



BIBLICAL EXPOSITION

The Whole Counsel of God for the Whole People of God



PSALM 107

1 For he commandeth the storm, and stilleth the stormy wind.
2 They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths: their soul is vexed because of trouble.
3 They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wits' end.
4 Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distress.
5 He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still.
6 Then are they glad because they be quiet, so he bringeth them unto their desired haven.
7 Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!
8 Let them exalt him also in the congregation of the people, and praise him in the assembly of the elders.
9 He turneth rivers into wilderness, and the water springs into dry ground.
10 A fruitful land into wilderness, because of the wickedness of them that dwell therein.
11 He turneth the wilderness into a standing water, and dry ground into meadows.
12 And here he maketh the hungry to dwell, that they may prepare a city for habitation, and prepare a city for habitation, and plant vineyards, which may yield fruit of increase.
13 And they shall greatly increase, and shall multiply exceedingly.

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40 He poureth contempt upon the wicketness of his enemies.
41 He setteth the high as a high step, and the low as a low step.
42 He setteth the rich as a high step, and the low as a low step.
43 Whom is wise, and shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord.

PSALM 108

1 A song or psalm of David.
2 O Lord, my heart is lifted up, and I will praise thee, O Lord.
3 My heart is lifted up, and I will praise thee, O Lord.
4 For thy mercy is great above the heavens, and thy truth reacheth unto the clouds.
5 Thou exaltest above the heavens, and thy glory is above the earth.
6 That thy beloved may dwell with thee, and thy name be praised.
7 My heart is lifted up, and I will praise thee, O Lord.
8 My heart is lifted up, and I will praise thee, O Lord.
9 My heart is lifted up, and I will praise thee, O Lord.
10 My heart is lifted up, and I will praise thee, O Lord.
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18 My heart is lifted up, and I will praise thee, O Lord.
19 My heart is lifted up, and I will praise thee, O Lord.
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PSALM 109

1 Do not speak of the wrath of the wicked, O God of David.
2 Do not speak of the wrath of the wicked, O God of David.
3 Do not speak of the wrath of the wicked, O God of David.
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Explaining and Applying Old Testament Poetry



THE IMPORTANCE OF THE PSALMS

- The psalms are part of “all Scripture” and are “profitable” (2 Tim 3:16).
- The psalms contain rich and vivid theology.
- The psalms reflect genuine human experience.
- Jesus used the psalms more often in his preaching and teaching than any other OT book, and most of the New Testament authors quote from the psalms often.



CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PSALMS

- Structure

- Line

- The basic unit of Hebrew poetry, containing one “complete parallelistic expression of thought” (Futato, p28).
 - A line can be made up of two cola (a *bicolon*), three cola (a *tricolon*), or even four cola (a *tetracolon* or *quatrain*).



CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PSALMS

- Structure

- Strophe

- Lines are grouped together into strophes (like paragraphs in prose).
 - There will typically be an extra space between strophes in modern translations (like paragraph indentions in English prose).
 - The basis of grouping lines together into a strophe is the *sense*.



CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PSALMS

- Structure

- Refrain

- A refrain is a recurring line, providing an obvious division in the poem.
 - A refrain often marks the beginning or end of a strophe or stanza (a group of strophes sharing a common theme (Ps. 57:5, 11)).



CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PSALMS

- Structure
 - Inclusion (*envelope figure*)
 - An inclusion is a repetition of key words or phrases at the beginning and ending of a section (Ps 103; Ps 145).
 - Inclusions can mark a verse, a strophe, or an entire poem and stress a theme.



CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PSALMS

- Structure

- Chiasm

- A chiasmic structure is the repetition of ideas with the repeated elements arranged in reverse order the second time (Hahne, p8).
 - The center of the chiasm is often the main point of the poem.
 - Chiasm may occur within a line or in a larger section (Ps 83:2; Ps. 51:1-9).



Psalm 51:1-9

A Blot out my transgressions (1)

B Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity (2)

C And cleanse me from my sin (2)

D For I acknowledge my transgressions (3)

E I have I sinned (4)

E In sin my mother conceived me (5)

D1 You will make me to know wisdom (6)

C1 I shall be clean (7)

B1 Wash me (7)

A1 Blot out all my iniquities (9)

Psalm 51:1-9

A Blot out my transgressions (1)

B Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity (2)

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E I have I sinned (4)

E In sin my mother conceived me (5)

D1 You will make me to know wisdom (6)

C1 I shall be clean (7)

B1 Wash me (7)

A1 Blot out all my iniquities (9)

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PSALMS

- Parallelism

- Parallelism is the most distinctive feature of Hebrew poetry.
- Parallelism is saying something similar in each colon but often with a difference added in the second (or third) colon.
- Parallelism can be between two or three lines or between verses of poetry (Ps 3:1-2; 139:8-9).



CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PSALMS

- Parallelism

- Different kinds of parallelism:

- *Repeating* (=) – saying the same thing using different words
 - *Contrasting* (≠) – saying the same thing with opposite expressions
 - *Supplementing* (+) – adding new information



REPEATING PARALLELISM

Psalm 24:1

*The earth is the Lord's, and all it contains,
The world and those who dwell in it.*



REPEATING PARALLELISM

Psalm 24:1

*The earth is the Lord's, and all it contains,
The world and those who dwell in it.*



CONTRASTING PARALLELISM

Psalm 20:7

Some trust in chariots, and some in horses;

But we will remember the name of the Lord our God.



CONTRASTING PARALLELISM

Psalm 20:7

Some trust in chariots, and some in horses;

But we will remember the name of the Lord our God.



CONTRASTING PARALLELISM

Psalm 18:21

*For I have kept the ways of the Lord;
I am not guilty of turning from my God”.*



CONTRASTING PARALLELISM

Psalm 18:21

For I have kept the ways of the Lord;

*I am **not** guilty of turning from my God”.*



SUPPLEMENTING PARALLELISM

Psalm 3:1-2

Lord, how they have increased who trouble me!

Many are they who rise up against me.

Many are they who say of me, "There is no help for him in God"



SUPPLEMENTING PARALLELISM

Psalm 3:1-2

Lord, how they have increased who trouble me!

Many are they who rise up against me.

Many are they who say of me, "There is no help for him in God"



CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PSALMS

- Figurative Language
 - Hebrew poetry uses many metaphors—using one concrete reality to describe another.
 - Figurative language provides mental pictures, engaging the mind and the imagination.



CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PSALMS

- Figurative Language
 - Metaphors in the psalms often describe human experiences (Wright, p230).
 - Psalm 42:1 – The psalmist compares himself to a deer.
 - Psalm 69:2 – The psalmist is sinking in the mud.
 - Metaphors in the psalms speak powerfully about God (Wright, p230).
 - Psalm 18 – *The Lord is my rock and my fortress...my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.*
 - Psalm 23 – *The Lord is my shepherd...*



CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PSALMS

- Human Emotion
 - The psalms are filled with expressions of human emotions
 - Joy and happiness
 - Gratitude and thanksgiving
 - Agony and despair
 - Pain and hurt
 - Entering into the emotions of the author will enhance understanding of the psalm.



CATEGORIES OF PSALMS

- Psalms of Lament
- Psalms of Praise (or Hymns)
- Psalms of Thanksgiving
- Royal Psalms (or Kingship or Covenant)
- Psalms of Trust (or Confidence)
- Wisdom Psalms



• **Psalms of Praise (or Hymn Psalm)**

- Psalms of praise extol God for His greatness and goodness.
- They are hymns that celebrate who Yahweh is and what He has done, especially in relation to creation and redemption.
- The structure of a psalm of praise:
 - A call to praise
 - A cause for praise
 - A renewed call to praise



- Example: Psalm 117

Structure	Verses
A call to praise	
A cause for praise	
A renewed call to praise	



- Example: Psalm 117

Structure	Verses
A call to praise	1
A cause for praise	
A renewed call to praise	



- Example: Psalm 117

Structure	Verses
A call to praise	1
A cause for praise	2a-b
A renewed call to praise	



- Example: Psalm 117

Structure	Verses
A call to praise	1
A cause for praise	2a-b
A renewed call to praise	2c



GUIDELINES FOR INTERPRETING AND DEVELOPING A MESSAGE FROM A PSALM



Guidelines for Interpreting and Developing a Message from a Psalm

- Read the psalm aloud multiple times.
 - This will familiarize you with the content.
 - This will help you recognize patterns, chiasms, and repetitions.
- Consider the context.
 - Literary
 - Historical



Guidelines for Interpreting and Developing a Message from a Psalm

- Discern the structure.
 - Identify strophic (main) divisions.
 - Look for the patterns typical of a specific subgenre.
 - Identify the parallelisms.



