

Bible Books of Poetry

Old Testament Studies III
BOT- 333

King's Word Academy

ARE YOU BORN AGAIN?

Knowing in your heart that you are born-again, and followed by a statement of faith are the two prerequisites to studying and getting the most out of your KWA materials. We at KWA have developed this material to educate each Believer in the principles of God. Our goal is to provide each Believer with an avenue to enrich their personal lives and bring them closer to God.

Is Jesus your Lord and Savior? If you have not accepted Him as such, you must be aware of what Romans 3:23 tells you.

23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God:

How do you go about it? **You must believe that Jesus is the Son of God.**

I John 5:13 gives an example in which to base your faith.

13 These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.

What if you are just not sure? **Romans 10:9-10 gives you the Scriptural mandate for becoming born-again.**

⁹That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. ¹⁰For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Take some time to consider this very carefully. Ask Jesus to come into your heart so that you will know the power of His Salvation and make your statement of faith today.

Once you become born-again, it is your responsibility to renew your mind with the Word of God. Romans 12:1-2 tells us that transformation of the mind can only take place in this temporal world by the Word of God.

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may

prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

The Apostle Paul, giving instructions to his ^{son} Timothy states in *2 Timothy 2:15*:

15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

What happens if we do these things? Ephesians 4:12-13 gives us the answer to this question.

12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: 13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ:

By studying the Word of God, you will be equipped for service in the Kingdom of God and you will also be ready to take the position in the Body of Christ to which God has appointed you. You will be able to walk in unity with other Believers and you will be a vessel of honor to God that can rightly divide the word of truth.

If you are not saved and you do not know what to say, consider this simple prayer.

Lord, I know that I have need of a savior. I believe that Jesus died for my sins and the God raised Him from the dead three days later. I ask to be forgiven and for Jesus to come into my heart and be the Lord of my life. I believe now by faith that God has heard my prayer and I am born- again.

If you have prayed this prayer, you must accept by faith that your sins have been forgiven. It is important that you tell someone of your decision to accept the Lord. Also, it is our recommendation that you should attach yourself to a local church and undergo water baptism.

For those who have prayed this prayer with sincerity of heart, we welcome to eternal life in the Kingdom of God. May the blessings of God overtake you.

May God grant you wisdom, knowledge, and understanding in all of His ways.

KWA Directors and Staff

THE VISION

As we have been commissioned by the prophet of old, we now set our hand to write the vision of King's Word Academy, so that: **"He that runs may read it, the vision having been clearly written and made plain" Habakkuk 2:2.**

- 1) **UNITY** - To build up the Body of Christ by networking with all churches, as well as with local and international ministries. This networking is to provide seasoned leadership ministries to the small local church, to encourage unity and fellowship among pastors, church leadership and para-church groups through active service.
- 2) **GOSPEL** - To go with the lifeline of the Gospel, to educate with love, integrity, and without compromise.
- 3) **ONE CROSS FOR ALL** - To cross the cultural, racial, and denominational lines for unity, fellowship, networking, and progress. To have an open door through K.W.A. to all who desire to join with us in a common goal and for the highest good. To proclaim one cross for all cultures, races, denominations, and peoples.
- 4) **GO YE** - To go wherever there is a need, to rich or poor, to majorities or minorities, to large or small churches, to free or bound: to go where many fail to go and to meet the needs before us.
- 5) **THE CALLED** - To make available opportunities to those called to minister and to expand their horizons through new associations and experiences. To aid new and/or younger ministers fulfilling God's call on their lives.
- 6) **EDUCATION** - God has charged us with propagating the Gospel through education to whosoever will. This education is through foundational schools that teach the basics of Christianity as well as correspondence schooling for those seeking more in-depth levels in Christian teachings.
- 7) **APPLICATION** - To bring opportunity to students by making available to them teachings and information for practical application and beyond traditional confines.
- 8) **DREAM A DREAM** - To cause each person we associate with to catch a vision, to dream yet another dream, and to keep their eyes on Jesus, the author and finisher of their faith.

- 9) **THE CALL** - To encourage each person to move out of their comfort zone, to be all they can be for Christ and to fulfill that call upon their life. To encourage each one to pursue his purpose, live up to his potential, and produce the fruit of the Spirit.

For Your Consideration

Many times when we read material or study in an area, it seems that the subject matter does not apply to us. This can be because we do not fit the particular age group, gender, or situation that is being talked about. However, there is good reason to learn from any materials that we study; especially the Bible and Bible-based study courses, such as you are embarking on now.

