



DIGGING DEEPER

Introduction to the Book of Psalms

Lesson 6: Tips for Reading and Studying the Psalms

- 1) **Pray.** Open your heart to the Lord and ask Him to direct your study.
- 2) **Location.** Which book (Book I-V) is the Psalm in?
- 3) **Theme.** What is the theme of that book?
- 4) **Title/Superscription.** What can you learn from the title and superscription? What is the title of the Psalm? Is there additional information in the superscription: author, occasion of the Psalm, direction to the choir director, or musical instruments to be used.

For example:

Psalm 51:1 (ESV)

Create in Me a Clean Heart, O God

To the choirmaster. A Psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet went to him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba.

- 5) **Read.** Read through the Psalm
- 6) **Genre.** Attempt to identify the genre of the Psalm. Is it a Hymn, Lament, Thanksgiving, Confidence, Remembrance, Wisdom, or Kingship?
- 7) **Old Testament Context.** How does this Psalm fit in with the context of the Old Testament? Does it quote other sections of the Old Testament? Is the Psalm quoted elsewhere in the Old Testament?
- 8) **New Testament Context.** Try to determine if and how the Psalm was used in the New Testament context. Many Psalms (116) are quoted in the New Testament and often these Psalms have a meaning that was not fully understood until the coming of Christ.

9) Structure. Examine the structure of the Psalm. Pay special attention to the division of stanzas.

10) Outline. Develop a simple outline of the Psalm. Look for themes, identify who is speaking, look for the use of parallelism and figures of speech.

Congratulations!

You have completed the course:

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