Guidelines for Interpreting and Developing a Message from a Psalm

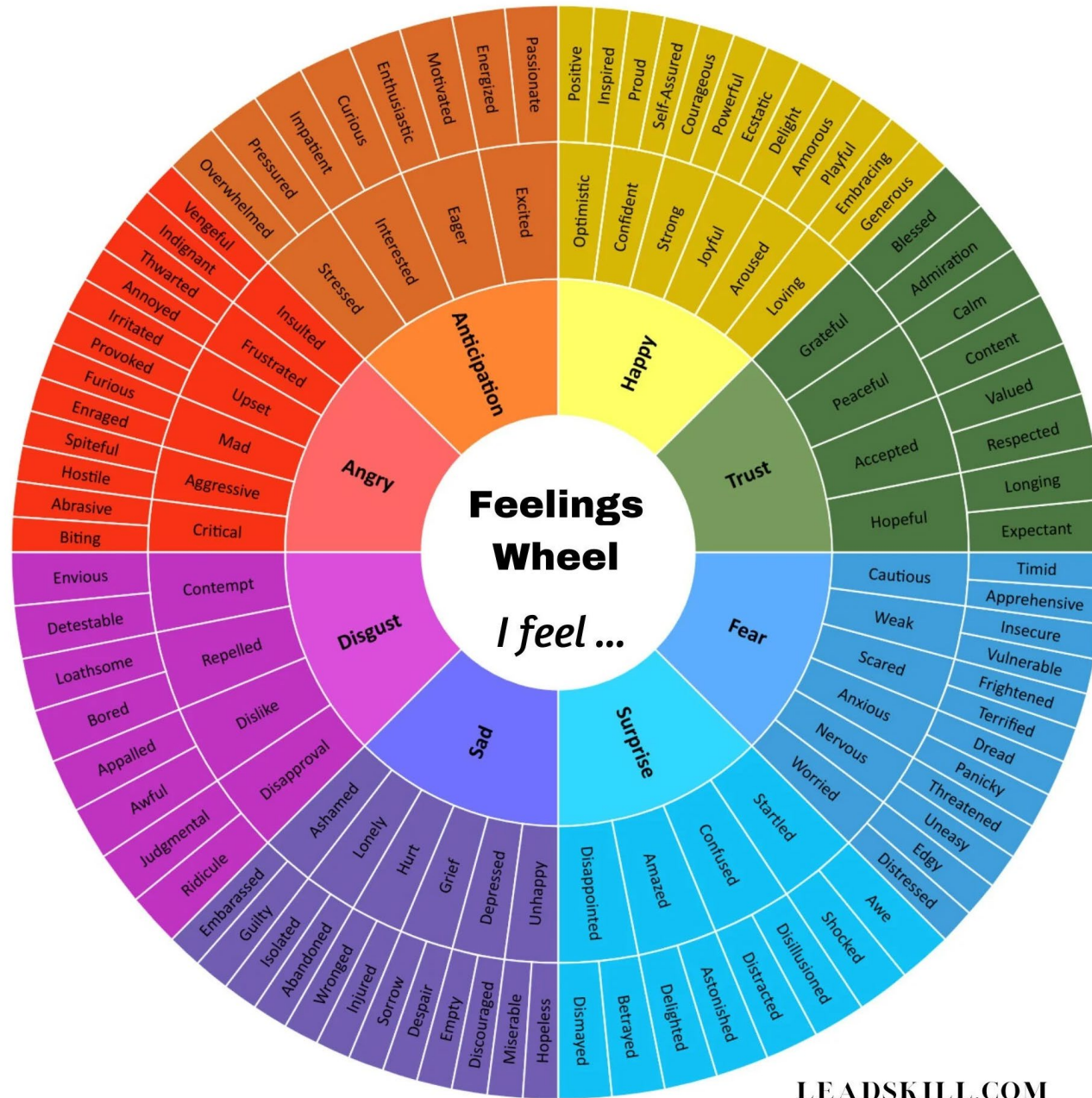
- Identify and interpret figurative language.
 - Identify the *target domain* (the “subject the author is speaking of”).
 - Study the *source domain* (the “aspect of ordinary life the poet is drawing from”).
 - Identify the aspect of the source that is associated with the target (e.g. Ps 127:4).
- Be careful when teaching the metaphors in the psalms.
 - Watch for shifts in imagery (e.g. Ps 23 – shepherd and host).
 - Avoid applying the metaphor beyond the author’s point of comparison (e.g. Ps 23 – we’re not to act like sheep).



Guidelines for Interpreting and Developing a Message from a Psalm

- Discern the emotion of the psalm.





Guidelines for Interpreting and Developing a Message from a Psalm

- Identify key words.
 - Notice a refrain or recurring words and phrases.
 - Define unfamiliar words.



Guidelines for Interpreting and Developing a Message from a Psalm

- Identify the theology in the psalm: What does the writer say about God?
 - What pictures are used for God?
 - What characteristics of God are mentioned?
 - What actions of God are described—past, present, or future?
 - What reasons does this psalm give for trusting God, or for obeying Him, or for not giving up in faith?



Guidelines for Interpreting and Developing a Message from a Psalm

- Determine the big idea of the psalm.
 - What is the subject (often stated in the first couple verses)?
 - How is the big idea developed (how the main ideas of each stanza work together to form a theme)?
 - What is the conclusion?



