, in fact, he is going to be in death. He's asking God to keep him safe.

He addresses God with the name of El. This refers to God in all of his transcendence. This is the quintessence of the divine transcendence that he's all powerful and over all his creation. So, he's looking to the one who is the author of life itself and the author of the whole creation, including his body, to keep him safe. He's asking God to do this? Because he says he keeps covenant relationship, "I take refuge in you." And so, I like, what Weiser says here, "This constant life of prayer is the natural way in which faith manifests itself in life. And so, I live my life; I take refuge in you and here in a particular case as I'm facing death and the grave. I'm taking refuge in you all mighty God."

Analysis of Psalm 16:2-4 [28:20-32:57]

Now comes the confession of trust. This is the confession of trust before death. And we have the confession of his loyalty to the covenant community. It begins with the sole loyalty to I Am. "I say," I presume therefore he's talking to I Am. But when he says,

"I say to I Am," it seems to me, that would imply there was a congregation who is listening to his prayer and prophecy. "I say to I Am you are the Lord." And this is the adonoi, which means, you are the master over everything and I am your slave. I am totally dependent upon you.

He goes on to say, "I have no good thing apart from you." That is to say, you are my sole trust. I'm not trusting in anything else. I have no good apart from you. He recognizes that every good and perfect gift is coming from the God above.

He's not only loyal to God, and he has no good apart from God, but he's loyal to the people of God. The saints are his sole pleasure. He refers to the saints as "the holy ones." These are those that accept God's forgiveness. They depend upon God. They depend upon his power. They depend upon his enablement that sets them apart to God. So, they are set apart to God by their faith and by their lives. I think he adds "in the land" so that he identifies this would be the promised land, I think. But if he just said "holy ones," it could mean the angels. And I think by adding "the holy ones in the land," he's excluding any ambiguity here. He's able to say, it's the people in the promised land with whom he associates.

Very emphatically, "they are the noble ones." The noble here means respected for excellence in power. They live by true strength. I take that out of the song of Hannah in 1 Samuel 2, where she speaks of God as true strength over against human strength, with its false strength. So, they have power and strength because they are depending upon the true strength of God himself. They are all my delight. That is, any delight apart from the sacred congregation would defile that relationship. I think he has in mind more, other people. So that if you delight in those outside of the saints, it may compromise your delight. It may defile your delight in the saints of God. It's pure, in other words. It's very similar to who may ascend to the house of the Lord and it says though, the seventh commandment is they hold as despicable those that are vile, but they honor those who fear the Lord. So, we should love the people of God. And we should delight in the people of God and weep when they err.

He refuses to worship with apostates. Their pains will increase. In other words, they are on a trajectory to a painful death and their pains are ever increasing, pointing them to death. They are looking to another god, that is, to someone else to give them significance and security. He will not enter into their cultus into their external forms of worship. He will pour out their libations of blood. That is, he will not participate in their cult. He is set apart totally to the Mosaic and the Davidic cultus. He won't even take their names on his lips to remain pure.

Analysis of Psalm 16:5-7 [32:57-42:44]

His cause for trust he's at ease in the crisis because the sublime God is his possession. Thus, God bestows on him all the good he possesses. If man turns his thoughts to the providential rule of God and envisages that providential rule with gratitude and joy, he is thus taught to discern in material benefits, the visible proof of the benevolence of his God. So, if you see everything as coming from God and in his providence, and you rejoice in that with gratitude and joy, then you will discern that all your good is from the Lord because God is over everything and you will celebrate God.

He says, "my inheritance is from the Lord." And he says the allotted portion, my allotted portion. He is using the language of, I think, when they distributed the land and they used boundary stones so that when Israel entered the land, they divided up the land amongst the tribes. As they were, as it were, by casting of the lots and each tribe got its portion under the high priest who probably used the Urim and the Thummim and divided up the lands. Then each family got its own portion in the land. Then he says, "but I Am is my portion." So he's like the Levites, in other words, my real portion is God himself. As I said in Psalm 73, if you have all the possessions of this world in your one hand and you have God in the other hand, I'm going to take God because he has everything and he's good.

He speaks of God as "my cup." This is the metaphor of the sovereign handing the king a cup to drink. So, God determines his portion. God is his portion and God determines everything he has. God determines his destiny. So, everything he understands

by his total loyalty to God in his inheritance is from I Am. Says Augustine, "but others choose for themselves portions, earthly and temporal to enjoy. The portion of the saints in the Lord is eternal. Let others drink of deadly pleasures, the portion of my cup is the Lord."

So, when he says "you hold fast," he means by that, I think you decide my destiny. He not only inherits the Lord, but he also inherits everything that the creator himself possesses and all the goodness. "The boundary lines [are the measuring lines that measure out his portion] have fallen to him [that is the casting of lots] in pleasant places."

He not only has an inheritance from I Am, he has the instruction from I Am. He praises I Am for his instruction. When he says, "I will bless the Lord" it means I will pronounce to I Am that he is the source of all his beneficial power that he benevolently bestows on the one praising him as such. He counsels him; he instructs him how to live. Even at night, he's instructing him. I assume that at night there's no distraction. He's not on the stage of life and acting hypocritically as we saw in Psalm 4.

His conscience, probably is the kidneys, were associated with emotions as you can see. I think he's probably referring to his conscious. The very way he feels about what's right and wrong is instructing him at night. He keeps his eye on I Am; and God protects him. "I place I am always," he keeps his eye on him. And how does he keep his eye on him? I would think therefore in two ways that God reveals himself namely through Scripture and through conscience. He's at his right hand, a place of safety.

He says, "I will not be toppled." Now, I think that I like the illustration of Barnhouse when his wife died and they had interred the body and he was returning back from the burial, the cemetery. He was returning into Philadelphia. The sun was in the East, shining into their windshield and a big truck, van, came between the sun and their car. He had his three children, I think, in the backseat. Barnhouse said to his children, this is what happened to us today. We were hit by the shadow, but we were not hit by the truck. We were hit by the shadow of death, but we were not hit by eternal death. We were hit by the shadow, but not by the truck itself. I think it's a beautiful illustration of the

Christian's experience.

Dr. Mounce: Can I ask you a question back in verse three? Sure. "As for the saints in the land, they are the excellent ones in whom is all my delight." When you were talking about that, I mean the easy application is issues like it's so easy for us to have delight in so many other things: houses, possessions, fame, fortune, all these things. It certainly does affect our relationship with the Lord because all of our delight is not in him.

But I was wondering about kind of where is the practical level. I mean, we take delight in friends. We take delight in neighbors who aren't Christians that we want to build relationships with and witness to. I mean, this reads absolute "in whom is all my delight." Is that really what we're supposed to do?

Dr. Waltke: Yeah. I think he's really contrasting, he later on talks about the material possessions, the boundary lines that come from God. So that therefore he finds his total good in God, but God gives him good. He sees God as the source of all his good. But here, I think he's talking about his loyalties in life and his loyalty is with the saints and he repudiates the apostate. So, I think it is all his delight in contrast to any allegiance to those who are loyal to a different religion. That's what I think it's the reference to it. So, I think it's in religious relationships that he has no delight in false worship. Okay. All of this is the thoughts that keep covenant with God.

Dr. Mounce: Thanks. That helps. Yeah. Sometimes it seems that in Scripture, you can read it and it's being super absolute. Then when you try to actually put it against real life.

Dr. Waltke: I think it's true. I think that's very true. I find that it's especially in the Psalms. But again, you see, I think in this case too you have it as a reference to Jesus ultimately. All his delight was in the covenant community, but God so loved the world that this is why he gave his son to die, but he doesn't though delight in the world. It's not his pleasure in the world. So, I think Jesus found no pleasure in, he loved the sinner and won the sinner, but he didn't delight in sin. He would say to the adulteress, "sin no more." So, I think he had no delight at all in sin. Yeah. So, I think it's good to probe that. That's easy to apply.

Dr. Mounce: If you have, mean this is kind of, unless, you hate your mother and father you're not worthy of me. It's not saying hate him, but he's saying I demand primary allegiance.

Psalm 16:10-11: Committing his corpse to God [42:44-45:12]

Dr. Waltke: In that case, that if there's a tension, you have to reject the other. All right. We're up to page 322. And now we have the commitment of the corpse to God. He's confident of God's presence in death and his emotions are joyful for his body is secure. He says, therefore, that is because of this trust in I Am in life. His relationship to God, his experience with God, he is confident of God's protection in death. He talks about his heart and his liver. I really think he's referring to his whole emotional state. In the Ugaritic texts we're told about Anat's joy in a butchery in this, in this particular myth, "her liver swells with laughter, her heart fills up with joy." Anat's liver exalts. So, I think it is always referring to his whole emotional state that as he's thought through his confidence that God is his inheritance, God holds his destiny. All the good he has is from God. He sees everything in God's providence. In that life of trust and faith and relationship, now that I'm facing death, I'm still with you and he's full of joy because he knows his God. He's glad and rejoicing because his faith is set certainty that God will not hand his body over to the grave to have the last word. In addition, with joy even his fleshly body confronting death rests secure. The reason is because God will not hand him over and leave him in Sheol, the realm of the dead. He will not allow his devoted one that is, he showed himself totally devoted to the Lord and his community. So he's the devoted one.

Psalm 16:10 Shahat: Pit or Corruption? [45:12-51:12]

He will not see corruption. Here we come to the crucial word, which is the word Shahat. As I tried to think my way through it, I had first of all, to decide whether or not we're dealing with a homonym. That is that if shahat is derived from the root shuah. The shuah means to descend. And then if you add a T and you make it into a feminine noun, it

would mean "the pit,"--the place of descent. So, if it's derived from shuah, then the T on the end of the word is a feminine suffix. We call it feminine because when you're dealing with animates, it would distinguish the feminine gender in distinction to the masculine gender. That's oversimplification, but basically with animates you could talk about the feminine gender. But the Hebrew uses that form not only for animates, but for abstractions, for inanimates such as "pit," for example, an inanimate. It's used, for example, the feminine is used, for abstraction like wisdom. So this ending, this form, what we call with animates feminine that form is used with inanimates and abstractions and we still call it the feminine gender. No one questions that there is a root shahat the feminine form from shuah means "pit." And it's from the root shuah. Everybody agrees that's a possibility.

The question is: is there a root shahat in which case the T is part of the root itself. It's a trilateral root it's the third letter. In that case, it's masculine. How can you demonstrate that a masculine noun occurs. I think you can do it and I'm suggesting and arguing that you can do it through poetry. In poetry since all nouns in Hebrew are in the masculine inflection or in the feminine inflection, when you personify an inanimate or abstraction and you make it into a person like Woman Wisdom then you must personify according to the gender of the noun. So therefore if it is a feminine form even though it is something like an abstraction like wisdom and then you personify it becomes Woman Wisdom, Lady Wisdom. You cannot take feminine noun and personify it as a masculine noun in Hebrew poetry or any poetry.

Now if it is a masculine you must personify it in a masculine and this is exactly what happens in Job 17, verse 14. Here's Job, "If I say to shahat, you are my father and to the worm, [rema, that's feminine] my mother and my sister." There, he is clearly using Shahat as a masculine because he personifies it as my father. The feminine noun and in the absolute form is rema, but it becomes another form so T "that's my mother and my sister." So I have established now that there is a masculine noun that BDB did not give me or acknowledge as a possibility. The question then is which homonym is a view. Here

I have to look to the verbs that go with it. I discovered that with the verb, "pit" is almost always with a verb of motion, to go down, to descend. So, you have to descend, to enter, to go down. It denotes a place, not a state.

But when it refers to the masculine and the situation event, you use a verb such as to see, which is to experience. So he doesn't use a verbal motion here. "He will not allow me to experience. You will not allow me to see corruption." So therefore there are several places in the Old Testament where shahat occurs. And the Septuagint interprets it as corruption. The Septuagint got it right and BDB got it wrong, is my argument. I think it's a strong case that it does mean indeed "corruption." So, my conclusion is that the Septuagint and the other ancient versions, including the NIV and the ESV, got it right. Not BDB, not HALOT, not the Jewish publication, not the New American Bible, nor the New RSV.

Psalm 16 and Christ's Resurrection [51:12-53:47]

So therefore I would argue it's true prophecy that Christ would be raised by the third day because he wouldn't see corruption. So, he's confident of God and his presence after death, that it is a continuation. His reward is the continuation. I draw the contrast here between extrinsic motivation and intrinsic motivation. So, I say a parent, may reward, a child for practicing scales on a piano with an ice cream cone. But the reward is unrelated to the investment. It's extrinsic motivation. God's reward, however, consummates the investment, the child who practices today can anticipate playing beautiful music tomorrow.

