

Dr. Bruce Waltke, Psalms, Lecture 4

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

We pray, Father, that as we look at the text and we 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, and 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, 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. 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 root of the course. Rather our approach is how do we understand the Psalms, approach them, so we understand them. We said that unless you know how a text means, you don't know what it means.

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 Psalms to our theology and to our spiritual lives. 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 be looking at other approaches like liturgical approach, rhetorical approach, and editorializing approach.

All these different ways of looking at the text helped us to understand the text and what it's 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. 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 that 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. We began to see that once it is about the king, the Psalms open up. It's a royal hymn book.

We find references to the king throughout the Psalms, not only by David but by the sons of Korah. 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 of the Psalms.

So, it alters our thinking. Suddenly we lay a firm foundation for a Christological interpretation of the Psalms because Jesus said, they speak of him. When we realize they speak of the king and he is the king of kings, then suddenly we begin to understand how they speak of his passions, his sufferings, and 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 crisis.

We feel abandoned by God. It's a common human experience and Christ experienced that. He was attempted 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. 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 of our sufferings and in our triumphs. Our approach has been then to look at this concept broadly and then narrowed 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 chosen 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 viewpoint, 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 4. And in each case where I deal with individual Psalms, I have an introduction, and 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. Then I said, that exegesis is leading out of the Psalm with the author's intended, exposition is the part of the teacher who now sets it forth in a way people can hopefully understand it.

So, I speak of exposition, though what we're doing is also exegesis. They're inseparable from one another. All right.

So, by way of introduction, I have, first of all, a 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 have said about the Psalms. I commented that I have 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 and was a lecturer in history at Oxford University. 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, was Augustine, a Bishop of Carthage in Hippo. Then after we talk about the, just touch them a little bit, I'm going to talk about the historical context of the psalm. The difficulty of the psalm is the psalmist is in crisis.

The king is in crisis. The difficulty of the psalm is what's the crisis. 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 third thing, 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 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.

All right. First of all, then the translation. So, we read, it's a Psalm of David on page 25.

I suggest if you can have the page separately, so you can look at it when we get into the exposition, might be a 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 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 conclusions.

All right. So now it's talking about, I'm talking there, explaining this against the king that these men are turning their glory into shame. 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 all know bene b'rit, 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 is bene. And then the ish is ish. We had ish yesterday in 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. Now, when these occur bene ish and bene adam, in all the other translations, they distinguish them. And I'll demonstrate, I happen 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. Here's 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. 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 translate it high versus low. So, you could see it there in Psalm 49.2. Now it's sort of used three times. I'll 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 lowest state is bene adam.

The highest state is bene ish. So, both other times it's translated high or in contrast to common and lowly. So, therefore, that's what the word means.

And it makes the most sense in my Psalm. I'm talking about high-born men. The problem is that David's high-born men are turning his glory into shame.

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 they're 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 loving God, who is our true hope and our true security.

Now we begin to understand something of the crisis because David is effacing 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, well, 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. They're turning away from the king and they're turning away from his God for the king and the God are inseparable. So, they're turning away from God.

And if you turn away from God, you're going to, 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 serve, 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're incompatible.

They're two different things entirely. So, they're turning away from God as 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 you could see how important this historical interpretation is because suddenly understand who the Baal is and what it means to be turning his glory into shame and then seeking false gods. But there you also see the importance of translation.

Because if it's highborn, it gives a totally different impression. This is his leadership. This is his cabinet.

These are his advisors. And 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.

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 highborn 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, the 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. It's a viable option that I think is the better. All that one would show us good.

Let the light of your face shine upon us, I Am. That's what many are saying. 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 him 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 a 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. I translate the fill and my heart and joy and when literally from the time of, not more than when. Pace means in scholarly literature is a gracious way of saying, if you don't mind, I may differ with you.

So, we say Latin pace. 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. Normally the me' would be comparative more than that would be normal.

But with eight, time, in its eight other instances, it always means from the time of, when. That's what I'm arguing. Me'id elsewhere is always temporal, never comparative.