Paul wrote to us in First Corinthians, chapter ten (to) and verse eleven (11), "Now all these things happened unto them for examples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come." What Paul is saying here is that God had a purpose in everything He had the writers record for us. Everything that is written down will apply to us in some way or another, whether as a warning, as material for future ministry to someone who needs it, or simply to help us avoid a pitfall that the enemy places in front of us.

The same is true in the Bible courses of King's Word Academy. However, there is a possibility that some might think that something does not apply to them, because of the way the materials are written, when we use words that appear to refer to a particular gender. At times the material does apply to gender, as when it is talking about marriage relationships, or possibly the rearing of children. However, there is one area that does not refer to gender, though it may appear so.

In the courses, as well as the Bible, there are areas where the word "he" is used extensively. This is not necessarily designed to refer to gender. God is certainly no respecter of persons, and neither are we. The King James Bible especially, has a myriad of references that use the word "he" which are in no way gender significant. For instance, the Scripture that says, "Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: The soul that sinneth, it shall die" Ezekiel 18:4. We all know that women have souls, the same as men. However, the use of the words "father" and "son" here would seem to imply that women are left out. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Also, there is the use of "he" and "she" in terms of natural things. For instance, the Church is continually referred to as "she" in the Scriptures. "She" is pictured as the Bride of Christ. Isaiah 61: 10 speaks of the Bride who has adorned herself with her jewels. Of course, this does not preclude the male gender from being a part of the Church and those who are delivered from the destruction of the end times, the Great Tribulation (Re.21:2).

Ships are referred to as "she," airplanes as "she," yet pastors and elders as "he." Does this mean that women cannot be pastors or elders? No. It simply means that for ease of reference, there has been a gender applied to some words.

No one should feel left out or slighted because of this nuance in the English language. You will find that both genders are not referenced every time in the course materials you are studying, and will study through King's Word Academy. It is double referenced in some places, and in some it is not. It is by no means meant to leave out some precious souls, just because we did not double reference

every time a gender was

*King's
Word
Academy*

*"Study to shew thyself approved unto God,
a workman that needeth not to be ashamed,
rightly dividing the word of truth"
II Timothy 2:15*

*Administrative & Curriculum Office
P.O. Box 339
Norris City, Illinois 62869
Phone: 618-378-3821 - Fax: 618-378-2101*

BOT – 333 Bible Books of Poetry-OT III

2nd Revision, August 2004
King's Word Academy

This electronic data file/publication is the sole property of American Mission Teams Evangelistic Organization, Inc. It may be printed in its entirety for the readers personal use or to pass on to family or friends. It may not be altered, edited or changed in any way and all reproductions of this electronic data must contain this copyright notice. © 2004 American Mission Teams Evangelistic Organization, Inc. This material is not to be posted or transmitted

Old Testament III/ Books of Poetry

81 pages of Commentary
5 Homework assignments
5 Quiz assignments
1 Midterm Exam
1 Final Exam
25 pages of Answer Keys for school sites only (Answer keys are not included in the student=s copy of material.

INSTRUCTIONS: Read the Commentary.

Do Homework I, which covers pages 11-29 in the Commentary.
Do Quiz 1, which covers Homework I.
Do Homework II, which covers pages 29-50 in the Commentary
Do Quiz 2, which covers Homework II.
Take Mid Term Exam, which covers Homework I - II.
Do Homework III, which covers pages 50-62 in the Commentary.
Do Quiz 3, which covers Homework III.
Do Homework IV, which covers pages 62-69 in the Commentary.
Do Quiz 4, which covers Homework IV.
Do Homework V, which covers pages 69-78 in the Commentary.
Do Quiz 5, which covers Homework V.
Take Final Exam, which covers Homework III-V.

13 weeks in a Trimester: 11 weeks of teaching and 2 weeks of testing. You will need to cover 6.1 pages per teaching session.

18 weeks in a Semester: 16 weeks of teaching and 2 weeks of testing. You will need to cover 4.2 pages per teaching session.

NOTE: The Instructor is encouraged to add his/her personality to the teaching sessions and to add knowledge to the Commentaries. The Instructor had some latitude if they desire to give some outside homework or essays. Before doing so, please check with the administrator of the school.

