

Of course a psalm is not restricted in its full usage by any one idea, in other words, any Psalm may have one or all five ideas within it. But they are classified in terms of general content.

- E. Many of the psalms are introduced with a Psalm-title. In many modern English versions this will be in small print under the number of the Psalm and will look like an editor's note. But in the Hebrew Bible (especially in the Masoretic text and tradition) this title is the first verse. These titles are found this way in the oldest psalm manuscripts and my opinion is that they are part of the original work and hence are part of the inspired text. Sometimes they give hints about the author and the occasion for the psalm and so they fit well. The peculiar names and words found in these titles could indicate the method or melody by which they were sung.
- F. The psalms were written by many men. About one-half were written by or for David. But many others authored hymns of praise...the eldest one being Psalm 90, the Psalm of Moses. The Psalms really came to place in Israel's history after the temple was built although many were written and used before that time. Some of them may have been composed by groups (Ps. 137) but what we feel certain about is that the superintendent work was by the Holy Spirit.
- G. The place of the Psalms in the New Testament is striking. Our Lord repeatedly used them in argument with the Pharisees, et al. and on the night of the last supper, it was after they had sung a "psalm" that they went out...at least that is the strongest Greek text reading. James suggests they are especially appropriate for the merry and they are classed with hymns and spiritual songs for the life of the church.
- H. As mentioned earlier, they have long been valued in the church. The fellowship in which the present writer was converted sang the psalms and truth pressed into the heart by singing is not easily forgot ten. But more than mere singing has been the memory of the Psalms as one is led by the experience of a godly writer into the warmth of God's love. To this end the Psalms have a very practical service and that is what we seek in this series of messages...practical lessons from the Psalms whereby the godly experience of the past may better direct us today.