So, the joy of fellowship with God in this world will be rewarded with the reward of overflowing joy when we see him face to face after death. Tears of joy will flow like a river. So, this is continuation with like practicing in this life and rewarded with being able to play beautiful music, in your maturity. So, this is not only a quantitative life, but when it says life, it means not only quantity, eternal life, but it's quality of life of participating in true life. The true life is God himself. It's an abundant life in fellowship with God and quantitatively it's eternal. This is life, indeed. This is our hope. So, I prayed that we

would add substance to a faith, order to our vigor, confidence in our confession and will be nerved to fidelity even when we're tested by death.

This is Dr. Bruce Waltke and his teaching on the book of Psalms. This is session number 25, Messianic Psalms, Psalm 16, part two. [53:47]

Psalms [\[Jump to TOC\]](#)
Session 26: Wisdom Psalms Genre, Psalms 19
By Dr. Bruce Waltke

This is Dr. Bruce Waltke and his teaching on the book of Psalms. This is session number 26, Wisdom Psalms Genre, Psalm 19.

Review and Introduction [00:22-1:20]

I want to look at another genre of Psalms, namely Wisdom Psalms. We've already looked at two Wisdom Psalms. When we discussed rhetoric, I discussed the importance of refrain we looked at the wisdom Psalm 49. When I looked at liturgy, and the role of liturgy and the symbolism, and the liturgy is a way in which God communicates to his worshippers, I looked at Psalm 73 when the Psalmist went into the temple of the Lord and what he would have seen there by imagination. If we look at wisdom material broadly, the psalm I will zero in on is Psalm 19.

Meaning of Hokmah (wisdom) [1:20-9:17]

But first of all, some matters of introduction. First of all, what do we mean by wisdom? The Hebrew word is Hokmah. The word means to be skillful. It's used of all kinds of skills. It means, I say, this hokmah is usually translated "wisdom," and denotes masterful understanding, skill, expertise.

When I taught the book of Proverbs, we expanded this and it refers to our technical and artistic skills, such as Bezalel and Oholiab who built the tabernacle. Or like Hiram who built the temple. It's used for the arts of magic of the skill of the Egyptian magicians. It's used of government. In addition to that, you have Deuteronomy 1, when Moses was to appoint wise, judicious men who would govern the nation. It's used of

diplomacy. It's used of war.

In Wisdom Literature, namely, and Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and selected Psalms, such as 49, for example, in prophesy wisdom refers to the skill of living in the way of eternal life. This entails the social skills, namely loving God and loving your neighbor, but it's living in the way, the typical main metaphor of wisdom, is the way of eternal life.

Since wisdom is a neutral term, it can be used for evil and even the serpent is subtle, one of the words for wisdom arum--crafty or subtle. It has to be used as a correlative term with righteousness to protect it. So, when it speaks of wisdom, they mean as well righteousness and those terms are used interchangeably. So, it's like a correlative term to the vice president who has two different positions. He's both the chair over the Senate, and he's also to be the stand in for the president if necessary. Those are very different functions, but, if you have one, if you're chair of the Senate, you're also the vice president who will stand in for the president. So, if you have wisdom, you have righteousness. If you have righteousness, you have wisdom. So, these two terms go together. It's correlative with the righteous.

The form of Wisdom Literature is admonition and instruction. It can be positive and it can be negative as a warning when you are facing testing. The positive admonitions would be such as: to trust in the Lord, to fear the Lord, to do good, to avoid sin and to confess sin at the proper time or to watch one's tongue. That's all instruction, it's admonition, it's teaching. So quite typically a beautiful promise is added to these admonitions sometimes introduced with "for."

Negatively, it can also be a negative warning in connection with theodicy, that is to say, when you're facing the triumph and it looks like evil is prevailing and triumphing, it's a negative warning of not to be enamored with material possessions that will tempt you into living outside the way of eternal life. These are the concerns of Job and Ecclesiastes. So, it's against becoming disgruntled by misfortune provoked by the wealthy godless.

Marveling over riches or trusting in them this, we saw very clearly, is the kind of wisdom in Psalm 73 and Psalm 49. In Psalm 49 don't be overwhelmed and fret when you see the prosperity of the wicked. It's a warning not to go there and thereupon the refrain is they are headed for eternal death. It's eternal. They're headed for death but it's an eternal death in contrast to the righteous who will rule over them in the morning.

We saw it in Psalm 73 when he envied the prosperity of the wicked and then he went into the temple of the Lord and he was instructed. We said at that time, that what he had to learn from that song is that he wasn't to define God by his problem, but rather, what I didn't go on to say, he was to define his problem by God. So, the first fourteen verses his temptation is to define God by his problem and he can't square that seeing the prosperity of the wicked and his own affliction. He couldn't square that with the confession: God is good. So, his problem was he's was defining God as not good because he began with this problem. But when he went into the temple of the Lord, then he defined his problem by God. There he saw God's victory, he saw God's holiness, and he saw that God would destroy the wicked. So, he now defined the problem by God. That's one of the lessons I think we can get out of Psalm 73.

So, I say here as well, this is why I put together the Torah Psalms as well as the Wisdom Psalms, because the Torah Psalms are an indirectly admonishing us to keep Torah and keep instruction. And so, Psalm 1 is a Torah Psalm, but it talks about the rewards of keeping Torah. It's the reward of being like a tree with leaves of eternal life that bears its fruit in its season, the first psalm.

So, I throw together here, the Torah, which is catechetical instruction, and so on the Psalter may refer to the Mosaic Law sayings of the wise. And I say by the negative, it may also be an admonition not to fret because of evildoers or to envy the wicked and so forth. I'm going to skip how they begin because they begin really in various ways. Gunkel tries to classify it by its beginnings and so forth. But I don't find that fully satisfactory. So, I'm going to skip it.

Wisdom and Torah Psalms: Identifies [9:17-10:07]

On page 326, I classify the psalms that pertain to wisdom and the Torah Psalms are Psalms 1, 19 and 119. The Psalms that are totally positive admonition, which is Psalm 78 where he's teaching by the narrative of Israel's history. Psalm 112 is positive admonition. So is 127 and 133. A negative admonition is what we saw earlier in Psalm, well, I didn't discuss, Psalm 37, but that's same thing as 49 and 73.

Psalm 19: Introduction: Setting in Psalms [10:07:12:59]

So now I want to look at a Torah Psalm. It's actually in praise of Torah, but it thinks in terms of the sage. It's an encouragement to keep Torah. First of all, let us see how this psalm functions within the Psalter as a whole. It is recognized that Psalms 1 and 2 are introduction to the book. Three, four, five, six, seven those Psalms are mostly David's Laments. Then you get a Praise Psalm as to the exalted position of man who will bring everything under his feet in Psalm 8. Then you get 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, another five Psalms. And then you get 14, which describes man and his corruption and his depravity. It looks at mankind at his worse. That's a whole corpus, so you've got introduction. You got three through fourteen with the two Psalms at the like eight, after five and fourteen after five.

And now you've got 15 through 24, which are structured chiastically. So, 15 is an entrance liturgy psalm "who may ascend into the hill of the Lord?" We read that. And in Psalm 24, we read "who may ascend into the hill of the Lord?" Psalm 16, which we just looked at is essentially a Song of Trust. And it's paired with Psalm 23, the one before 24 obviously, which is the famous shepherd song, which is a Song of Trust. C. Psalm 17 is a prayer for help. And it matches Psalm 22, which is a prayer for help to be delivered from death. Psalm 18 is a Royal Psalm after he had defeated all his enemies and it's a Royal Psalm and Psalm 20 and 21 are a Royal pair. 20 is for the King going out into battle and a prayer for the King. And 21 is the return from battle.

Where the rock hits is Psalm 19. That's the pivot. And Psalm 19 is a Torah Psalm.

It's edited so that again, as Psalm 1 is to Torah Psalm that introduces the Psalter, at this pivotal point, we get a Psalm admonishing by praising Torah in the middle of it.

Translation of Psalm 19 [12:59-16:04]

Well, with that background, let's take a look at the psalm We'll begin by translation. "It's a Psalm of David. The heavens declare the glory of God." I don't like "sky," particularly. It's the word for firmament. And in the Old Testament, they viewed what we call the sky as a dome, that's what Jerome meant by something firm, a firmament, a dome. And they thought of it as crystal clear with water above it. "The firmament above proclaims his handiwork. Day to day pours out speech; and night to night reveals knowledge.

There is no actual speaking; there are no actual words. And whose" that is, the heavens, this should be, the bracket should be around "whose voice" the bracket should be around "heavens." That means the "whose voice" goes back to "the heavens." And so, "whose voice is not heard." It's not in decibels, sound decibels. "Nevertheless, their voice, though silent, goes out throughout all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them he has set a tent for the sun, which comes out like a bridegroom, leaving his chamber, and like a strong man it runs its course with joy. It's rising is from the end of the heavens and its circuit is to the end of them; and there is nothing hidden from its heat.

Now he praises the law. "The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul. The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart. The commandments of the Lord are pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever. The rules of the Lord are true, and righteous all together. More to be desired, are they than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than the honey and the drippings of the honeycomb. Moreover, by them as your servant warned and in keeping of them there is great reward. Who can discern his errors? Declare me innocent from hidden faults. Keep back your servant also from the insolent [or insolent people]; let them not have dominion over me. Then I shall be blameless and

innocent of the great transgression. Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight. O Lord, my rock and my Redeemer."

Comments on the Translation of Psalm 19 [16:04-16:44]

Just a few notes here. When it says in verse eight, when he says "the precepts of the Lord are right," the Hebrew word is *yashar* and it means they're perfectly upright. They're without a blemish. It can be used for an absolute on a vertical axis, it's absolutely straight. There's no twisting, no bending. And on a horizontal axis, there is again, no bumps. It's perfect. It's smooth. It's straight. It's upright. That's what's meant by "right."

Fear of the Lord [16:44-22:13]

The fear of the Lord, you'll notice there are wisdom terms in this psalm because I think it belongs to a wisdom category as well. That the fear of the Lord is equated with as you have it there in verse seven. It's equated with the law of the Lord, the testimony of the Lord, the precepts of the Lord, the commandments of the Lord and verse nine "b" the rules of the Lord and you have the fear of the Lord. The fear of the Lord always entails this objective revelation of God's holy moral will. The fear of the Lord means you submit to that revelation because you fear God, who holds life and death in his hands. That conforming to his law, and we know it to be realized through Christ today and through the Spirit, be conformed to that is eternal life, to reject it is eternal death. This is the fear of the Lord.

The fear of the Lord is this objective revelation, like Mosaic Torah teachings, doctrines, and obedience to it because you believe God means what he says and he says what he means -- he says what he means and he means what he says. It's a matter of life and death and you hold God in awe. That's how I understand the fear of the Lord.

One of the unique translations here, I think it may be unique to me here, is the way I have translated "keep back your servant also from the insolent [19.13]." Normally this is translated "presumptuous sins." The Hebrew word is *zadin*. So, I need to defend that translation. That is he saying, "keep back to your servant from insolent men." I say,

traditionally it's translated as "presumptuous sins." I think the reason is, is that he's in verse 12, talking about "declare me innocent from hidden faults of which I'm unaware." The opposite of that would be those of which I am aware and I deliberately keep them. I think that's what led to the translation of "presumptuous sins," in contrast to hidden sins.

The word, I say, the root of the word zadin is zed. It occurs 13 times, always in the plural apart from Proverbs 21.24. This to use grammatical terms, this is a masculine substantival adjective that is as an adjective used as in noun like insolent, the insolent. Elsewhere it is used with several types of insolent people. Here's how it's used: those who challenge God. Malachi 3.15; who attack the Psalmist 86.15; rejects Jeremiah's prophecy, Jeremiah 43.2; mock the pious without restraint, 119.51; forge lies 119.69; dig pits 119.85. The Psalmist prays that God will put them to shame 119.78; and not let them oppress him 119.22. I Am is said to rebuke them 119.21; and will cause their arrogance to cease Isaiah 13.11; confer with Mark 4 and Proverbs 21.

The NIV translates it as "the proud and arrogant person." Maka is his name. He behaves with insolent fury. Here the NIV translates the singular zed as "the proud" in light of these 12 other occurrences of zadin the conclusion, I think, not only can be, but must be drawn that this zadin refers to people who from their exaggerated and prideful opinion of their self-importance and sufficiency disregard I Am, the wise and revealed truth. So that's why I say I don't depend upon lexicons. I depend upon the concordance. I just went through all the uses, and in all the uses it refers to proud, arrogant, insolent people who disregard God or the wise or truth. So, therefore I feel I'm on solid ground that he asks God to keep him from insolent men. In other words, it's similar to the Lord's prayer "lead us not into temptation." What he's saying is I can't handle it. I can't enter into their company. God keep me away from those who would ruin me spiritually. It's a very humble prayer on his part. All right, So that's the translation.