I give you some verses. Min by itself after simchah, 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.

When you're dealing with this gets into Hebrew and something deeper than what we know beyond what is the basic background to a course like this. So, I translated it, fill my heart, and that the fill imperative, that's an issue of Hebrew grammar. That is what happened with me.

I'll tell you the truth. What happened with me is 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. That's why I ended up getting a 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. If you're going to do accurate theology, you'll 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 thing is here with me'im. It's a collocation.

You've got to study it together to get it right. Okay. You've all gotten into Hebrew again.

I hope you're still above water and I haven't drowned you yet, but there we are. But 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. You've got to work a little bit to stay with me sometimes.

I do the best I can. Okay. Fill my heart with great joy when their grain and new wine abound.

I will lie down and fall asleep at peace. And then here, my translation wasn't good. It should be, for you I am, make me dwell apart in safety.

I think he means to 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. I'll just give you some church fathers. This is John Chrysostom at 347 to 407.

And this I picked out of Jim Houston, Professor Houston's material. But he goes all the way through, throughout the whole church history and what the church fathers have said. And 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 it is only the ways and things of the world that will keep us separated from his providential care. And here's Augustine, how loudly I, see, this is what I like about Augustine.

He doesn't talk about God. He talks to God. He teaches theology by praying.

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 breath 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 fired to recite them to the whole world were 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. Oh, 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 more than 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.

So, the issue was, what is the historical context I've already commented on? 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.

If you love the father, you're going to love the son. They're inseparable. So, what is the crisis? Why are they defecting from him? I'm suggesting the crisis is, first of all, there is a drought.

There is, and I try to argue that. There's no rain. There's no harvest.

There's no new wine. There's no wheat, no borrowing. 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, a substantival adjective. It's substituting for something.

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 produced.

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're related to one another.

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 is the 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 gives autumn and spring rains in season, who assures us the regular weeks of harvest. Your wrongdoing has 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.

This doesn't necessarily, but I wouldn't know that necessarily, except by his prayer that follows the people, they're praying all that one would show us rain and crops. And he says, fill my heart with great joy when their grain and new wine abound. I think I'm on solid ground to say a problem here.

There is a drought. There's a lack of rain. That's a real crisis.

As everyone knows 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. And when they go a year without rain, they're in deep trouble. And the country and the nation is in deep trouble at this point.

That's the first part of the crisis is the drought. So, I tried to argue that, the argument. So first of all, there's no mention of an enemy in this Psalm, which is unique.

There are 50 Psalms of lament. 47 mention the enemy, and three do not mention the enemy. There's something else.

This is one of the three. He's not, there's no enemy invading the land. There's no one trying to overthrow an enemy from without at any rate.

He doesn't mention that. I said that good occurs elsewhere as a metonymy. That means one noun for another, and you have to fill it in for rain and for harvest.

And I tried to show that. Then he says, well, that would be, then he fills my heart with joy when the grain and new wine abound. And I argued that case.

This would fit then Solomon's prayer number four. Solomon, notice Solomon's names in his, when he builds a temple, he names 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 and they pray toward this place and confess your name and turn from their sins when you afflict them.

Then hear in heaven, then forgive the sin of your service 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, this Psalm, there's no suggestion that there's sin, but it does show that you come to the temple in a crisis of drought and you come for rain.

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 and the Psalms. I give you two quotes, one from Ashurbanipal in Syria. That's one of the good things about today's situation in the Middle East.

People know where Iraq is and they're beginning to 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, that's where the northern part, you read about Mosul, that's Assyria. When you read about Baghdad, that's Babylon and down to Basra. So now, so at any rate, they used to all be, the two were together, part of Syria.

Ashurbanipal, king of Assyria, notices what he boasts, since the time that I sat on the throne of my father, my progenitor, Adad, who in their mythology was the storm god, has loosed his downpours. And Aar, who is the underwater god of springs and so forth. And Aar has opened his fountains.

The forests have grown abundantly. And 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. This is Israel's king, the true king.