Guidelines for Interpreting and Developing a Message from a Psalm

- Determine the big idea of the psalm.
 - Note: The following are additional questions to determine the meaning of the psalm (Wright, p249).
 - What truths about the world, the people of Israel, or other nations are mentioned or implied?
 - In what ways does this psalm connect with the New Testament, with Christ, the gospel, or the church?
 - Is this psalm quoted in the New Testament, and if so, why?



Guidelines for Interpreting and Developing a Message from a Psalm

- Develop an outline of the psalm.
 - Summarize the main idea of each stanza.
 - Develop an outline that communicates the main ideas and the flow of thought of the psalm.
 - Structure the outline using coordination and subordination.
 - State the key points as timeless principles (rather than historical statements).
- Develop explanation for each principle, drawing from your interpretive research.



Guidelines for Interpreting and Developing a Message from a Psalm

- Develop application (asking and answering the “so what?”).
 - What is the significance of the message of the poem for your own life and the lives of the audience?
 - In what ways should we respond to this psalm in our understanding of our faith and in persevering in our faith?
 - Relate the principles to current real-life issues.



Practice Exercise: Psalm 62



Psalm 62 Strophe Summaries

1. David declares that God is his deliverance and security (vv1-2).
2. David describes his opposition and suffering (vv3-4).
3. David reminds himself that God is his deliverance and security (vv5-7).
4. David exhorts the people to trust in God (v8).
5. David exhorts the people about where not to place their trust (vv9-10).
6. David asserts that power, mercy and justice belong to God (vv11-12).



Psalm 62 Big Idea

Because God is your Protector and Deliverer, trust only in Him in times of suffering, knowing He will accomplish His purposes.



Psalm 62 Outline

1. Be Calm before God (vv1-2)
2. Rest in Him in Times of Stress (vv3-4)
3. Be Increasingly Confident in Him (vv5-7)
4. Exhort Others to Confide in Him (vv8-10)
5. Be Assured that Power, Mercy, and Justice Belong to God (vv11-12)





BIBLICAL EXPOSITION

The Whole Counsel of God for the Whole People of God



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4 Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distress.
5 He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still.
6 Then are they glad because they be quiet, so he bringeth them unto their desired haven.
7 Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!
8 Let them exalt him also in the congregation of the people, and praise him in the assembly of the elders.
9 He turneth rivers into wilderness, and the water springs into dry ground.
10 A fruitful land into wilderness, because of the wickedness of them that dwell therein.
11 He turneth the wilderness into a standing water, and dry ground into meadows.
12 And there he maketh the hungry to dwell, that they may prepare a city for habitation, and prepare a city for habitation, and plant vineyards, which may yield fruits of increase.
13 And they shall greatly increase, and they shall multiply exceedingly.

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40 He poureth contempt upon the rich, and setteth the lowly upon high.
41 From affliction and high torments like a cloud he is hid: he is hid from their eyes.
42 He is hid from their eyes, and he is hid from their eyes.
43 Whom is wise, and shall understand the lovingkindness of the Lord.

PSALM 108

1 A song or psalm of David.
2 O Lord, my heart is enlarged, and my tongue is enlarged, and my mouth is enlarged, and my mouth is enlarged.
3 I will praise thee, O Lord, among the people, and I will praise thee among the people.
4 For thy mercy is great above the heavens, and thy truth is exalted above the clouds.
5 Thou exalted above the heavens, and thy truth is exalted above the clouds.
6 That thy beloved thy mercy shall answer me.
7 And God hath spoken in his sanctuary, and hath said, I will rejoice in my law.
8 Gilead is mine, Manasse is mine, Ephraim is mine, Judah is mine, Benjamin is mine, Simeon is mine, and Dan is mine.
9 Mosah is my washpot, and Edom is my tower, and Philistia will I cast out.
10 Who will bring me into the city? Who will bring me into the city?

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PSALM 109

1 Let mine enemies be confounded, and let mine adversaries be silent: let mine enemies be confounded, and let mine adversaries be silent.
2 Let mine enemies be confounded, and let mine adversaries be silent: let mine enemies be confounded, and let mine adversaries be silent.
3 Let mine enemies be confounded, and let mine adversaries be silent: let mine enemies be confounded, and let mine adversaries be silent.
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22 Let mine enemies be confounded, and let mine adversaries be silent: let mine enemies be confounded, and let mine adversaries be silent.

PSALM 100

1 Let the Lord be praised, ye servants of the Lord.
2 Let the Lord be praised, ye servants of the Lord.
3 Let the Lord be praised, ye servants of the Lord.
4 Let the Lord be praised, ye servants of the Lord.
5 Let the Lord be praised, ye servants of the Lord.
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