Structure of Psalm 19 [22:13-24:14]

Now we move, keeping the translation in hand, we move to the structure of the psalm. And we have a superscript "A Psalm of David." And then we have a stanza, "the

heavens display God's knowledge," which gives him glory. Verse two, "night to night reveals knowledge" and so forth. So, it is really referring to God's omniscience as displayed in the creation.

And then he praises the Torah, which displays God's moral excellence. So, he's praising the law of the Lord and its excellence. It revives life, makes wise, rejoices the heart and enlightens the eyes, and so forth. Then he's going to have a prayer in order to keep Torah. And he's going to have a twofold prayer: forgive his hidden sins and to keep him from insolent men.

The Janus between the Torah and the petition is that he says in verse 11 "moreover by them is your servant warned." That's going to lead to his petition that through the law he's warned. So, it's leading to his petition for forgiveness and protection. And when he says, "in keeping of them there is greatly reward" he's looking back to verses seven through ten, where he has listed the rewards of keeping Torah. So really he has "in keeping of them there is great reward." And then "by them your servant is warned," and that leads into the petition. It's not unusual in Januses to get the B verset, referring to what went before and the A verset, referring to what comes after that. That's quite common in Janus verses as it occurs here.

Rhetoric of Psalm 19 [24:14-28:34]

The question that has to be asked at this point: what is the connection of these psalms? In other words, in rhetoric, you ask, what's the logic of it? Why do we have this radical shift from praising creation to praising Torah? How do we understand that relationship?

In the commentaries that I've read that I found somewhat helpful, they note a movement from stanza to stanza. So, Michael Fishbane notes the movement of speakers. So that the first stanza the heavens are speaking. In the second stanza verses seven through ten, the Lord is speaking through the law. And then in the petition section, the Psalmist is speaking at the end. I think that's helpful. It doesn't particularly explain the

logic. Simply there are three different speakers, but that didn't particularly help me. It's a good observation. I think it's there.

Arnt Meinhold he doubts the changing of the subjects with reference to the word. There are words about God, there's a word from God and there's a word to God. And I find that helpful that it's a word about God and the creation. It's a word from God in the Torah. But then again, where that falls down is that the creation is also a word from God. But anyway, he makes that distinction. It's worth commenting on.

And then you have the word to God. I thought Craig Broyles and his commentary was useful that he notes the contracting of movement. That is, it begins with the heavens, the vastness of the skies. Then it moves more narrowly to the law and then even more narrowly to the worshipper. So, he sees a contracting movement. He also sees a contracting movement in the names of God, from El, the creator of all, to I Am where the Lord whose Israel's covenant, keeping God, and then David calls him "my Rock and my Redeemer," his saving God. And again, I find that helpful.

However, I'm still not clear what is the logic of the psalm in spite of these interesting observations of the movements that are taking place between the stanzas. I think you can say that the verses one and two are united by praise of God, praise of God, for his revelation and creation and praise of God in his law. I think that's worthwhile.

Then I quote from Immanuel Kant that Kant is amazed by a natural revelation, He divides natural revelation into two parts that amaze him. And one is, he's amazed by the creation around him. He's amazed in natural revelation by the conscience within him. So, I say Immanuel Kant also included conscience in general revelation and both the witness of the heavens and of his conscience filled him with awe. He says, "Two things fill the mind with ever new and increasing admiration and awe the more often and steadily we reflect upon them: the starry heavens above me and the moral law within me. I do not see or conjecture either of them as if they were veiled obscurities or extravagances beyond the horizon of my vision. I see them before me and connect them immediately with the consciousness of my existence." That in his Critique of Practical Reason, he could not

escape these two revelations. But he doesn't speak, he's speaking of conscious, so instead of speaking of the law as done in Psalms.

Necessity of Comprehensive Knowledge [28:34-36:54]

I guess, maybe because of my own working in wisdom literature, I see a relationship between the creation and the law. Namely, as I said, and I think in the Proverbs course, that you do not know anything with certainty until you know, or absolutely until you know something comprehensively.

And so, for example, I use the illustration, we used to think damming up waters was good, but now we know it can be bad because we didn't have enough knowledge about ecology. But now that we've seen the results of damming up the waters and how it can hurt ecology, what we thought was good, turned out to be bad. The point is we didn't have comprehensive knowledge. Or like forest fires, we used to think forest fires were always bad. We want to stop all forest fires but now we know they're absolutely essential for the preservation of the ongoing life of the forest. So, what we thought was bad is now good.

Did I share the illustration from Westminster with you all?

Dr. Mounce: I don't think in this class you have.

Dr. Waltke: Yeah, I did in the Proverbs course, but I think it's worth sharing again here, because this is the logic of the psalm. So, my favorite illustration that if you are without comprehensive knowledge you don't have absolute knowledge, was my experience at Westminster Seminary. At Westminster, the best building on the campus is the library. It's a wonderful library and it's built overlooking a valley. It has the best venue; it has the best facilities. All the faculty offices are built around the core of the library itself. It's a great library for research. It's the pride of the campus. Well, when I taught there between 86 and 91, it was a time when students were in career transitions. Formerly, most of our students came directly out of college, but now we were getting older students who had already had a career and they were not finding their careers meaningful. So, therefore, they were shifting careers and going into ministry.

We had one student who was a geologist who worked for NASA in Huntsville, Alabama, and his specialty was measuring radon gas. When they moved from Huntsville to Philadelphia, his wife acquired a position as a RN, a nurse at a local Abingdon hospital. His training as a geologist suggested to him that that area may be fraught with radon gas. So, he brought his instrument to measure radon gas, into the library one morning intending to set it up in the hospital that afternoon. But since he was already there, he decided to measure the radon gas in the basement of our library.

To understand his measurement, you need to know a little bit about the quantity of radon gas in different environments. So that normally the atmosphere has four picocuries. That's thousands of nanni, the thousands of the thousands, the various four picocuries are in the atmosphere, four picocuries of radon gas. If you smoke a pack of cigarettes a day, you're a chain smoker. Then you're going to inhale 200 picocuries of radon gas. If you work in a uranium mine, you inhale 400, a hundred times more than you would in normal atmosphere, you get 400. I understand that uranium miners have to take a year off every third year in order that the body can detox and get rid of all the poisonous gases. Well, he set up the measurement in a library and it measured 4,000 picocuries. So, it was a hundred times, that was a hundred times more than a uranium mine. If it was accurate, this would be one of the highest concentrations of radon gas on planet earth and here it was our library.

He couldn't believe it. So, he called up NASA in Huntsville and told them his readings. And they brought in the most excellent sophisticated measurement where you measure gas, whatever they could call that instrument. But anyway, they measured it and they confirmed his readings. It was 4,000 picocuries. I was not aware this was going on until the next day when I went to my office, there was black and yellow tape on the doors and on the windows, keep out, danger, lethal, and here was my office and it was a thousand times more than air, a hundred times more than a uranium mine.

Therefore, the point I'm making is that the builders those who were built the library thought they had chosen the best spot, but because they didn't have

comprehensive knowledge, they chose the worst spot on earth almost.

So, without comprehensive knowledge, you can never have absolute certain knowledge. And, of course, the question arises. What did they do at Westminster when they confronted the situation? Well, the geologists speculated that there was a fissure 40 miles directly down into the bowels of the earth directly below the library. The gas was emitted through this fissure into our library and / or the rocks were vertical. And they were falling apart like the pages of a book and emitting this radon gas. This is what I read in the newspaper. As the geologists tried to explain the situation. Well, the way they solve the problem is they put pipes down on the corner of the library. Then they had a flue affair running along the basement wall, and then a flu chimney running up behind the elevator. And then they put an air fan, fan on the top to withdraw the air. And so, they've solved the problem which they thought it was going to be a major problem. They actually solved the problem for \$15,000 to the great relief of the seminary.

Dr. Mounce: So, they pumped all that poisonous there into the air?

Dr. Waltke: Yeah. Well, I mean, it would have gotten there anyway without being concentrated in our library. It's one of the sources of the I guess four picocuries that are in the air normally. So, it isn't the concentration. Yeah.

So, in any case, I see that kind of the connection that because God has comprehensive knowledge. The heavens are declaring his glory and you could see his comprehensive knowledge of the sun that goes over the entire earth because he sees the entire earth. Therefore, he has absolute knowledge.

Job 28 and Wisdom [36:54-40:23]

Therefore, his law is in all our best interest because he sees it holistically. So, unless you see things holistically, you can never see them really clearly or absolutely. And this is the logic of wisdom literature. You can see that kind of logic in Job's great poem of wisdom in Job 28. You could see this is the way the sage thinks. You could see why I'm saying that this whole instruction is part of wisdom literature. In Job 28, we have

this poem, by Job or by the author of Job, in which he praises wisdom and the inaccessibility of wisdom apart from revelation. So, he says in Job 28.12, "But where can wisdom be found? Where does understanding dwell? No mortal comprehends its worth; it cannot be found in the land of the living. The deep says, 'It's not in me'; the sea says, 'it's not with me.' It cannot be bought with the finest gold, nor can its price be weighed out in silver. It cannot be bought with the gold of Ophir, with precious onyx or lapis lazuli. Neither gold nor crystal can compare with it, nor can it be had for jewels of gold. Coral and jasper are not worthy of mention; the price of wisdom is beyond rubies. The topaz of Cush cannot compare with it; it cannot be bought with pure gold.

Where then does wisdom come from? Where does understanding dwell? It is hidden from the eyes of every living thing, concealed even from the birds in the sky. [Who can see much farther than humans on earth]. Destruction and Death say, 'Only a rumor of it has reached our ears.' God understands the way to it and he alone knows where it dwells for he views the ends of the earth and sees everything under the heavens."

In other words, he has comprehensive knowledge. "When he established the force of the wind and measured out the waters, when he made a decree for the rain and the path of the thunderstorm, then he looked at wisdom, appraised it; he confirmed it and tested it. And he said to the human race, "The fear of the Lord--that is wisdom, and to shun evil is understanding." So only God has true wisdom because only God sees everything. So because he has comprehensive knowledge, he can speak absolutely and say, the fear of the Lord, the revelation of God in submission to it, that is the skill of living in the way of eternal life.

Proverbs 30 and the Epistemology of Agur [40:23-48:25]

Again, you have the same truth being represented by Agur and Proverbs, chapter 30. If you want to turn with me there, he's grappling with the same thing I have the outline of this on your notes on page 330, and I'm in chapter 30, verses one through six, this is Agur's epistemology, his source of knowledge of how do you have truth; how do you have knowledge? And he makes five confessions. He begins in chapter 30. "These

are the sayings Agur son of Jakeh"--and he speaks as a prophet, as well as the sage. It's an inspired utterance. This man's inspired utterance is being taught to his son. He begins with the confession, and I put it here, of his ignorance. It's a summary. It begins with and he says, "I am weary God, but I can prevail." I don't have time here to defend the translation. I defend it in my commentary on the book of Proverbs, chapters 15 through 30, and you could see the defense of this translation. "I'm weary God, but I can prevail. Surely, I'm only a brute, not a man. I do not have human understanding. I have not learned wisdom nor have I attained to the knowledge of the Holy One. Who has gone up to heaven and come down? Whose hands have gathered up the wind? Who has wrapped up the waters in the cloak? Who has established all the ends of the earth? What does this name, what is the name of his son? Surely you know! Every word of God is flawless. He's a shield to those who take refuge in him."

Here in his epistemology, he makes his five confessions. His first confession is his ignorance. "I do not have knowledge." Verse two, "Surely I'm only a brute" because I don't have knowledge. I'm not what a human should be. I'm not a man. "I do not have human understanding. I have not learned wisdom nor have I attained to the knowledge of the Holy One." So, he confesses his ignorance that he does not have knowledge.

Secondly, he confesses his inability to have certain knowledge because he cannot go up to heaven to see the whole. "Who has gone up to heaven and come down?" And who sustains the creation? "Whose hands have gathered up the wind? Who has wrapped up the waters in their cloak?" And matching the 4A on the vertical axis, who has gone up to heaven to come down, on the horizontal axis; who has established all the ends of the earth? Therefore, he's confessing that unless you can see it holistically from heaven and you see the ends of the earth, you cannot have certain knowledge.