And there is no rain and he's in trouble. And so, this is common. How long highborn 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 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 that's what I'm saying is 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 is the true king responsible for rain and there is no rain. That's the crisis.

They call it his kingship into question. The 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. Jesus prayed and didn't get the answer right away. That's bad theology.

It's just not true. There's always a gap between virtue and its rewards. There's always a gap.

There should be a gap. I 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 a genie in the Aladdin's lamp.

This is what I want. It saves 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.

And 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, and hope that will not be put to shame. And by the gapping of 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. And we learn obedience through the crises of unanswered prayers sometimes.

It develops our spiritual life. But then we're assured we will not be put to shame. And 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, and 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 aggregation of a crisis that has been going on for some time. It's implicit in the words. How long? So, there's a critical situation of unanswered royal prayer that cannot continue.

C. S. Lewis in his novel, *Till We All Have Faces*, that is his last novel, describes a critical situation in his imagery to understand it, within the ancient kingdom that he's created of Gnomes. When the rain fails and starvation 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 to death. 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. Now the form, I think you can see why it took me 30 years to write Proverbs.

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've already seen its poetry. We'll talk about parallelism, terseness, and concrete imagery. The form of this psalm is a lament or a petition.

These kinds of psalms have distinct motifs. One is the address to God, my righteous God. In this case, an introductory petition, a lament.

The lament is that turning my glory to shame, turning to other gods. How does he restore confidence in seven admonitions to the apostates? Then comes his petition to people for favor and his 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 this composition which is its genre and its author. It's addressed first of all, to God.

Then in verse two, to the highborn and 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 highborn, he rebukes them and gives them the first admonition. The rebuke is they're being faithless to the king and to the God and the true God. His first admonition to them is to 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 and do not sin.

Be silent. And this would be better, search your hearts. Offer the sacrifices of righteousness and trust I Am.

Then the third part is the petition to I Am petition. 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 at the beginning of Psalm 5 is the postscript for 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 an 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 and we sing this all together 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 reign. It gives us hope in a drought. Think about that.

We're not to despair. All right, let's look at the psalm 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 highborn men, this is not just every man they're departing from and turning his glory into shame.

Secondly, he has a distinctive glory. Know that the Lord has set me apart with a distinctive glory. That could apply to everybody, but he has a special grace in prayer.

He's in corporate solidarity with people. They're saying all that one would show is good. And then he in solidarity with them says, fill my heart.

So, he's working with his people. They go together. You can see it's a corporate solidarity.

There's no reason to question his authorship. I know of no reason. Yet it's universally denoted and it died.

I couldn't teach in a university because they argued this. It's a closed mind. It's incredible.

All right. The address to God, first of all, with the introductory petitions. I should do better here.

This is the answer to me when I call. That's actually three requests. One is answer.

The second is relief. And the third is be gracious. There are two principal words for God.

I'm trying to give you basic vocabulary. God, Elohim speaks of God in 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. 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. 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.

And what happened in Israel, is 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 were calling upon Jesus Christ, instead of praying in 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 Romans, 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. And we now know that the father wants to be known through the son. He wants, the apostles to preach in the name of Jesus Christ.

They prayed in the name of Jesus Christ. And when I listen to a lot of preaching in 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. And therefore, we worship in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, I think it's 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. That's a suggestion.

When it says, my righteous God, 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 could set it right. And he sets things right. And he does it for us.

This should be my God. This great God is personal. It's my God.

And when he says, be gracious to me, be gracious. The verb hadan means to 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.

That's grace. Page 31 here, which means to assess and consider the situation. 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 word book by Moody Press. 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.

Well, I get it. Well, 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. I couldn't believe it.

I've 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, that's, that's, oh, the theological word book. God has used it in many, many pastors write me and thank me for that.

And so in the theological word book, this is what I did, 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 it region.

I had to teach exegesis to people who knew Hebrew, had no real background. That's very hard to do, to teach how to really do exegesis. So, and doing word studies, how do you do word studies? So, I'm trying to think, how can I help these people? And it dawned upon me, we built it off Young's Analytical, which is okay, but it's not that simple.