Table of Contents

I	INTRODUCTION	11
	A. Three Main Types of Hebrew Poetry	11
II.	JOB	12
	A. The Christ of Job	14
	B. Keys to Job	14
	C. Prominent Subjects:	14
	D. Background	14
	E. Survey of Job	15
III.	PSALMS	29
	A. Introduction	29
	B. Outline for Psalms	31
	C. The Christ of Psalms	38
	D. Specific Messianic Prophecies	39
	E. Keys to Psalms	40
	F. Survey of Psalms	40
	G. Psalms: Bless the Lord, O' My Soul	43
	H. Preparation for Study	44
	I. Background	44
	J. Prominent Subjects	47
	K. Features	49
	L. Applications	50

IV.	PROVERBS	50
A.	Outline of Proverbs	50
B.	Writer	51
C.	Key Verse	52
D.	Features	52
E.	Literary Structure of Proverbs	53
F.	Survey of Proverbs	54
G.	Proverbs: Walking in the Fear of the Lord	56
H.	Preparation for Study	56
I.	Background	56
J.	Purpose	57
K.	Place in the Bible	58
L.	Literary Characteristics	59
M.	Prominent Subjects	60
N.	Applications	60
V.	ECCLESIASTES	62
A.	Outline of Ecclesiastes	62
B.	Writer	63
C.	Vanity under the Sun, but Hope is in God	63
E.	Background	64
D.	Style	64
E.	The Christ of Ecclesiastes	65
F.	Keys to Ecclesiastes	65

G.	Purposes of Ecclesiastes	66
H.	Estimations of the Book	67
I.	Survey of Ecclesiastes	67
VI.	SONG OF SOLOMON	69
A.	Outline of Song of Solomon	69
B.	Union and Communion	69
C.	Background	70
D.	The Christ of Song of Solomon	71
E.	Keys	71
F.	Survey of Song of Solomon	72
G.	Schools of Interpretation	75
H.	Typical Interpretation	75
I.	Purposes	76
J.	Unique Characteristics	77
K.	Applications	77

I. INTRODUCTION - BOOKS OF POETRY

God inspired a few writers to compose for Scripture, poems, songs, and dialogues reflecting the meditations and questions of their hearts and minds. These five books comprise the "poetical books," Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon.

Job, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes are classified as wisdom literature because their message represents the wise observations and interpretations of every day life. Hebrew wisdom literature tells us that the "fear of God is the beginning of wisdom".

The poetic books are charged with feeling. These books appeal especially to the human emotions and will. Because of this fact, they are very persuasive in exhorting and reproving. The poetical writings deal with problems and experiences common to all mankind.

In studying the books of poetry, it is helpful to become acquainted with the various aspects of poetic literature so the language and style of these 5 books will be more intelligible.

A. Three Main Types of Hebrew Poetry

1. Lyric

This type was originally accompanied by music on the lyre. It expresses the poets' emotions as they are stirred and directed by God. Most of the Psalms are lyrical.

2. Didactic

The main purpose is to share observations and evaluations of, not so much to communicate feelings. Proverbs and Ecclesiastes are of this type.

3. Dramatic

These are mainly dialogue to get across thoughts and ideas. Job and Solomon are this type.

II. JOB

OUTLINE OF JOB

Part One: The Dilemma of Job (1:1 - 2:13)

- I. The Circumstances of Job 1:1-5
- II. The First Assault of Satan 1:6-22
- III. The Second Assault of Satan 2:1-10
- IV. The Arrival of Job's Friends 2:11-13

Part Two: The Debates of Job (3:1 - 37:24)

- I. The First Cycle of Debate 3:1-14:22
 - A. Job's First Speech 3:1-26
 - B. Eliphaz's First Speech 4:1-5:27
 - C. Job's Reply to Eliphaz 6:1-7:21
 - D. Bildad's First Speech 8:1-22
 - E. Job's Responses to Bildad 9:1-10:22
 - F. Zophar's First Speech 11:1-20
 - G. Job's Response to Zophar 12:1-14:22
- II. The Second Cycle of Debate 15:1-21:34
 - A. Eliphaz's Second Speech 15:1-35
 - B. Job's Response to Eliphaz 16:1-17:16
 - C. Bildad's Second Speech 18:1-21
 - D. Job's Response to Bildad 19:1-29
 - E. Zophar's Second Speech 20:1-29
 - F. Job's Response to Zophar 21:1-34