But now he confesses, the Lord has that knowledge. Who has gone up to heaven? And he says, "What is his name?" Well, who is the one who was in heaven and has established the ends of the earth? Who is the one that sustains the creation with the water, with the clouds? Obviously, the name is, I Am. It's Israel's God. He is the God who has

this knowledge.

The next fourth confession he asks, "And what's the name of his son?" And, of course, in the book of Proverbs, the son is the disciple, "Who is the one that God teaches? Who is his son? It's the disciple of God. In the Old Testament "the son" is the people of Israel. They are called the son of God in Exodus 4. This interpretation is validated I think in the Apocrypha book Baruch 3 verses 29 through 36. He raises the same questions.

"Who has gone up to heaven and taken her [that is wisdom] and brought her down from the clouds? Who has gone over the sea and found her and will buy her for pure gold? No one knows the way to her or is even concerned about the path to her. But the one who knows all things knows her. He found her by his understanding. The one who prepared the earth for all time filled it with four-footed creatures, this is our God. No other can be compared to him. He found the whole way to knowledge and gave it to his servant Jacob, to Israel whom he loved." So, there he's confessing that the One who has this knowledge is Israel's God and the one to whom he has given this knowledge and his revelation as Paul will argue in the book of Romans, are the people of Israel.

The fifth confession that he is going to make is in verse 5 that it's good God has this knowledge, established all this and knows all this but he has to make it known. And he says, "Every word of God is flawless. He is a shield to those who take refuge in him." And so, the fifth confession is that God has made himself known in his revealed word.

Well, that's by way of introduction of how I understand the stanzas is to be violated that because God has the comprehensive knowledge being in heaven. He sees the whole, he created the heavens. They reveal his knowledge. Therefore, he's able to speak with certainty through the law that we have in the rest of the song.

Dr. Mounce: Okay. Let me ask a question in a lot of systematics Psalm 19 is used and the connection between the stanzas is general revelation and specific revelation, and then our response to both. Is that a legitimate way of seeing that?

Dr. Waltke: Yeah, I did tended to mention that back on page before the translation on page, the new page 329, 326, in the old pagination. I'm talking about the unifying logic of

the stanzas. And one way it can be is the praise of God, the two fundamental types of his revelation of himself to the world: natural revelation in creation and special revelation in word. So, I think that's very valid, but that doesn't really explain fully. Why do you put these, well its praise, but I think that there's something deeper in this relationship, that the way that sage thinks is what I'm arguing at any rate God is flawless, he is a shield to those who take refuge in him.

And so, the fifth confession is that, God has made himself known in his revealed word. Well, that's by way of introduction of how I understand the standards is to be violated that because God has the comprehensive knowledge being in heaven he sees the whole, he created the heavens. They reveal his knowledge. Therefore, he's able to speak with certainty through the law that we have in the rest of the psalm.

This is Dr. Bruce Waltke and his teaching on the book of Psalms. This is session number 26, Wisdom Psalms Genre, Psalm 19. [48:25]

Psalms [\[Jump to TOC\]](#)
Session 27: Wisdom Psalms Genre, Psalms 19 cont.
By Dr. Bruce Waltke

This is Dr. Bruce Waltke in his teaching on the book of Psalms. This is session 27, Wisdom Psalms genre, Psalm 19 continued.

Review [00:24-2:35]

In the last lecture we introduced the genre and basically as it pertains to Psalms that give us admonition both positive and also theodical Psalms that warn us not to envy the prosperity of the wicked. Then we moved into looking at the psalm. We had done early lectures on Psalm 1, that put together wisdom and Torah, because Torah Psalms are also admonition and instruction. So, we looked at the very first lecture about Psalm 1 which is a Torah Psalm and we looked at the theodical psalms like Psalm 49 and Psalm 73. So, I thought we would do another one like Psalm 19, which is a Torah Psalm, an Instruction Psalm.

We saw the basic structure of it that it praises God in the creation, general revelation; and it praises God for Torah, in special revelation. I think there's a relationship between that. It's not just simply praise for two kinds of revelation. But I think the point of it is that as well, that because of his knowledge in general revelation, therefore he's able to give certain moral revelation in Holy Scripture. So, I don't think it's just simply two aspects of praise. I think they're quite unified in wisdom thinking. I tried to demonstrate that from Job 28 and Proverbs chapter 30, which puts that together. This would be the similar thing that God knows the whole heavens and therefore the fear of the Lord, what we saw in Job, because he knows everything. Therefore, what he says is to keep the fear of the Lord and because he's created everything, here again, we get "the fear of the Lord is pure, enduring forever."

Psalm 19:1-6 God's Omniscience [2:35-8:00]

So, it seems to be that sort of logic of the wisdom thinker. Now we want to look at it in more detail and exegete and exposit the psalm. This is on page 331. We begin with the first stanza, God's knowledge or his omniscience that's displayed in the creation. Actually, that should be verses one through six, not just simply verses one through four, but it's God's knowledge. What I'm doing here is I'm looking at the psalm exegetically and then, since we had the eschatological Messianic approach, I'm thereupon trying to look at it as well in light of the New Testament. Then I'm looking at it in what does it mean to us personally today. So, I divided this up into: the historical exegesis; then how does this relate to Christ; and then how do we understand that in application to ourselves? First of all, then we have in verses one through four that the firmament declares, 4B really, the firmament declares God's glory. God's glory is his comprehensive knowledge.

There are two units here, actually the God's knowledge in the stanza has really two strophes to it. The first one is God the firmament declares God's glory or his knowledge. Then he focuses in particular on the sun in the last half of verse four through verse six. Speaking of God, let me get the psalm in front of me here. In that first strophe about the firmament, it declares God's knowledge and that's what gives him glory is that he speaks in verses one and two about the temporal universality of the firmament's praise of God's knowledge. You could see that in verse two, "day to day pours out speech and night to night reveals knowledge." So, both day and night ever, always he is revealing his glory and his knowledge.

In verse four, he speaks about his universality and space, his spatial universality of the firmament's praise. He says, "their voice goes out throughout all the earth and their words to the ends of the world" "and to the end of the world." So, verses one and three are verbs of declaration. So, he has "the heavens declare the glory of God, the sky above proclaims his handiwork." Then verse three, he elaborates, "There is no speech. There are no words, no sound is heard." So, he talks about the communication in the odd verses. Then in the even verses, he's talking about the universality of that revelation in time and

in space.

In the second strophe he faces, he focuses, upon the sun, which again is comprehensive in space. The sun, of course, is daily and in space. In verse six, "it's rising is from the ends of the earth and its circuit to the end of them." And so, it sees the whole thing. There's no end to it. He uses two metaphors or similes in this case. One is that he pictures the sun as a bridegroom. And that simile suggests to me that it speaks of the sun's freshness, newness, beauty, vigor, and joy. And the second one is he's a strong man, and as I would look at it who's a racer who runs his course with joy. So, he's both a sprinter because no one can run as fast as the sun, and he's a long-distance runner, no one can run as far as the sun. So, these two similes speak of his exuberance and speak of his strength and universality.

Psalm 19 – Christ and Joseph Addison's Poem [8:00-9:52]

So far as the reference to Christ, and as I would think of it, that in John 1, Christ is the word that brought about the creation. He is the agent of the creation through whom it is accomplished. And the moral, I would bring in here what we did in Psalm 8, is that this revelation is so glorious, you are without excuse for not responding to the Creator.

But suffice it to say, I like Joseph Addison's paraphrase at Psalm 19. "What though in solemn silence all, move round the dark terrestrial ball. With all no real voice nor sound, amid their radiant orbs be found, in reason's ear they all rejoice, and utter forth a glorious voice." And I think that humankind like Kant it spoke to him immediately of God; though there is no voice. There is no sound; yet to reasons ear we hear it and we see it. Oh, I should have added "What though in solemn silence all, move round the dark terrestrial ball. With all no real voice nor sound; amid their radiant orbs be found, in reason's ear they all rejoice, and utter forth a glorious voice, forever singing as they shine; the hand that made us is divine."

Torah's Essence and Reward [9:52-10:35]

Having spoken of the glories of God in the creation and his knowledge; now we

come to the moral excellence of Torah. He basically almost exhausts the vocabulary of Torah. I divided this into two parts, Torah's essence and Torah's reward. Its essence is its moral perfections. It's complete, it's flawless, it's righteous, it's eternal. And then we talk about its rewards and essentially, wisdom's reward is life itself.

7 Excellencies of the Law [10:35-15:32]

But notice how he describes it in its perfection and his seven perfections. He says, first of all, "the law of the Lord is perfect" by which he means it is complete. I like Spurgeon's comments. He said, "It is a crime to add to it, treason to alter it and felony to take from it." It's an interesting quote about it. That's expository preaching. Pardon? Dr. Mounce: A good lesson for expository preaching.

Dr. Waltke: Yeah. And I like the one, yeah, perfect, perfect. When he says, it's "sure" it means it's totally reliable. And I suggest it's totally sure, totally reliable. "The testimony of the Lord is sure," because it's based on comprehensive knowledge, it's based on universal knowledge.

Then he says that, it is upright. "The command of the Lord is upright." We already commented on that, which means it is faultless. It has doesn't have a bend or twist in it. It's perfectly smooth, straight. It's flawless. When it says it's pure. The Hebrew word means it's scoured until it shines. It's that pure. So that's why it's enlightens. It's pure.

It's then he says, and he said, law of the Lord is perfect--absolutely perfect. It's complete. It's sure, totally reliable. There's not a blemish in it. In fact, it is scoured until it shines.

And then he says it is clean. By that he means there is no mixture in it. Because there are no impurities in it, it endures forever. There's nothing to make it decay.

9B. He says the rules of the Lord are true by which he means they are firm they're steady. They cannot be overturned unlike human judgments. So that his law is unchangeable.

It's true. It cannot be altered. And it's righteous. It's in total conformity to God's character and his will. Those are the seven moral excellences of God's word.

Dr. Mounce: Why are so many people afraid to preach it now?

Dr. Waltke: Because I think the reason is, you know, I think we want to please people and we'll preach what we think people want to hear. I think we want to grow churches. We want to attract people and we tell them what they want to hear. I think that may be the reason.

Dr. Mounce: Grow churches, not grow people.

Dr. Waltke: Good analysis. Yeah. I think that's right. That's a good way of putting it. Torah's reward is he says that it revives the soul, that is, renews vitality, like Psalm 22. I suggest that restores life to the sad and to the discouraged. It's used, for example, of what Obed will do for Naomi, "he will renew your life and sustain you in your old age." So, the word of God will renew you, it will refresh you. I think that's why it's good for us to read it every morning.

It is the testimony of the Lord making wise the simple. That is to say, wisdom is the skill that gives life and social skills. So, it gives us the skill of living eternal life. Here the Hebrew word is the same as in Proverbs. But simple, the *peti* in Proverbs, is negative he's part of the fool. The basic meaning of the word is to be open. And so, the fool is open to everything and committed to nothing. In the Psalms, it's very different. The simple is open; he's open to God's instruction. He's open to learn. He's open to grow. So, it's unfortunate, we have to translate it simple. It's a word of the sage, but they used in very different ways in these two books.

Rejoicing Heart [15:32-19:41]

It rejoices the heart. And, of course, this assumes a right heart. I say that all art has two parts to it. I think that all art has two parts. There is the actual objective picture with shape and color and you also bring a certain imagination to it. And so, everyone sees it differently. So, you come to art is both an objective and subjective experience. And so, there's the reality, the objective reality, but the way you see it depends upon your heart. If your heart is right, then you will rejoice in it. If the heart is not right, it will not rejoice in it. You will hate it.

I think, for example, of the painting of the Mona Lisa. It's supposed to be one of the greatest paintings ever produced, I think, by DaVinci. If you go over the Louvre the place is packed with people looking at it. What fascinates people about the Mona Lisa is the smile. It's rather quixotic. It's sort of an enigma. How do you understand it? And people see it differently. Now, I hope I don't ruin the painting for you, but I was reading how people respond to it. And everybody tried to explain the smile on Mona Lisa's face. And this woman said, I know what that smile is. It's the smile of my little daughter who pees in the bathtub. One word trashes it. So, she saw this same smile on the face for daughter in that situation, she brought a totally different imagination to that picture and I think, well, anyway, than most of us would bring to it. I hope so.

Then it says that it enlightens the eye, and that's because it's clean and radiant and the commands light up the eyes.

Then he says that it is verse 10 "More to be desired are they than gold; even the much fine gold." And as I commented when we were doing Proverbs that gold can put food on the table, but it can't give fellowship around the table. That gold can give you a house, but it can't give you a home. That gold can give a woman jewelry and fur on her back, but it can't give her the love she really wants. So, wisdom will give you give you a home, as well as the house. It will give you a table full of food, as well as fellowship around the table. And it will give a woman luxuries as well as the love she really wants. So, it does both.

