



Psalms Bible study guide

A clear 8-session guide for personal study, small groups, and churches

Read Psalms as a whole before working through the sessions. Let its own structure set the agenda.

Every question sends you back to the biblical text. The guide helps you observe the passage, follow the author's argument, interpret it in context, and respond faithfully.

CHOOSE YOUR DEPTH

- Short: Read the book overview and discuss the first and final question in a session.
- Study: Work through all 8 sessions and answer each question from the passage.
- Deep: Open the free chapter commentary and dictionary links while you study.

protos-app.com/commentary/psalms

Psalms at a glance

BIG IDEA

Jesus and the apostles loved the book of Psalms—they quoted from it and lived out of it. [1]

HISTORICAL SETTING

Author: Various; nearly half are linked with David. Date: Written over the course of many centuries; the process of collecting and editing was likely completed after the Babylonian exile. Setting: Varied, but a postexilic setting accounts for much of the editorial activity and grouping of the psalms. [1]

HOW TO READ THIS BOOK

Read this book as poetry and wisdom. Notice parallel lines, imagery, speakers, and emotional movement. Do not flatten a poem into a list of propositions.

MAJOR THEMES

- To offer praise and prayer to God, to supply God's people with texts for worship, and to provide reflection on the sovereignty of God and some of life's toughest questions
- The book's literary movement and central claims
- Faithful response within the people of God
- Hope, judgment, grace, and obedience in their proper context

INTERPRETIVE CARE

- Attend to poetic language and speaker before treating every line as a universal promise.
- Read individual poems and sayings in their collection and canonical setting.

Psalms 1-24

312 verses. Read it aloud together before anyone talks about it.

Who and what appears

Selah · LORD · Sheol · Bashan · David · Face

Questions

- Try to state the argument in one sentence before anyone reacts to it.
- What does the writer repeat? Repetition is usually the point, not a habit.
- What surprised you, or what did you have to read twice?
- Why does the writer bring David into this argument, and what claim does the example support?
- The word face is doing real work here. What did you assume it meant, and does the passage agree?
- What problem was this letter written to solve, and does knowing that change how the instruction lands?
- Where does this cut against something you already believe or already do?

[Stuck on a word or name? Open the free Bible dictionary.](#)

NOTES AND PRAYER

Psalms 25-41

304 verses. Read it aloud together before anyone talks about it.

Who and what appears

LORD · Selah · Lebanon · Sheol · Kadesh · Hate

Questions

- What is the writer trying to get these readers to do or stop doing?
- Who is being addressed here, and what do they already know that we do not?
- What is assumed rather than argued? Those assumptions are often the real claim.
- Define hate from this passage alone, without reaching for what you already know.
- Is this a command, a description, or an argument? They are not read the same way.
- What would actually be different this week if you took this seriously?

[Stuck on a word or name? Open the free Bible dictionary.](#)

NOTES AND PRAYER

Psalms 42-64

305 verses. Read it aloud together before anyone talks about it.

Who and what appears

Selah · LORD · Sheol · Edom · Abraham · Gilead

Questions

- What has the writer already established that this section is building on?
- Which single verse carries the weight of this section?
- What is left unsaid that you expected to be said?
- Which detail about Abraham matters to the argument here, and which familiar details do not?
- Where else have you heard lips used, and is it being used that way here?
- What did the first readers face that we do not, and what does that change?
- Who do you know who needs to hear this, and what stops you saying it?

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NOTES AND PRAYER

Psalms 65-78

325 verses. Read it aloud together before anyone talks about it.

Who and what appears

LORD · Selah · Egypt · Bashan · David · Jesse

Questions

- Where does the writer expect pushback, and how do you know?
- Where does the tone shift, and what causes it?
- What question does this section answer that you had not thought to ask?
- Trace the sentence or paragraph that mentions Jesse. What conclusion does the writer want the readers to reach?
- The word sea is doing real work here. What did you assume it meant, and does the passage agree?
- Where does the writer move from what God has done to what we should do?
- What is the hardest thing in this passage to accept, and why that one?

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NOTES AND PRAYER

Psalms 79-97

305 verses. Read it aloud together before anyone talks about it.

Who and what appears

LORD · Selah · David · Egypt · Sheol · Amalek

Questions

- If you disagreed with this, where would you push first?
- What does the writer repeat? Repetition is usually the point, not a habit.
- What surprised you, or what did you have to read twice?
- Why does the writer bring Amalek into this argument, and what claim does the example support?
- Define throne from this passage alone, without reaching for what you already know.
- What problem was this letter written to solve, and does knowing that change how the instruction lands?
- If this is true, what have you been getting wrong?

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NOTES AND PRAYER

Psalms 98-110

303 verses. Read it aloud together before anyone talks about it.

Who and what appears

LORD · Moses · Egypt · Aaron · Abraham · Abiram

Questions

- What would be missing from the letter if this section were cut?
- Who is being addressed here, and what do they already know that we do not?
- What is assumed rather than argued? Those assumptions are often the real claim.
- What does the writer assume the readers know about Abiram, and how is that knowledge being used?
- Where else have you heard bless used, and is it being used that way here?
- Is this a command, a description, or an argument? They are not read the same way.
- What would you want to be reminded of from this section in six months?

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NOTES AND PRAYER

Psalms 111-122

305 verses. Read it aloud together before anyone talks about it.

Who and what appears

LORD · Jerusalem · Aaron · Jordan · David · Kedar

Questions

- Try to state the argument in one sentence before anyone reacts to it.
- Which single verse carries the weight of this section?
- What is left unsaid that you expected to be said?
- Which detail about Kedar matters to the argument here, and which familiar details do not?
- The word salvation is doing real work here. What did you assume it meant, and does the passage agree?
- What did the first readers face that we do not, and what does that change?
- Where does this cut against something you already believe or already do?

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NOTES AND PRAYER

Psalms 123-150

302 verses. Read it aloud together before anyone talks about it.

Who and what appears

LORD · Jerusalem · David · Selah · Egypt · Og

Questions

- What is the writer trying to get these readers to do or stop doing?
- Where does the tone shift, and what causes it?
- What question does this section answer that you had not thought to ask?
- Trace the sentence or paragraph that mentions Og. What conclusion does the writer want the readers to reach?
- Define zion from this passage alone, without reaching for what you already know.
- Where does the writer move from what God has done to what we should do?
- What would actually be different this week if you took this seriously?

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NOTES AND PRAYER

Sources, method, and reuse

Protos created this guide to help readers understand Psalms in its literary and historical context. Questions are designed to be answered from the passage, not from guesswork or personal opinion alone.

REFERENCES

[1] Tyndale Open Study Notes

Tyndale House Publishers. Book background, purpose, setting, and structural orientation. CC BY-SA 4.0.

<https://tyndaleopenresources.com/>

[2] Protos study guide editorial

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Printable Bible reading plans [_protos-app.com/reading-plans](https://protos-app.com/reading-plans)

Protos is also available on iPhone and Android, with verse-by-verse study help beside the passage you are reading.

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