III.	The Third Cycle of Debate	22:1-26:14
A.	Eliphaz's Third Speech	22:1-30
B.	Job's Response to Eliphaz	23:1-24:25
C.	Bildad's Third Speech	25:1-6
D.	Job's Response to Bildad	26:1-14
IV.	The Final Defense of Job	27:1-31:40
A.	Job's First Monologue	27:1-28:28
B.	Job's Second Monologue	29:1-31:40
V.	The Solution of Elihu	32:1-37:24
A.	Elihu Intervenes in the Debate	32:1-22
B.	Elihu's First Rebuttal	33:1-33
C.	Elihu Second Rebuttal	34:1-37
D.	Elihu's Third Rebuttal	35:1-16
E.	Elihu's Conclusion	36:1-37:24

Part Three: The Deliverance of Job (38:1-42:17)

I.	The First Controversy of God with Job	33:1-40:5
A.	God's First Challenge to Job	38:1-40:2
B.	Job's First Answer to God	40:3-5
II.	The Second Controversy of God with Job	40:6-42:6
A.	God's Second Challenge to Job	40:6-41:34
B.	Job's Second Answer to God	42:1-26
III.	The Deliverance of Job and His Friends	42:7-17
A.	The Christ of Job	

Job acknowledges a redeemer (see 19:25-27) and cries out for a mediator (9:33; 25:4; 33:23). The book raises problems and questions which are answered perfectly in Christ who identifies with our sufferings (Hebrews 4:15). Christ is the believer's life, redeemer, mediator, and advocate.

B. Keys to Job

1. Key word: Sovereignty

The basic questions of the book are, "Why do the righteous suffer if God is loving and all-powerful?" Suffering itself is not the central theme; rather, the focus is on what Job learns from his suffering - the sovereignty of God over all creation. Job's three friends' solutions are inadequate. The conclusion at the whirlwind is that God is sovereign and worthy of worship in whatever He chooses to do. Job must learn to trust in the goodness and power of God in adversity by enlarging his concept of God. Even this "blameless" man (1:1) needs to repent when he becomes proud and self-righteous. Job teaches that God is Lord "of those in heaven and of those on earth, and of those under the earth" (Philippians 2:10). He is omniscient, omnipotent, and good. As such, His ways are sometimes incomprehensible to men and women, but He can always be trusted. Without the divine perspective in chapters 1 and 2 and in 38-42, chapters 3-37 are a mystery. Job does not have access to chapters 1 and 2.

2. Key verses: Job 13:15; 37:23, 24.
3. Key chapter: Job 42

The last chapter of the book records the climax of the long and difficult struggle Job has with himself, his wife, his friends, and even his God. Upon Job's full recognition of the utter majesty and sovereignty of the Lord, he repents and no longer demands an answer as to the "why" of his plight.

C. Prominent Subjects:

Satan, suffering and trust

D. Background

1. His name has two possible meanings:

In Arabic Job means "One who turns back" (repents); and in Hebrew - "the hated (persecuted) one." Both of these meanings are reflected in Job's experiences. Job was a real person known for his patience not his suffering,

(Ezekiel 14:14-20). Job was a native of Uz (Job 1:11). This city could be found northeast of Palestine - possibly between city of Damascus and the Euphrates River. (Present day Iraq and Saudia Arabia).

2. Job was a respected man (29:7-25):

Job probably lived before or around the time of Abraham. Nothing is known of his earlier life, his parents, or how the he first learned about God, etc. Job was wealthy. He had 7,000 sheep, 500 asses, 500 oxen, and a great household. He was the greatest of all the men in the East. Indicated by the fact Job does not mention any Israelite covenant with God which is the core of Hebrew history from the call of Abraham. The family altar worship of Job 1:5 was before or outside the Mosaic type worship with its priests. He probably lived between the Tower of Babel and the call of Abraham or shortly thereafter. He was a righteous man in God's eyes (1:5,8). He lived to a very old age, 140 years (42:16, 17).

E. Survey of Job

1. Title

The book of Job was named for its main character.

2. Author/date

The author is not known. Date of writing is uncertain. It was quite likely about the time of Genesis.

3. Overall purpose:

a. Reveals who God is.

b. Job is a book about physical and spiritual experience of a patriarch whose faith was tested to the uttermost (Job 1:22). It concerns the transforming crisis in the life of a great man who lived perhaps four thousand years ago. Job's trust in God (1 and 2) changes to complaining and growing self-righteousness (3 and 31); see 32 and 40:8), but his repentance (42:1-6) leads to his restoration 42:7-17). The trials bring about an important transformation: the man after the process is different from the man before the process.