Then he says, "It is sweeter than drippings from the honeycomb" that's to a healthy taste. Whereas we saw that the rebels in Psalm 2 saw it as bondage. So, he's responding as a saint, the way a saint looks at Torah and its benefactions. He goes on to say that, "By them your servant is warned, [it's to avoid sin] and the keeping of them there is great reward" including all that we've just read.

Two Prayers: 19:12-13 Keep from Hidden sins and Insolent Men [19:41-24:26]

That leads him. "By them is your servant warned," that leads him then to his two prayers. And his first prayer is for hidden sins. Two petitions, one petition is for hidden

sins. That's in verse 12. And the other one is to be kept from insolent men and I think that's first verse 13.

So, first one then is for hidden sins. And since they're hidden, you can't confess them. Yet we know we sin. So, Elaine and I begin every morning with our Lord's liturgy that we ask God to forgive us all of our sins. If we know a specific sin, then we have the responsibility to name it and to renounce it. But we're so depraved that we sin against God, I think, almost "in thought, word and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone." We're in constant need of forgiveness. David is saying, and this prayer is asking that God forgive our hidden sins because it becomes part of canon. And therefore, it's God's response to David. I assume since it was put in the canon of Scripture "for the director of music," that we can all pray it and be assured God forgives us our hidden sins; as well as our confessed known sins. I say, since they're hidden, we cannot renounce and confess them to God.

His second request is that God hold him back from the rule of insolent men. We've already talked about that. I suggest here none is free from the danger of apostasy. And I think we express it when we sing the hymn "prone to wander Lord I feel it." I think we all know that it takes the grace of God to persevere in the faith. Then he gives the reason for that. Where am I in the translation? Give me a break here to get the translation in front of me. What page was that on? 323, 328. Okay.

His second petition after he asks God to forgive his hidden sins, now he says in verse 13, "keep back your servant also from the insolent." And I suggested that none is free from the danger of apostasy. And I think that it's appropriate to add here that without help from God, none of us is a match for Satan. Behind the apostate is Satan and demonic forces and we're no match for it. We constantly need God's help.

His reason is, "then I shall be blameless to keep integrity and be innocent of the great transgression." The question is what is the great transgression? And I think the word pasha' means rebellion, rebellion against God's rule. That means breaking faith with him. Whoever commits pasha' does not merely rebel or protest against Yahweh but breaks

with him. And so, what he's asking is don't allow me to break my relationship with you. Keep me from apostasy.

Conclusion Psalm 19:14 God my Rock and Redeemer [24:26-28:46]

His conclusion is: "May these words of my mouth and meditation of my heart. Be pleasing in your sight O Lord my Rock and my Redeemer." I suggest this is the protocol of the royal court that he's asking for favor and acceptance before the King, that God would accept his prayer. And these words of his mouth, are the words and the praise of the heavens for the Christian it would be the praise of Christ, the creator. And it would be the praise of Torah, which today is expressed in the new covenant that he refers to God as "my Savior." In other words, this is not legalism. He is not striving on his own to keep the law. He's totally dependent upon God. He's asking God to keep him from insolent men. And he's asking God to be his Rock and his Redeemer.

The rock is a Rock of salvation, a rock of salvation, of protection. He's really dependent upon God who will protect him and keep him. He's not simply, here's God's word, and I'm going to do it. He recognizes he can't. So, he's a petitioner. I suggest at the end, his words found favor, the words of his mouth found favor because they were accepted into the canon of Scripture. And God was pleased with his prayer.

Dr. Mounce: I keep hearing the last line of the Lord's prayer, which is so problematic, you know, "lead us not into temptation." Well, God doesn't tempt us. Right. But he does test us. Right. "But deliver us from evil or the evil one." And I just I'm finding myself wondering is Jesus teaching us to pray that the same thing that David is praying here? Yeah, to keep us from apostatizing to keep us from dealing with Satan, who we can't deal with on our own.

Dr. Waltke: Yeah. I think that I'm troubled with that too, but I think this psalm has helped me to understand it. That we're saying we can't handle it, keep us from even the temptation because we recognize our weakness "lead us not" we can't handle it. I think it was a very humble prayer.

Dr. Mounce: And when you say, "then I shall be blameless and innocent of great

transgression" great transgression is breaking with God.

Dr. Waltke: That's what I think.

Dr. Mounce: which in modern theology would be apostasy. We call it apostatizing. Right. So, keep me from permanently breaking with you. Yeah. Because I can't continue on under my own power, I need God.

Dr. Waltke: Well. I think that it is a prayer. Yeah. That I can't do it. You have to keep me, he's dependent upon God to keep him from doing it because he's recognizes I can't do this on my own.

Dr. Mounce: Because we're all prone to wander. Yeah.

Dr. Waltke: So, I think this gives us insight. I used to be troubled by that too. God doesn't lead us into temptation and so forth, but I am praying. I'm not able to handle it. And so God, I know myself and how sinful I am. Put me in the wrong context and I may be guilty of the wrong transgression, of great transgression.

When I graduated from high school, I was offered a scholarship in a liberal college and I turned it down because I didn't think I could handle it. I was too young and I was afraid, I didn't know this psalm, but intuitively I was afraid I would be guilty of the great transgression because I couldn't answer the professors.

This is Dr. Bruce Waltke in his teaching on the book of Psalms. This is session 27, Wisdom Psalms Genre, Psalm 19 continued. [28:46]

Psalms

Session 28: Editing of the Psalter

By Dr. Bruce Waltke

[\[Jump to TOC\]](#)

This is Dr. Bruce Waltke and his teaching on the book of Psalms. This is session 28, Editing of the Psalter.

Review, Prayer and Introduction [00:20-2:05]

We've been addressing different methods of understanding the Psalms. We looked at the historical context of the Psalms, Royal Psalms. We looked at different forms of Psalms. And at the last hour, we looked at the Wisdom Psalms that played a role in the editing of the Psalter. This will become more clear. We looked at the Eschatological, the Messianic way of looking at the Psalms. And in this lecture, we will be looking at the editing of the book of Psalms understanding how the book fits together holistically, now that we've considered the parts.

But let's begin with prayer: "Father, we ask you for the grace, for our learning and comprehension, and we ask you for strength and energy as we need it. We've looked to you. We're dependent upon you in Christ's name. Amen.

In this lecture, I will, first of all, discuss just briefly the titles of the Psalms. Then I will discuss the process by which the Psalms were collected and came together into their final composition and the canon. And then finally, on page 344, I think, I will discuss the significance of the way these books are put together. The book of Psalms is actually, as we shall see, five books. It's been divided into five books.

Name of the Book: Praises [Tehillim] [2:05-8:32]

But looking at the book as a whole, in the Hebrew Bible, there is no title for the book as such. Normally the books of the Bible are, well, in the Pentateuch they are named after the first word. So, the first word in Hebrew of Genesis is Bereshit [in the

beginning], and that becomes the name. In Exodus you have "eleh shemot," which means "names." And so, the title of Exodus is picked up from that second word "shemot" [names]. The first word of Leviticus is "vaikqra", "and the Lord called" at so that's Leviticus. And in Numbers, the fourth word, it has in the first verse it mentioned that it was "in the wilderness" bamidbar, and that becomes the title. Deuteronomy begins with devarim, "the words."

But in the book of Psalms, it doesn't work that way. I must say that for the prophets they were named after the prophet. So, they're named after Isaiah or Ezekiel or Jeremiah. But in the Hebrew Bible itself. There is no name.

There may be a reference to an earlier stage of the book in Psalm 72, where it says, "the prayers of David, the son of Jesse are ended." And it could be, there was an early collection that was called "the prayers of David." But that seems to be the eggshells, if you please, the eggshell, if you please of an earlier stage of the book. The title of the book in the Jewish literature and Rabbinic literature is the sepher Tehillim, sepher meaning "book," and tehillim meaning "praises" they're sometimes simply shorten down tehillim or the construct form the tehile, which means "the book of praises." It got its name, therefore seemingly from the content of the book because, as we've said, almost all the Psalms have praise.

The only one that doesn't have a praise section as such is Psalm 88. Psalm 88 is called the black sheep of the Psalter. I must say there was a time when I was troubled by the fact that there was one song with no real praise, section to it; although it does mention God's work in Israel's history in just a brief reference to it. Until one time when I was very tired and very discouraged, I didn't even have the energy to pray. I realized that at least the Psalmist had the energy to pray. And that in itself is redemptive and I was thankful for that.

But in the Psalms, you have whole Psalms that are praise. You have Grateful Songs of Praise. And I said, even the Psalms of Lament are couched in praise. So, it's very fitting that the book is called "The Book of Praises."

In the Septuagint, it's referred to as hymnists, I think, hymns. The title Psalms, is really derived from one of the major codices of the Septuagint, which is the codex Vaticanus, referred to as Codex B. It dates to between 350 and 400 AD or thereabouts. There, the title of it is the Psalmoi. And that is a transliteration or translation of the heading of the Psalms, "the Psalm of David," for example. The Hebrew word is mizmor and that is translated over as "psalmoi." And that becomes, well in the Codex Vaticanus it's these Psalmoi, Psalms. And in Codex Alexanderinus, that dates about 400 AD it's called "psalterion." And out of that, we developed the name Psalter. So sometimes due to that Greek influence, it's referred to as the "Book of Psalms" and other times it can be referred to as the "Psalter."

Jerome, when he translated it, called it *Libra Psalmorum* "the book of Psalms." He took that evidently from the Greek term, Psalmoi. So, in any case, it's called "The Book of Psalms," which technically speaking in English, it's out of the Greek and through the Latin and into the English.

It's called "The Book of Psalms" strictly speak it as we saw psalms or mizmor meant "a song sung to the accompaniment of a stringed instrument." But since the note of praise is so strong in the book that Psalms now, if it denoted "a song sung to the stringed instrument," the note of praise is so strong that psalm connotes a Psalm, a song of praise.

So that kind of gives you the background to the title of the book. So, I talked about the Hebrew title, the rabbinic and subsequent Hebrew literature, calling it praises that in the Greek Bible, in the Codex Vaticanus it is called Psalmoi and Codex Alexandrinus it's called Psalterium, which comes over into English Psalter. And then in the Latin, Jerome called it *Libra Psalmorum* or simply Psalmoi. So, it is denoted, that should be denoted, "a song sung to the accompaniment of musical instruments," but it connotes a sacred song or a hymn. So that introduces us finally in the last lecture I take up the title of the book that we've been studying all this time.

How did the Book Come Together? [8:32-9:17]

Second step we're going to talk about is how did the book come together--the

process of its collection. And I said, someone has well said that you can think of its collection as the way drops of rain develop into springs and into small streams and they go into brooks and then they go into little rivers into larger rivers and finally, into the sea. So, we're going to be, it starts out with these individual psalms and they become collected and they get collected into books until finally we have the canon. So, we're going to be looking at this process and looking at the stages by which the book came together.

First Stage: Individual Psalms [9:17-9:45]

The first stage, of course, where the individual songs or the individual psalms. As we noted, some were actually composed for the temple. Namely, the Psalms of Praise as the Hymns were probably composed for the temple. The Songs of Grateful praise were to accompany the todah sacrifice. So, you had the word of praise along with the sacrifice of praise. Those were originally intended for the temple.

Stage 2: Handed over to the Chief Musician [9:45-11:43]

But David's Laments seemed to be composed away from the temple in various experiences, especially when it was seven of the psalms when he was contesting with Saul and he was out in the wilderness. So, they didn't particularly have the temple in view, but, because he was such a charismatic figure and he had written or evidently somebody wrote down these poems that he had composed, that led to the second stage for all the psalms that they are handed over to the chief musician. So even Lament Psalms, are handed over to the chief musician and the chief musician adapted it, therefore, for the democratization. They may have referred to David individually and for the King. But they were also becoming democratized so that all the people could sing the psalms at the temple, or at least the priests could sing the psalms at the temple, or the King could sing the psalms at the temple.

Probably as we said, many of them were antiphonal. And so, you had the priests singing and you had the people singing, you had the King singing. Probably a priest or prophet representing God and gave the voice of God within the psalms.

So, you have the first stage is the individual Psalms either for the temple or away from the temple, the Laments. And then you have the second stage where they are now adopted and used in the temple. The other detail is on top of page, 337, where I talk about some of the Qumran scrolls. That's a little bit too detailed for an introduction to the book of Psalm. So, I'm going to skip that.

