

Old Testament Overview Autumn 2021

Session 7: Wisdom Literature: *Living as God's Covenant People*

Psalm 1

Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked,
nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers;
but his delight is in the law of the LORD,
and on his law he meditates day and night.
He is like a tree planted by streams of water
that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers.
The wicked are not so,
but are like chaff that the wind drives away.
Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgement,
nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous;
for the LORD knows the way of the righteous,
but the way of the wicked will perish.

7.1 What is wisdom literature?

7.2 The Book of Psalms

A song book, a prayer book

How was the book of Psalms written?

- Evidence of early songs – e.g. Exodus 15, Judges 5, 1 Samuel 2:1-10
- Collections gradually coming together
 - Davidic collections 3-41, 51-70, 138-45
 - Asaph 73-83
 - Korahites 42-9, 84-88
 - Ascents 120-134
 - Praise collections 146-150
- Deliberate placement – e.g. Psalm 1, Psalms 3+4

Reading the Psalms

- Parallelism –
- rhythm and meter?
- what does poetry do?

Different kinds of Psalms

- wisdom / torah – Psalm **1**, 19, 119
- royal / enthronement Psalms – Psalms **2**, 72, 95, 96
- Praise – Psalm 8, 24, **100**, 113, 117, 150
- Prayer and lament – Psalm **3**, 13, 88, 130
- Confession – Psalm 32, **51**
- Vengeance, compassion and justice – Psalm 82, 109, **137**
- Assurance – Psalm **23**, 46, 73
- God's place – Psalm 48, 90, **122**

PPK:

Prophet

Priest

King

The shape of the Psalms

7.3 The Book of Proverbs

Proverbs 1-9 – the path of wisdom and the path of folly

Proverbs 1:1-7

Proverbs 6:20-35

Proverbs 10:1-22:16 – advanced wisdom – living wisely before God

Purpose - Proverbs 15:16-17

Twice-told proverbs – 11:13 and 20:19; 10:15 and 18:11 – reflecting on wisdom

Discursive wisdom – 10:1-5 (wisdom, wealth, diligence, righteousness and YHWH); 15:1-3

Proverbs 22:17-24:34 - further wise sayings

Proverbs 25-29 second set of Solomon's proverbs

Proverbs 30-31 – three appendices

Proverbs 31:10-31

PPK:

7.4 The Book of Job

The problem and wisdom and how life works out

Note Job 7:17 and Psalm 8

Job 1-3 Introduction

Job 4-14, 15-21, 22-31 Speech cycles

Job 32-37 Elihu

Job 38-41 God speaks

Job 42, epilogue

What does Job teach?

PPK:

7.5 Ecclesiastes

Structure – two voices – narrator 1:1, 12:9-14 and the teacher - Qohelet

The problem -the apparent meaningless of life – 1:2, 12:8, 1:4-11, 12:1-7

Teaching –

7.6 Song of Solomon

The Song as love poetry: 1:2 etc. - love making. A window into an intimate world.

Characters - Solomon - 3:6-11 -and two lovers - Shulammitte 6:13 and Shepherd 6:3

The realism and idealism of the Song - realism of 5:7 and 8:6. fulfilment - 8:11-12

The Song and Genesis 1-3 - idealism and realism, the garden 4:8-5:1, no shame. Signs of disorder - 1:6, 2:15, 5:7, 8:6.

Contribution to Old Testament theology

The Song, the gospel and eschatology

7.7 Lamentations

Structuring grief..

Lamentations as 'ordered grief' - four acrostic poems, another of 22 verses.

Poem 1: Zion's plight

Poem 2: Yahweh's fierce anger - 2:1-17

Poem 3:

Poem 4: Zion's death throes

Poem 5: The community at prayer

A book about suffering for sin and repentance. Allusions - Acts 8:23, 1 Cor 4:13, Rev 14:20, 19:15. esp 2:15 in Mark 15:29-30.

7.8 Prophet, Priest and King

7.9 The Psalms in the Bible

What is Context?

1. *The part of a text or statement that surrounds a particular word or passage and determines its meaning.*
2. *The circumstances in which an event occurs; a setting.*

Look for their wider context in the book of Psalms and the Bible

Look for the development of any of the themes we've looked at so far: Covenant, Kingship, Prophecy, Priesthood.

Think about when, where and why it was written

Psalm 1

Psalm 2

Psalm 3

Psalm 8

Psalm 95

Psalm 110