4. Divisions

The book of Job divides into three parts:

- a. The dilemma of Job (1 and 2)
- b. The debates of Job (3-37)
- c. The deliverance of Job (38-42)

5. Example of trust

Shows the kind of trust God wants His children to have.

- a. Believers are to trust God even though they cannot fully account for the circumstances.
- b. Job did not serve God for gain. Even in the end, in his miserable condition, he worshipped God.
- c. Job did not know the reasons for his afflictions.

6. To reveal God's favor toward His children

7. God's absolute control over Satan

8. The dilemma of Job (Chapters 1, 2)

- a. Job is not a logical candidate for disaster (see 1:1,8)). His moral integrity and his selfless service to God heighten the dilemma.
- b. Behind the scene, Satan ("Accuser") charges that no one loves God from pure motives, but only for material blessings (1:10). To refute Satan's accusations, God allows him to strike Job with two series of assaults. In his sorrow Job laments with two series of assaults.
- c. In his sorrow Job laments the day of his birth but does not deny God (1:21; 2:10). He began by cursing the day of his birth and his miserable existence, but note that in this entire Job did not curse God. His cry was an expression of pain and despair, not a cry of defiance against God.

9. The lessons of Job

- a. It is always best for believers to express their doubts and their honest emotions to the Lord in prayer. To go to God with our misery and heartache in order to find him and evoke his compassion is never wrong.
 - b. Jesus Christ himself asked God the question, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Matthew 27; 46; also Jeremiah 20:14-18) In 3:13, "I would be asleep and at rest..." Job conceived of the grave as a place of rest. He did not see it as extinction, but as a place of continuing personal existence.
 - c. In 3:25, "What I feared has come upon me..." Job's greatest desire had been for the presence and favor of God; now the thing he dreaded most had happened. God seemed to have forsaken him, and he had no idea why. But he still prayed to him for mercy and relief (6:8-9).
 - d. The fear of the Lord - that is wisdom (32:28). Fear of and reverence for God is fundamental to the believer's relationship with God (Ps 61:5; Pr. 1:7). Fearing the Lord makes us concerned and alerts that we do not offend our holy God. Without this foundation, no true wisdom exists and no redemptive experience will stand the test of time and temptation. True fear of God and true Biblical wisdom cause us to shun evil and result in the encouragement of the Holy Spirit (Acts 9:31). To fear God and yet continue in sin is a moral impossibility. The person that acclaims God's majesty and recognizes his opposition to evil will be characterized by an earnest, decisive and total endeavor to separate from sin (Ps 4:4, Pr 3:7; 8:13, Isa 1:16) and follows God's word (Ps 112:1; 119:63; Eph 5:21; 1 Pe 1:17;).
10. The debates of Job (3-37)
- a. Although Job's "comforters" reach wrong conclusions, they are his friends: of all who know Job, they are the only ones who come: they mourn with him in seven days of silent sympathy: they confront Job without talking behind his back.
 - b. Everything they said is not necessarily true. The Holy Spirit recorded their words, but did not inspire them.
 - c. At the end of the book, God himself stated that much of what

they had spoken was not right (42:7-8). However, after Job breaks the silence, a three-round debate follows in which his friends say Job must be suffering because of his sin.

- d. Job's responses to their simplistic assumptions make the debate cycles increase in emotional fervor. He first accuses his friends of judging him, and later appeals to the Lord as his judge and refuge.
- e. Job makes three basic complaints: (1) God does not hear me (13:3, 24; 19:7; 23:3-5; 30:20); (2) God is punishing me (6:4; 7:20; 9:17); and (3) God allows the wicked to prosper (21:7). His defenses are much longer than his friends' accusations. After Job's five-chapter closing monologue (27-31), Elihu freshens the air with a more perceptive and accurate view than those offered by Eliphaz, Bildad, or Zophar (32-37). He tells Job that he needs to humble himself before God.

11. Main characters of Job

a. Eliphaz

-Two possible meanings, "God is fine gold" or "God is dispenser."