Stage 3: Collection into Groups [11:43-12:47]

The third stage is these are now seemingly the third stage seems to be that they were collected into groups. In this section, I'm discussing into what kind of groups they are collected. So, I talk about they were collected by author or by genre, or, and then one of the difficulties in the Psalms is known as the Elohistic Psalter. They seem to be collected, somehow with reference to the name Elohim. I'll get into that in some detail. There were other techniques that were thematic groupings and other techniques of grouping.

And I look at some of those other techniques, I'm really dependent to a large extent here on Gerald Wilson's, Yale doctoral dissertation written under Brevard Childs, who dealt with the editing of the Psalter. And you have that reference in your bibliography.

Stage 4: Collection into 5 Books; Stage 5 Collected into Canon [12:47-14:05]

The fourth stage is that they will be collected we have them into groups and seemingly the almost the last stage, they are collected into five groups, five books, as I said, and we'll look at that.

Finally, we have the canon itself, the Masoretic text, what actually becomes the book itself in the canon of the Old Testament and then of Holy Scripture. Well, let's look at that in more detail then, as we look at how it came together in the second and the third stage of how they work collected into groups. Wilson points out that the process of collecting occurred early to judge from the cuneiform parallels as early as 2334 to 2279

BC, before Christ, if not earlier. So, the evidence from Mesopotamia is that this grouping occurred very early in the history of the formation of the Psalter.

Techniques of Grouping: Authorship [David, Asaph ...] [14:05-18:27]

One way they are grouped is by way of authorship. The Chronicler mentions, two authors, he talks about David and he talks about Asaph as being two principal authors of the Psalms. Very interesting he says there, he talks about how they were "under the hands of David and Asaph." So, it raises the question, what does it mean that was under the hands of David and Asaph? And probably it's referring to chirography where you directed the music by your hands. So, you would have hand signals for how you should sing it. So, there was, that's the way it expresses it, "under the hands of David and of Asaph."

So, here you have, most of the Psalms are by David and you have the whole first book pretty well after the introduction of Psalms 1 and 2, 3 through 41 are all by David. There are two anonymous songs in that collection. They are 10 and 33. 10 is not a particular problem because it actually was originally a part of Psalm 9. Originally Psalm 9 and 10 were one psalm. Psalm 33 is a little bit more problematic because it's an Orphan Psalm in there without authorship being indicated to it. The Psalms by David [LeDavid] also occur in a Book II in 51 through 65. And again is 68 through 70. And then you have in 72, that closes Book II, you have, this is by Solomon. And yet that psalm seems to been with the Davidic collection. And that's where we have this final editorial notice, "The prayers of David, son of Jesse, are ended."

We have more Psalms by David in Books III and IV and I make note of that in the footnote 477. But, in other words, the important point here is one way of collecting the Psalms is by authorship. One of the main collections are those that belong to David, or they are by David.

There's another collection that belongs to the sons of Korah. This is found in Books II and III. And so, in Book II that opens the book Psalms 42 and 43, as I said, was originally one song and Psalms 42/43 through 49, are by the sons of Korah. We'll come back to that. When we talk about the Elohistic Psalter. Also, by the sons of Korah in

Book III, this time, are Psalms 84, 85 and 87 and 88. The psalms of Asaph are Psalms 50, 73 to 83. And the oldest song in the Psalter is Psalm 90, which is by Moses, the man of God. So, one way of collecting the material is by means of the author.

They were also collected by means of their genre. So, some collections are put together is by *mizmor* being psalm/song. And I give you those smaller collections and 3 and 4, or rather 3 through 6, 19 through 24 and so forth. We already looked at the *miktam* in Psalm 56 through 60. Then some are called *maskil*, to make prudent or skillful, some of these superscripts we don't know exactly how to translate them. But here you have the collection of the *maskil*, 42/43 through 46 and 52 to 55. But these are smaller collections seemingly within the authorial collections.

Techniques for Grouping: Elohist Psalter [Pss. 42-83] [18:27-37:49]

A third grouping is, and quite problematic is the so-called Elohist Psalter. The Elohist Psalter extends from Psalms 42 through 83. It's called the Elohist Psalter because in the other Psalms outside of these 42 Psalms, the primary name for God is his name that is used with reference to being the God of Israel, namely, *Yahweh* or *I Am*, usually translated the *LORD* in capital letters. That is the primary way of referring to God. He's the God of Israel. And so just as *Marduk* was the personal God of Babylon; *Yahweh* is the personal God of Israel for he formed the nation. He adopted the nation as his family. He became as a father to them and they became as a son to him. Another imagery, he became as a husband to them, and they became as a bride to him. So, you have these two different images of Israel's relationship to their covenant keeping God whose name is *I Am*. And the significance whose name we have discussed in another lecture.

But in the Elohist Psalter, the primary name is *Elohim*. This refers to God and his transcendence. It refers simply to God, the one God, who is overall. So, you can refer to your mother. You could refer to her as mother. There is no other, or you can have your mother's name. So, in the same way, you can refer to God as God for the essence of who he is, or you can use his name *Yahweh* that he is the eternal one and makes himself

known through his relationship with Israel.

Here I give you the statistics that in Psalms 1 through 41, and remember the Elohist Psalter is 42 through 83; in Psalms 1 through 41 and 84 through 150, the personal name for God and his relationship to Israel Yahweh, which means I Am occurs 584 times. But in the Elohist Psalter, his name occurs in those psalms, the name I Am occurs 584 times. The title Elohim, simply God, occurs 94 times. But in the Elohist Psalter the name I Am occurs 45 times and the name Elohim occurs 210 times. So, you have a very distinctive concentration or change of the divine name.

Furthermore, the use of the alternate name mostly occurs in parallelism. In other words, the parallel to Yahweh would be Elohim. In the other books outside of these Elohist Psalter, Yahweh is normally in the A verset and Elohim is in the B verset. But in the Elohist Psalter, Elohim is in the A verset and Yahweh is in the B verset. So, there's a very distinctive cast on these 42 books.

In fact, there are synoptic psalms that occur outside the Elohist Psalter and within the Elohist Psalter. This is illustrated in, I give you, Psalm 14 and Psalm 53. You can see how in Psalm 53 Elohim is used rather than the Lord or Yahweh. Here is the Psalm it's by David: "The fool says in his heart, 'There is no God.' They are corrupt, their deeds of vile; there is no one who does good." I think you may recognize that from Romans 3. This is where Paul uses the psalm in order to show that all are sinners; there is none who does good. And so, he's teaching doctrine through the psalm. Notice how it refers to God here.

He uses the this is Psalm 14. "The Lord" [that is Yahweh] "looks down from heaven on all of human kind to see if there are any who understand, any who seek God." Notice how Lord is in the A verset, God is in the B verset. "All have turned away, all have become corrupt; there is no one who does good, not even one. Do all these evildoers know nothing? They devour my people as though eating bread; they never call on the name of the Lord. But there they are, overwhelmed with dread, for God is present in the company of the righteous. You evil doers frustrate the plans of the poor, but [note the

proper name] the Lord is their refuge. O, that salvation for Israel would come out of Zion. When the Lord restores the fortune of his people, let Jacob rejoice and Israel be glad."

Now here's the Psalm in the Elohistic Psalter [Ps 53]. "The fool says in his heart, [it's a maskil now, of David.] The fool says in his heart, 'There is no God.' They are corrupt, and their ways of vile; there is no one who does good." Now note whereas in Psalm 14, it said, "the Lord looks down from heaven." Here, we read, "God looks down from heaven on all mankind to see if there are any who understand, any who seek after God. Everyone has turned away, all have become corrupt; there is no one who does good, not even one. Do all these evil doers know nothing? They devour my people as though eating bread; they never call on God." Whereas in Psalm 14, it says, "they never call on the Lord."

"But there they are, overwhelmed with dread, where there was nothing to dread. God scattered the bones of those who attacked you; you put them to shame, for God, despised them. O that salvation for Israel would come out of Zion! When God restores the fortunes of his people." Notice that verse seven of Psalm 14, "O that salvation for Israel would come out of Zion! When the Lord restores his people." "But let Jacob rejoice and Israel be glad." So, I think it's very clear there's a very conscious change of name from the personal name of Israel to the more abstract generic term for God who is the transcendent creator of all things.

Dr. Mounce: I'm assuming that in Welhausen in this is all E stuff in JEPD.

Dr. Waltke: No, no. This has no connection to that. No, that's not, because that is only in the way the Pentateuch J E D is only in the Pentateuch or with some like a Von Rad, it includes the Hexateuch. He includes Joshua within it. So no, this has no connection to that. Now, when we look at this Elohistic Psalter, one can see that it has a Davidic core from 51 to 72. It is surrounded by two Levitical collections. First of all, by the Korahites, as we said by the sons of Korah, that is 42 through 49. And then you have the Asaphic Psalms by Asaph from 73 to 83. So, it seems to be it's around a Davidic core with the two of vertical choirs on either side of it.

But what's of interest to us is that there are 42 Psalms and they begin at Psalm 42. So, what gives the number 42? Why do they begin in Psalm 42 and we have 42 Psalms? Well, numbers have symbolic significance and as best I can see, and I agree with this here, the number 42 refers to premature judgment. You have it, for example, why is it mentioned that when Elisha called down the bears on the children, the boys at Bethel who were jeering and mocking him, 42 boys were killed. It's 42. When, Jehu, kills off the Judeans who were coming up to Samaria. He kills 42 of the Judeans in that case. So, the number 42 figures prominently in ancient Near Eastern collections of poetry. And in this collection, there are 42 psalms, and it begins with Psalm 42. Elsewhere in the Old Testament, the numeral 42 is used in the context of judgment or pre-mature death. So, for example, in Judges 12.6, where the Jephthah, took revenge on the Ephraimites at the fords of the Jordan, there were 42,000 Ephraimites. But again, they're put to death with the number 42. I already mentioned the children in 2 Kings 2.24. And then with the relatives Ahaziah in 2 Kings 10.14. And it may have some bearing on the scene in Revelation where the beast rules for 42 months after which he is destroyed, that is in the middle of the seven years.

In any case, I think that we can make a case that 42 is premature judgment. So why is there this 42? I think that it's right, probably with Burnett, that there may be a lamenting of the destruction of the temple that it may be reflecting that. He says to the lament, "I say, to lament, the destruction of the temple in 587." Then there's not only the Psalms of Lament in the Levitical corpus, in this Elohist corpus, but it's to express hope for renewal beyond it. Both political collections begin with the lament either of absence from the temple Psalm 42. "Why are you cast down O my soul?" We've looked at that psalm he is away from the temple. Or they are not finding God's, well, or, either the absence from the temple or absence from God's favor, as we saw it in Psalm 73, Psalm 73 begins the third book. It begins the third book of the Psalter. So, the first Psalm of the second book is the absence from the temple and the first Psalm of Psalm 73 of Book III, Psalm 73 is "Surely God is good for Israel, but as for me, my feet had almost slipped

when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.... and I have been afflicted all day long." They in turn are followed in both cases by Communal Laments of defeat. 44, we looked at Psalm 44. "We are counted as sheep for the slaughter," for example. And, of the destruction of the temple, where they come in with their axes and he went down and destroyed it in Psalm 74. The Asaph collection, that is, 73 to 83 contains other Communal Laments. I'm not sure what happened here with what should be, I think 79, 80 and 83. Psalm 83 concludes with a plea for God to deal with national enemies and to assert God's world encompassing sovereignty.

I'm taking this out of Joel Burnett study "42 Songs for Elohim, an Organizing Principle in The Shaping of the Elohist Psalter," in JSOT in 2006.

Again, looking at the Elohist Psalter on there on page 310, we note here, there was also the Songs of Zion that give hope. So, in the midst of this destruction, in the same collection, we have Songs of Zion, which are giving people hope in the midst of the death. It is suggested, therefore that Psalms 84 through 89, they're part of, they're not part of the Elohist Psalter, but are part of Book III, that they are actually an appendix to it.

It's in that collection that we have the darkest psalm in the Psalter, which is Psalm 88. In Psalm 89, we have the failure of the house of David. God had given the covenant to David, but David's crown is rolling in the dust as the psalmist expresses it. So, the failure of the Davidic covenant is most solely lamented in Psalm 89.

