



Title: Probing the Book of Psalms – Introduction (part 4)

I. Poetry

- A. There is a difference between “prose” and “poetry.”
 - A.1. Prose – written or spoken language in its ordinary form.
 - A.2. Poetry – written or spoken language in extra-ordinary form accompanied by structure.
- B. Poetry is a useful literary work (device, or art) that uses aesthetic or rhythmic qualities of language as an expression of feelings or ideas.
- C. Poetry is a composition in verse(s).
- D. It is a compact way of stating truth that reaches the mind and the heart (emotion) with powerful, graceful, and precise language.

II. English and Hebrew Poetry –

- A. English Poetry – Is mainly based on the rhyming of sound in meter.
- B. Hebrew Poetry – Is mainly based on the rhythm of thought in parallelism.
- C. The KJV Translators decided that rendering the poetic sections of the Bible as prose was more accurate and faithful to the originals vs. attempting to render Hebrew poetry into English.
 - C.1. The English Poetic forms and structures are not what God inspired. God chose Hebrew and Greek. A faithful translation will wrap the receptor language to the donor language and not the other way around. (Formal Equivalence vs. Dynamic or Optimal Equivalence).
 - C.2. The Translators were theologian translators and not poets.
 - C.3. God would have us learn His word and faithfully teach and preach it.

III. Hebrew Poetry:

- A. Parallelism – The relationship(s) between the lines of the texts.
 - 1) Synonymous Parallelism – the second line [distich] repeats or reinforces the first line [stich].
Example: Ps. 2:1; Ps. 3:1; Ps. 8:4; Ps. 24:2; Ps. 49:1.
 - 2) Antithetical Parallelism – the second line repeats or reinforces the first line in contrasting thoughts.
Example: Ps. 1:6; Ps. 19:2; Ps. 37:9.
 - 3) Synthetic Parallelism – the second line may continue the thought of the first line and further develop the thoughts. (Similar to Climactic Parallelism)
Example: Ps. 1:3; Ps. 29:1-2a.
 - 4) Alternate Parallelism – the third line repeats the first line, and the fourth repeats the second line. (A, B, A, B)
Example: Ps. 103:11, 12.
 - 5) Chiasm – the lines match each other in sequence. (A, B, C, C', B', A')
Example: Ps. 1 (Symmetric Chiasm)
 - (1-2) A. The Way of the Blessed
 - (3) B. The Future of the Blessed
 - (4-5) B'. The Future of the Ungodly
 - (6) A'. The Way of the LORD
Example: Ps. 12 (Asymmetric Chiasm)
 - (1) A. The Decrease of the Godly and Faithful
 - (2) B. Man's words.
 - (3-4) C. The proud speakers are “cut off”
 - (5a) D. The oppression of the poor
 - (5b) C'. The poor and needy are safe
 - (6-7) B'. The LORD's words
 - (8) A'. The Increase of the Ungodly and Vile men
- 6) Inclusio – Beginning and ending of a Psalm is the same. (Ps. 8:1,9)
- 7) Acrostic – Lines begin with successive letters of the Hebrew Alphabet. (Pss. 25; 34; 111; 112; 119; 145).

B. Figures of Speech:

- 1) Simile – a comparison of two things, usually employing the words “as” or “like.” (Ps. 1:3)
- 2) Metaphor – a comparison of two things without using the words “as” or “like.” (Ps. 23:1; 84:11)
- 3) Hyperbole – exaggeration for effect. (Ps. 6:6)
- 4) Personification – applying personality traits to inanimate objects. (Ps. 35:10)
- 5) Apostrophe – addressing inanimate things. (Ps. 114:5)
- 6) Synecdoche – representing the whole by a part. (Ps. 91:5)

IV. Five Reasons Why God gave us the Book of Psalms?

- A. A Book of Inspiration – Ps. 103:1-5 – ignites worship, leads us to magnify the LORD. Refocus on Him.
- B. A Book of Instruction – Ps. 1:1-2 – directs our steps into the righteous paths which leads us to blessings.
- C. A Book of Purification – Ps. 51:7-10 – searches and sifts through our hearts, points out sin, and cleansing.
- D. A Book of Consolation – Ps. 23:4; 42:11 – trouble, fear, doubt, worries; dangers, fiery trials.
- E. A Book of Fortification – Ps. 3:1-3; 18:2,3 – strengthens our faith, teaches us to pray, to hope in God.
- F. A Book of Expectation – Ps. 2; 18:50 – it lifts our eyes unto the hills of prophetic majesty where Jesus is King!