- Native of Teman (2:11)

- Leading spokesman of the three

- The smartest of the three - more considerate criticism than the other two friends

- Two of his main contentions:

--God is perfectly pure and righteous

--Man brings trouble on himself (5:7)

b. Bildad

- Means "sin of contention"

- Native of Shuah (2:11) Possibly Euphrates region

- A traditionalist (8:8-10) More argumentative than Eliphaz

- Charged Job with godlessness (8:23)
 - God does not reject a blameless man (8:20)
 - He tells Job to confess his sin because God is just
- c. Zophar
- Means "hairy" or "rough"
 - Native of Naamah (2:11) Probably North Arabia
 - A dogmatist and moralist: blunt sometimes and displayed a holier-than-thou attitude
 - Charged Job with boasting (11:2-6)
 - One of his main contentions: God knows iniquity when He sees it (11:11)
 - He says that God is all wise and knows man.
- d. Elihu
- Name means, "He is my God"
 - Native of Buz (possibly Arabia or Syria)
 - Youngest of the four
 - One of his main contentions: God is good (33:24); Elihu gave the diagnosis of Job's plight
 - He told Job that God is good; trust him, for He is God
- e. Job's wife
- She tells Job to curse God
- f. Satan
- Satan is the personal enemy of Job. He is the personal enemy of God and His children. Read Rev. 12:10; I Peter 5:8

12. The deliverance of Job

- a. God reveals himself. After Elihu's preparatory discourse, God Himself ends the debate by speaking to Job from the whirlwind. In His first speech God reveals His power and wisdom as creator and a preserver of the physical and animal world. Job responds by acknowledging his own ignorance and insignificance; they can offer no rebuttal (40:3-5).
- b. God reveals His love. (40:6) The Lord spoke to Job. In order to bring Job to complete submission to his lordship and ways, God continued his argument. He wanted to overcome Job's remaining resistance and to lead him into a full realization of his love. This loving persistence on God's part reveals his patience, mercy and genuine care for his suffering people.
- c. Animals (40:15). The behemoth is identified by many commentators as the hippopotamus or a prehistoric dinosaur; the leviathan (ch 41) is often identified as a giant crocodile or a whale or also a prehistoric animal. By these illustrations God emphasized that if Job could not subdue the great creatures of the world, then he was in no position to question the counsel the God who had made these creatures (41:10) Job must trustfully submit to God's rule over the universe, the affairs of humankind and the lives of his followers. He must trust God and maintain his faith in God-both during the sufferings and afflictions of life and during the times of blessing.
- d. God reveals His sovereignty. In His second speech God reveals His sovereign authority and challenges Job with two illustrations of His power to control the uncontrollable. This time Job responds by acknowledging his error with a repentant heart (42:1-6). If Job cannot understand God's ways in the realm of nature, how then can he understand God's ways in the spiritual realm? God makes no reference to Job's personal sufferings and hardly touches on the real issue of the debate. However Job catches a glimpse of the divine perspective and when he acknowledges God's sovereignty over his life, his worldly goods are restored twofold. Job prays for his three friends who have cut him so deeply, but Elihu's speech is never rebuked. "You have heard the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord-that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful" (James 5:11; see James 1:12).

- In his suffering and in his prayers Job did not sin against God. However, his misunderstanding and his complaints against God had led him close to pride and to believe that God was in some way not perfectly good. Now with the appearance and revelation of his Lord (5), his perspective completely changes.

- Job acknowledged his error and was ready to submit to and serve God no matter what happened to him. He would fear and love God for God's own sake, with or without his health, regardless of any personal gain (4).

- By committing himself to God in faith, hope and love while still suffering and not knowing the way of it all, Job proved Satan's accusations wrong (1:9-11) and thereby vindicated God's power to redeem and reconcile the human race to himself (1:8-9).

- Now my eyes have seen you - 42:5 - Job had earlier prayed to see his Redeemer (19:27); now that longing was fulfilled. God's word and presence brought Job a greater revelation of God's ways and character. Through this personal experience, Job was transformed by a sense of forgiveness, a renewed confidence in God's goodness and a reassuring experience of his love.

--God's appearance to Job was a vindication of Job's uprightness, and it is an assurance to all faithful believers that the Lord will accept our sincere questions when we are undergoing unexplained adversity and suffering.

--God is patient with his own and sympathizes with our weaknesses, our misunderstandings and even our anger (Heb. 4:15). As with Job, if we endure, God will manifest his presence and extend his care to us.

13. Relation to other books of the Bible

- a. Job is intimately related to the New Testament even though it is explicitly quoted only once in the New Testament. I Corinthians 3:19 quotes Job 5:13.