But there are also Songs of Zion as in Psalm 84 and 87. So it seems to be a mixture of death and hope. It seems to be a mixture of destruction of the temple, communal lament, and the prosperity of the wicked in exile. The army goes down in defeat in all these psalms. But at the same time, we get these Songs of Zion, mixed into it. So that they have restoring hope that Zion is a city of God, and it will be restored. The Elohist Psalter is as, you could see, somewhat problematic and that's the best in my judgment and understanding it. Years when I taught the book of Psalm, I simply said, I didn't understand it, but I think I'm beginning to agree with this Burnett study that it is probably reflecting there are a lot of dark psalms, including the destruction of the

temple in 74, 79 and so forth. But at the same time, we have the Songs of Zion that give hope.

That's as best I can do with it at this time. And then I conclude by saying the combination of death and life gives it an eschatological messianic hope for Jerusalem and the temple after its destruction. So, I think that's how the book functions.

Dr. Mounce: I've been reading some of the Minor Prophets and it seems that even those have a real emphasis on judgment always throw in hope. There's kind of a biblical pattern, isn't it? You never just talk about anything but judgment, because there's always hope at the end of judgment.

Dr. Waltke: That's right. That's exactly, that's true of all the prophetic material. And so, for example, in Micah...

Dr. Mounce: That was the one I was thinking of. Okay.

Dr. Waltke: When in Micah, you get these whole series of oracles of judgment. Actually, I see the book of Micah divided into three parts. The first section is chapters, one through let's see, well, actually it's a one through two. It begins with "Hear O Israel," and you have a whole series of accusation and judgment. And then you have the one hope at the end of chapter 12, where you have the Lord will break out of Zion and you have the remnant. Then you get the second one, chapter three "Hear O Israel," and we get three oracles against the leadership; the rulers, against the priests, and against the prophets. Finally, destruction of Jerusalem. But then you get four and five, which is filled with the remnant that's going to be restored and they'll become a mighty nation. That's where we get, "But you, Bethlehem though you be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you will come forth for me one who is to be ruler of Israel, who is from of old, from everlasting." The same thing happens in the third section, chapters six, seven through eight, it's all accusation and judgment. But then it ends with a composite song of victory at the end of it. So, you're exactly right. It's the same thing.

Dr. Mounce: I mean, it's a neat pattern for preaching too, but even as you're preaching through a judgmental passage, there needs to be hope expressed.

Dr. Waltke: Right? Yeah. Because if there's no, salvation the Psalmist would say who can stand, who could endure. If it's all just judgment, you just throw up your hands. "Well, that's it. We have no hope, right?" Yes. That's very, very good.

Techniques of Grouping: Themes [37:49-43:20]

Another way of grouping. So, I've, I've talked about grouping by author, grouping by genre, grouping by the use of Elohim in contrast to Yahweh; and another one is by thematic grouping. There's a way in Hebrew, in Semitic thinking that they put material together that is somewhat homogeneous.

I think it gets some insight into the grouping of homogeneous material that in our alphabet, for example, where our English alphabet is based upon really a Semitic alphabet. And so, for example, we will have H I J. Well, H I J a K the word, "I" constantly the Hebrew word, yodh. And the K constant, the Hebrew word kaph. Yodh which comes over into our "i" through the Greek alphabet refers to the hand, and in Hebrew, it refers in the Hebrew, from the elbow to the fingertip. That's the "i." The K is the Hebrew word kaph and that refers to the palm of the hand. The two are put together, for example. When you get to M and N the Hebrew word from which the "M" is the Hebrew word is mayim which means "water." Then the nun means "fish." The Q and the R, the Q comes from the Hebrew word qoph which means the back of the head where the hair is. And the R comes from resh, which refers to the front of the head. So, you can see that there is a grouping together here of, of thought. It seems to be that material by the rabbis is collected. The collectors of the Psalms are putting together in some way, homogeneous material as well.

So, for example, you can see the alternation of morning prayers and evening prayers in Psalms 3 through 6. So, we've looked at Psalm 3, "I awakened the morning," Psalm 4, "I go to sleep at night." Psalm 5 he awaits as a sentry, waiting for God to bring justice in the morning. Psalm 6, he floods his bed at night with tears. So, you go: morning, night, morning, night. And it may be it was intended for the morning sacrifice and the evening sacrifice. That's purely speculation, but again, it's a way of grouping

material.

Dr. Mounce: So, by thematic, you mean not just thematic in terms of the meaning of what's being taught, but metaphor is shared metaphors, images ... Dr. Waltke: Yeah, I use it very broadly. Yeah. Notice how Psalm 7 and 8, 9 go together. You might want to turn there, Psalm 8, we looked at, "O Lord, our Lord. How excellent is your name in all the earth." But look at the psalm preceding it. And the Psalm following it. Here's the end of Psalm 7. We read in Psalm 7.17. "I will give thanks to the Lord because of his righteousness. I will sing the praises of the name of the Lord Most High." That's the last verse of seven. Psalm 8 begins, "O Lord, our Lord. How excellent is your name in all the earth." And then that is an inclusio and repeated at the end of verse eight, "O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth." That leads us into Psalm 9. "I will give thanks to you, Lord, with all my heart; I will tell of all your wonderful deeds. I will be glad and rejoice in you; I will sing the praises of your name O Most High," which is very similar to 7.17. So, it seems these are ways in which the material is being brought together.

We already looked at Psalms 93 through 99, which are called Enthronement Psalms because they are referring to God's reign and his victory in establishing the creation. They also speak of his coming in judgment. There were other ways and techniques by which they're put together. They have the juxtaposition of some with similar and incipits that is to say, so Psalm 103 and Psalm 104.

Dr. Mounce: What's an incipit? Dr. Waltke: The beginning, how it starts. So, Psalm 103 and Psalm 104 both begin and end with identical phrases. "Bless the Lord" or "Bless I Am O my soul" for example.

Techniques of Grouping: Titles [43:20-43:59]

Another way, or other techniques, as I put it here is unique titles and one of the famous collections is the Songs of Ascent, Psalms 120 through 134. Because they all begin with ma'a lot which means to ascend. There is some debate over what that means

but the general consensus is they were written for pilgrimage, when you made pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Israel went there three times a year.

Techniques of Group: Catch Words and Phrases [43:59-45:09]

They are also linked together by catch phrases and we already saw how Psalms 1 and 2 are brought together. 3 and 4 because I mentioned that psalm because one begins with "blessed" and Psalm 2 ends with "blessed." In Psalm 1 you meditate in the Torah, Psalm 2 refers to the statute. Psalm 1 refers to meditate and Psalm 2 we already discussed that. Psalm 3 and 4 bring together because both of them say "I lie down and sleep" in 3.6 and 4.8. So, it seems as though these catchwords, phrases or words known as concatenations *c o n c a t e n a t i o n* is another way of grouping the material.

Techniques of Grouping: Hallelujah [45:09-47:47]

Another way of grouping is by the Hallelujah Psalms all of which mark the conclusion of Psalter segments. So, Psalm 104 and 106 conclude Book IV. Psalms 146 to 150 conclude Book V. and there are those who would argue that there is a unit that ends at 117 and after the Ascent Psalms of 120 through 134 you have 135.

Well at any rate, we talk about how the Psalms came together and we said the first stage was the individual psalms for the temple or away from the temple. But eventually they were all given over, almost immediately I think, to the director of music. They were all for the temple and it seems to be that the house of Levi, the different houses like Asaph, he's a descendant of Levi. But the Korahites and so forth they are a distinct house and they are the singers that they would bring this material together and they were grouping it in the ways that I have been suggesting.

Dr. Mounce: And this has nothing to do with how they were written?

Dr. Waltke Yeah. I think that, it's very similar to the Proverbs that they all were individual, but they were brought together by some forms of association. I think those associations give a richer meaning when we actually see the association. So that even when I talked about the Elohistic Psalter, I was suggesting it has a deep and richer

meaning when they pertain to destruction and hope beyond it.

The Hallelujah Psalms then indicate the conclusion of segments. I was talking about that and that the Todah "I will give grateful praise." So hallelujah as used in conclusion. "O give thanks to the Lord." Hodah "I'll give praise to the Lord" they're used for the introduction of segments.

The Five Books of the Psalter [47:47-58:21]

Well, in any case, so I talk about how the Psalms came together from individual Psalms. Then they were handed over to the temple and they were collected by the Levitical priests in charge of the hymnic singing at the temple. And they say the fourth stage is the collection of the psalms into five books. The five books are: the first book is Book I, Psalms 1 through 41; the second book is Psalms 42 through 72, the third book is Psalm 73 through 89; the fourth book is Psalm 90 through Psalm 106; And the Book V is 107 through 150. The evidence that there is a five-book arrangement, is that seemingly that the Psalms that ended with doxologies ended the book. But they're not boilerplate. Each doxology is different.

So, you might want to take a look at the doxology at the end of Book I, and that would be Psalm 41. And we read in the doxology: "Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel from everlasting to everlasting." I think the priest said that, and the people responded "Amen and Amen." which means "true, true" "firm, firm." That it ends with "praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel from everlasting to everlasting." And I think the response would be "Amen and Amen."

Then you have that same, you have a similar doxology at the end of Psalm 72 here we read: "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." And I think the people respond with the "Amen and Amen." Then looking at the last Psalm of Book III, that would be Psalm 89, where in verse 52, we read: "Praise be to the Lord forever," and the people respond. "Amen and Amen." And finally, the last of Book IV ends in Psalm 106 and verse 48 "Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel from

everlasting to everlasting. Let all the people say on Amen." There it is quite clear that the people are responding to the final doxology in praise probably sung by the priest.

So, these doxologies were probably an original part of the psalm and they were chosen because of their doxology to conclude the different books of the Psalms. Now, Book V doesn't have that kind of doxology because the last four or five songs, are just sheer praise for the Lord, 146 to 150. So almost the whole psalms are doxologies and praising God. The rabbis recognize that they had five books. So, we read, from I'm taking this out of Brodies' work on the Midrash on the Psalms. "As Moses gave the five books of the law to Israel so David gave five books of Psalms to Israel, And, therefore these books are named after their first words." So, Book I is entitled, "Bless is the man"; Book II is entitled "for the leader a maskil." Book III is called "A Psalm of Asaph." Book IV "A prayer of Moses" and Book V "Let the redeemed of the Lord say, so." This is very old. It's not only in the Rabbinic literature, but at one Psalm at Qumran, we actually have these things and this doxology preserved.

Another indication of five books, and it's not only that we have these doxologies, but in each case we have a change of author at the seams. So that the first book after the introduction, the author is David and that extends almost all the way through the entire first book. The second book that begins with Psalm 42 that's by or belongs to the sons of Korah. The third book is by Asaph. The fourth book is by Moses, the fifth book it seems to be a more artificial division. We're not given an author at Psalm 107. I think that's about sufficient for our purposes here, that we can see there are five books to the Psalter and something of the evidence for it.

So, they were recognizing the relationship of David to Moses. And as I said, Moses basically gave the cultus and David transformed it into opera. And so, they're seeing the relationship between the five books of Moses and the five books of David in the literature, the Rabbinic literature.

Dr. Mounce: You know, there's some talks about Matthew breaking into five divisions. In other words, is this fivefold pattern anywhere else in that canon?

Dr. Waltke: I think there's five books in the Megillot. I think that's right, but I'd have to be a pretty sure that's right. That's what comes to my mind.

Dr. Mounce: So, in other words, in Matthew, it could just be a pattern that he has because he's Jewish. He's used to seeing large chunks of five. Alright.

Dr. Waltke: Yeah. well, in the Old Testament, it could be with the Megilot. You would have the Pentateuch, you would have the five books of the Psalms and you may have five Megilot which may be the pattern that may impact him. It's seems to me plausible to think in those terms.

Dr. Mounce: If you took some of each of the five books and just compared the vocabulary in Hebrew and the rhythm of the books, things like that, could you tell which ones were for which book? Did they use different vocabulary? Do they use different rhythm when they wrote the books?

Dr. Waltke: No. No. I haven't seen anybody attempt that. Some have attempted to put the five books, like Book I to put it with Genesis. But that doesn't work.

When I discussed Hebrew poetry you could see, I was drawing it from all over. Now, there is a contrast between the poetry in the biblical poetry and the Qumran poems that are created a centuries later. There is a difference in that poetry, but in the Psalms themselves, you don't see it. Also, that the Davidic material is all Book I is David. As I said, the Elohist Psalter, which, and see the Elohist Psalter from 42 through 83, those 42 Psalms. It's interesting to me, that Book III starts sort of in the middle of it, which suggests to me that the division into five books is later than the Elohist Psalter's formation, because it is now split up into two books. So, the Elohist Psalter is in Book II and in Book III. And so, you have Davidic Psalms in Book II. No, we don't have any Psalms by David in Book III or in Book IV, but we have several Psalms in Book V by David, which is strange because we already had "The Psalms of David, the son of Jesse are ended," which reflects a earlier stage in the formation of the book of Psalms.