It dawned upon me, that what we can do is Strong and the King James has a number by every word. Every word is listed there. And every word has a number.

That number will take you back to the Concordance of the Word. And he will give you a brief definition of every word. So, I realized what we should do is in our theological word book is have a number that corresponds to 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 was 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 it the whole thing again. So, anybody can use it.

Just match, get a King James, get a Concordance, get the numbers, and match it up. And you'll get this kind of word study in it. And then he prays to escape the distress and he's hemmed in.

And when he asks to deliver, he means to make a broad space to get out of this distress. And to the high-born apostates that here we have the first accusation. This is on page 32.

I already said there were seven admonitions. So for them, to the high-born apostates, this is in verses two through five, I divided it into an accusation, how long? And then the first admonition is the accusation is they've turned to worthless deities versus the potent king. And so, I have the accusation.

And then I have many, well, the first admonition is to know your king. Okay. The next three occur in pairs in verses four and five.

That's the B. 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.

And 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 of 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.

The first thing is the accusation and the first admonition. The accusation is they're turning to worthless idols and versus the potent king. So you get one under that 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 one is the address to the apostates is A, the accusation.

The B is three parts of the admonition. Then he'll turn to petitions. Well, let's on page 32, the accusation of apostasy is they turn against God, against the king, and therefore against God.

I've taken up these terms so you can 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 discuss the words, glory and shame. I think we don't have to, I'll let it just stand there without taking time on it.

He not only accuses them of being pusillanimous and feckless in their 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.

I mean, for most of us today, there are basically three gods, money, sex appeal, and pride. As I said, if you're like me, you have no money, that's not the problem. I obviously have no sex appeal.

My danger is I seek fame, and pride. I think that's the danger of an actor or a teacher or a preacher. It's seeking the praise of people, which is a delusion, fickle praise.

It's only one worthy of praise is God himself. No temptation or incessant prayer, but there's a lot in the pulpit. Yeah.

Okay. Now the admonition, the 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 is that it means he's remarkably distinguished. The chassid, his loyal one means a covenant partner for himself that this King belongs to him. God loves this King and the King loves his God.

So, they love and serve one another. I did not like the book, the Shack. I don't think it's a good book.

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 relates.

I don't like re-imagining 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 again, he's not red, yellow, black or white. He's the God of all people.

So, I just don't like re-imagining 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 say they've all been wrong.

I got it right. I don't understand how even Jehoshaphat's bought into this book. Do you see my problems? So know your king.

Thy am is Israel's covenant-keeping God. He will hear when I call. There is power in his prayer and God ultimately did hear him.

The 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 a, maybe he had some kind of psychological complex or something. No, it was because the prophet said, you are the king.

And everybody knew that Samuel was the prophet and the prophet anointed him. He had the authentication of the prophet. 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, 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 that in the intertestamental period, they knew there was no prophet. In the book of Maccabees chapter four, chapter nine, they say, there has and when prophecy ceased in Israel, they knew they had no prophet in the 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. And all Israel, all Judah 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.

And he said, John said, Jesus is the lamb of God. I'm not worthy to unlatch his sandals before him. So, you had the verse of John the Baptist.

And then you had the voice of Samuel. The spirit of God was in Sodom. It was full of charisma.

They knew he was different. And then he went out and fought the Goliath and did the works of God. At Jesus, you have the voice of John the Baptist.

At his baptism, the heavens are open and the spirit of God descends upon him as seen as a dove, fair and gentle and mild on his anointed shoulders, 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. And he did the works of God.

As he said to John the Baptist, when he began to question him, he said, go back and tell John that the deaf hear, the blind see, the lame walk, the dead are being raised, the gospel is being preached to the poor, that I'm fulfilling what Isaiah had said would be the case. So he did the works of God and validated it. And his greatest work, of course, was triumphing over death itself.

And 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 gave them the right to become the children of God. And 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 drumbeat as the rest of the world. And 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, Historical Approach, Psalm 4.