There is a contrast between Books I and III and Books, IV and V. And seemingly Books I and III were formed earlier than books IV and V. And I try to put it together

there. And how they differ. But I don't think I want to develop that any further.

It seems to me, there's something of a chronological development of this material. That Book I, which is all by David is probably the earlier collection. But I don't want to go any further than that. It's a little bit too speculative for me.

Stage 5: The Psalms and the Canon [58:21-1:03:20]

Stage five then we looked at the individual psalms. We saw that they were all given over to the temple. We saw that the Levites responsible for singing the psalms. They collected them according to genre, author, and other techniques of collecting material. Then we looked at fourth stage where these five books and the final stage is the canon itself. Now in an academic course, I should at least mention that the canon at Qumran, especially one scroll in particular called 11QPsA. That means it came out of cave 11 and it's the first scroll of the Psalms out of cave 11. It has several, eight more, Psalms than we have in the Masoretic Text. And there's a somewhat different arrangement in the Qumran scroll. And this raises the question: Did the Qumran community have a different canon than which was preserved in the Masoretic text? You have two schools of thought about, that namely, we have like Patrick Skehan, this is Shamar Yahoo Talmon, so a Roman Catholic and a Jewish scholar. They think that the Qumran scroll is actually liturgical. It's not really trying to be the Bible. It was a creation for the use in the liturgy, but it was never really considered the Bible.

Others like Peter Flint and James Sanders they hold there actually was a different canon at Qumran. I think the evidence favors their interpretation because other Qumran scrolls also have some variation and it's doubtful they will all liturgical. It could be, but the argument is usually made that they are probably canonical. You have to remember that Qumran was a bit aberrant anyway. It was a distinctive religious sect within Judaism, and didn't represent the temple and rabbinic Judaism. So, it's possible they had a slightly different canon. I gave you the data there and I give you a footnote about it. But I think for the introduction to the psalms that's about as much we need to do.

I now come to page 344, and this should be Roman numeral three. The

significance of shaping the canon. Says, Delitzsch, "the collection bears the impress of one ordering mind." That is to say, there was finally some editor that put the whole thing together. The evidence for that is the way it begins with these two introductory songs, Psalms 1 and 2 is an introduction, and the last five Psalms which is all praise. It seems as though there's one editor who gave it an introduction and a conclusion, and probably arranged it in its final form in which we have it.

What happens then is we now have a book and originally the Psalms were the kings and the people's words to God. But now their words to God in this book within the canon of Scripture, comes back as the word of God to the community of faith. So, in the Psalms, they're celebrating the abiding acts of God, but in the doxology, they're celebrating the mighty words of God and they giving praise to God in these words.

So, the priestly editors transformed the Psalms for use in temple liturgy to reflect meditation in the synagogue. So, the final form probably takes place in the synagogue for meditation in the synagogue. In other words, when we use the Psalms in preaching, we are totally consistent with the purpose of the final editor who wants us to reflect and probably to preach the entire word of God. According to Yanni, "The peoples' Amen, no longer responds to the deeds of God, but to the mighty words of God."

The King and the Structure of Psalms [1:03:20-1:19:48]

Now what's interesting is it seems as though the Psalms were edited with a focus upon the king. And here's the evidence for that? We talked about the introduction, Psalms 1 and 2, and Psalm 1 could refer to the teachings of the book, but I think it refers to when he says, "He meditates in the Torah day and night" I think he means the Mosaic Torah. But Psalm 2, which is part of the introduction, is a coronation liturgy for the king. And we're introduced to the king. And from there on in, they're all by David except for Psalms 33, which is an anomaly. But they're all by David. We hear the king in prayer, Psalm 2, they said, "Ask of me, my son, I'll give the nations for your inheritance; the ends of the earth is your possession." He extends it to a universal kingdom. And from there we're hearing the king in prayer asking God for victory over the nations. And that would be

Book I.

Book II ends with "The prayers of David, the son of Jesse, are ended."

Interestingly enough, that that Psalm itself is by Solomon. But it seems to be included in the prayers of David. I think it's quite similar to the book of Job where we're told the words of Job ended, but the words of Job also include the words of Eliphaz, Bildad and Zohpar. But Job is the principal speaker. And the principal prayer in this material would be David. because we have a Davidic core even in Book 2. But you could see the progress because Psalm 2 is a coronation liturgy "ask of me, my son," and notice what happens in Psalm 72, how it expands now to the universal rule of the King, both universal in time and universal in space. We read Psalm 72 "Endow the king with your justice, O God." See how it begins immediately with the king. It began with Psalm 2 prayers of David, and ends with endowing the king, with "endow the king with your justice, O God, the royal son with your righteousness, may he judge your people and righteousness; your afflicted ones with justice. May the mountains bring prosperity to the people; the hills, the fruit of righteousness. May he defend the afflicted among the people and save the children of the needy. May he crush the oppressor. May he endure as long as the sun, as long as the moon through all generations. May he'd be like rain falling on mown fields, like showers watering the earth. In his days may the righteous flourish and prosperity abound till the moon is no more." So, it talks about his universal rule in time.

Now it [Ps. 72] shifts to his universal rule in space, "May he rule from sea to sea, from the river to the ends of the earth. May the desert tribes bow before him and his enemies lick the dust. May the kings of Tarshish." That is for him the ends of the earth, that is Spain. "And of distant shores bring tribute to him. May the kings of Sheba and Seba present him gifts. May all the kings bow down to him and all the nations serve him." So, it begins with an invocation to invitation for the king to pray. We see the king at prayer. It ends with this final prayer for the king, that he will establish a kingdom that is eternal and universal in time and universal and space.

So, typically you're going to get escalation. So, in Book I, it's almost always David

in distress, but he's always emerges in triumph and vows to praise at the end. And most of the Psalms when we get into, we've already talked about the Elohistic Psalter, with judgment and yet hope in the midst of it. But David's laments always usually move from lament or complaint to praise at the end.

Now, when we come into Book III, we come into the darkest book of the Psalter. This is the one that it begins with "Surely God is good to Israel, but as for me, my feet had almost slipped when I saw the prosperity of the wicked." Then it moves on in Psalm 74 and the form. And it begins with the destruction of the temple. "O God, why have you rejected us forever? Why does your anger smolder against the sheep of your pasture? Remember the nation you purchased long ago, the people of your inheritance, whom will you redeemed -- Mount Zion, where you dwelt. Turn your steps toward these everlasting ruins, all this destruction the enemy has brought on the sanctuary. Your foes roared in the place, where you met with us; they set up their standards as signs. They behaved like men wielding axes to cut through a thicket of trees. They smashed all the carved paneling with their axes and hatchets. They burned your sanctuary to the ground."

So Psalm 74 laments the destruction of the temple. But then you have some Psalms of Praise in the midst of it. But others are also lamenting the destruction of the temple. As we said, Psalm 88 again is the darkest of the psalms as Psalm 89 ends with seemingly the failure of the Davidic covenant. This is Psalm 89. So, it ends with reference to the king again. I'm arguing that the book is arranged around the king. And so, Psalm 2 and 72 are all about the king. A case can be made for Psalm 41 because it's concerned for the cause of justice. But take a look at some of the material. You could see how now, whereas Psalm 72 ended with prayer for universal kingdom. Yet in 89, it's a failure. And so, we read in Psalm 89, "I will sing of the Lord's great love forever; with my mouth I will make your faithfulness known to all generations. I will declare that your love stands firm forever, that you have established your faithfulness in heaven above." So, he's going to make a tremendous complaint that God has abandoned his people, but it's always couched in praise that's one of the points I've been making. "You said, 'I have

made a covenant with my chosen one, I've sworn to David my servant, "I will establish your line forever and make your throne firm through all generations." So, he recites here the Davidic covenant and God's covenant to the house of David. For example, verse 19. "Once you spoke in a vision, to your faithful people you said, 'I've bestowed strength on a warrior; I've raised up a young man from among the people. I found David my servant; with my sacred oil I have anointed him. My hand will sustain him; surely my arm will strengthen him. The enemy will not get the better of him; the wicked will not oppress him. I will crush his foes before him and strike down his adversaries. My loyal love will be with him, and through my name his horn will be exalted. I will set his hand over the sea, his right hand over the rivers'" and so forth. And then he gives the stipulations of the covenant in verse 30. "If his sons forsake my law and do not fall on my statutes, if they violate my decrees and fail to keep my commandments, I will punish their sin with a rod, their iniquity with flogging." But verse 35, he says, "Once for all," Oh, verse 33, "but I will not take my love from him, nor will I ever betray my faithfulness. I will not violate my covenant or alter what my lips have uttered. Once for all I've sworn by my holiness-- and I will not lie to David--that his line will continue forever and his throne endure before me like the sun; it will be established forever like the moon, the faithful witness and the skies." But now comes the lament, "But you have rejected, you have spurned, you have been very angry with your anointed one. You have renounced the covenant with your servant and have defiled his crown in the dust. You've broken through all his walls and reduced his strongholds to ruins. All who pass by have plundered him; and he's become the scorn of his neighbors. You've exalted the right hand of the foes."

And so he ends with the Davidic covenant seemingly to have failed as the punishment is now inflicted on the house of David. That's where Book III ends. It ends with the failure of the Davidic covenant with the exile. I'm arguing with Wilson. I'm arguing it's around the king to a large extent. I think it could be seen clearly in Psalm 2, Psalm 72 and Psalm 89 at the conclusion of Book III.

But something happens here. And immediately we go to Moses whom God used to

found the nation. And that's where you get, "O God, our help in ages past" that it filled the Davidic house has failed and not kept covenant. Nevertheless, God does not fail. And so, he begins with "Lord, you been our dwelling place throughout all generations. Before the mountains were born, or you brought forth the whole world, from everlasting to everlasting, you are God." And it's in this context that we get the Enthronement Psalms that God reigns. So even though the house of David fails, God does not fail. He still reigns. He is the one that will ultimately bring judgment to the earth. This seems to be if Book III is written in light of the exile, Book IV seems to be written perhaps during the exile and they're looking back to God who founded the nation. Moses was only mentioned once in Books I through III. I think it is Psalm 77. In Book IV he's mentioned seven times. In other words, it's going back to beginnings again. And God transcends the house of David. His existence does not depend upon the house of David. Their existence depends upon the living God.

Psalm 106 that ends Book IV is that they ask God to redeem them and seemingly from exile. Look at Psalm 106 and verse 47. "Save us, Lord our God, and gather us from the nations that we may give thanks to your holy name, and glory in your name." And then you get the doxology. So, the closing prayer of Book IV, where they go back to Moses and God is transcendent. Now they're asking God to gather them. Those who are in the diaspora, to gather them from the nations. Book V picks up on that and the first verse of Psalm 107 matches the last verse of Psalm 106. Psalm 107 "Give thanks to the Lord for he is good; His love endures forever. Let the redeemed of the Lord tell their story--those redeemed from the hand of the foe." Notice "those he gathered from the lands from the east and west, from north and south." So, Book IV ended that "gather us from the nations" and then Book V begins "those he gathered from the lands from east and west, from north to south when he brought his people back." And within this context, we get some more Messianic Psalms. It's in this book that we get the great Psalm 110, that there is to be a King who is to rule from sea to sea and shore to shore and who rules to the ends of the earth. So, I think you could see that the king plays a very important role

in the book of Psalms. I think as we spoke on the Messianic Psalms that they ultimately speak about our Lord who fulfills them.

And I think that's a good note on which to end, on which to end this course. And we'll stop it there.

Prayer: Father, thank you that you gave us a sure word of prophecy, both in prophetic word and in type. Thank you, Lord, that they speak about the Son in whom you are well pleased. The Son that you've moved our hearts, that we place our trust in him. Thank you that he is building his kingdom and that you've chosen us, who were nobodies with no pedigree, you've chosen us to be part of this kingdom. And you've put it in our hearts. the love for you, the love for our neighbor, the love for righteousness. And you put in our hearts the discernment to discern between truth and error, between truth and falsehood. Thank you that we've had this time together in the book of Psalms where we've learned of you, we've learned wisdom and we've learned about our Lord. And so, Lord, you've answered our prayer. We asked you to add substance to our faith. We pray, Lord we will experience ardor to virtue that we may have more confidence in our confessions. And that we will have nerve to fidelity when we are tested. Thank you for each student that participates in this class. Praise be to you Lord and may all the students say, Amen and Amen. In Christ's name. Amen.

This is Dr. Bruce Waltke and his teaching on the book of Psalms. This is session 28, Editing of the Psalter. [1:19:48]