- b. The problems and questions of Job are answered completely and perfectly in Christ.
- c. Like the other books, Job is forward-looking to Christ. Questions are raised, great sobs of agony are heard, which Jesus alone can answer. The book takes its place in the testimony of the ages that there is a blank in the human heart which Jesus alone can fill.
- d. Were it not for the atoning work of Christ neither the faith of Job nor that of any other Old Testament saint, would have availed to bring them to the city written about in Hebrews 11:13-16.

14. Death and suffering - Job 19:25-26

All humans, believers and unbelievers, are subject to death. It is rarely a welcome event. The word "death" in the Bible, has more than one meaning. It is important to be prepared and understand the believer's relationship to the various meanings of death.

- a. Death as a result of sin. Gen. 2-3 teaches that death entered the world because of sin. Our first parents were created with the ability to live forever; when they disobeyed God's command, they came under the penalty of sin, which is death. (1) Adam and Eve became subject to physical death. God had set the tree of life in the Garden of Eden in order that by continually eating from it, humans would never die (see Ge 2:9). However, after Adam and Eve ate fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. God pronounced these words: "for dust you are and to dust you will return" (Ge 3:19). Though they did not physically die on the day they ate, they did become subject to the law of death as a result of God's curse.
- b. Adam and Eve also died a moral death. God warned Adam and when he ate of the forbidden fruit, he would surely die (Ge 2:17). This was a serious warning. Even though Adam and his wife did not die physically on that day, they did die morally, i.e., their nature became sinful. Ever since Adam and Eve, every person has been born with a sinful nature (Ro 8:5-8), i.e., an innate desire to go his or her own selfish way without concern for God or others (see Ge 3:6, Ro 3:10-18, Eph 2:3, Col 2:13).
- c. Adam and Eve also died a spiritual death by disobeying God, i.e., their former intimate relationship to God was destroyed (see Ge 3:6). No longer did they walk and talk with God in the

garden; rather, they hid from his presence (Ge 3:8). Elsewhere, the Bible teaches that apart from Christ, all are alienated from God and from life in him (Eph 4:17-18); they are spiritually dead.

- d. Finally, death as a result of sin involves eternal death. Eternal life would have been the consequence of the obedience of Adam and Eve (Ge 3:22); instead, the principle of eternal death has become operative. Eternal death is eternal condemnation and separation from God as a result of disobedience (see Ge 3:4), i.e., "punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord" (2Th 1:9, Ro 6:16).
- e. The only way to escape death in all its multifaceted aspects is through Jesus Christ, who "destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light" (2Ti 1:10). By his death he reconciled us with God, thus reversing the spiritual separation and alienation that had come as a result of sin (see Ge 3:24, 2Co 5:18). By his resurrection, he overcame and broke the power of Satan, sin and physical death (see Ge 3:15, Ro 6:10, Ro 5:18-19, 1 Co 15:12-28, 1Jn 3:8). That believers will not remain forever in the grave was already a part of the testimony of God's OT people (Job 19:25, Ps 16:9-11).

15. The meaning of physical death for believers

Even though believers in Christ have the assurance of resurrection life, they still go through the experience of physical death. But believers approach death differently than do unbelievers. The following are some scripturally revealed truths about the death of a believer.

- a. Death for the Christian is not the end of life, but a new beginning. Rather than something to be feared (1 Co 15:55-57), it is the point of transition to a fuller life. Death for believers is a release from the troubles of this world (2 Co 5:1-5). Only a believer who understands fully these truths can readily welcome death's moment. Paul speaks of physical death as sleep (1 Co 15:6, 18, 20, 1 Th 4:13-15), implying that death is rest from earthly labor and suffering (Rev 14:13). It means going to be with our godly ancestors who have died before us (see Ge 25:8) and is a door into the presence of the living God (Phil. 1:23).

- b. The Bible also speaks of the death of believers in comforting terms. The death of the godly is "precious in the sight of the Lord" (Ps 116:15). It is an entrance "into peace" (Isa 57:1-2) and "into glory" (Ps 73:24); a being carried by the angels "to Abraham's side" (Lk 16:22); a going to "paradise" (Lk 23:43); a going to our Father's house, where there are "many rooms" (Jn 14:2); a blessed departure in order to "be with Christ" (Phil 1:23); a being "at home with the Lord" (2Co 5:8); a falling "asleep in Christ" (1Co 15:18, Jn 11:11, 1Th 4:13); a "gain...which is better by far" (Phil 1:21,23) and a time to receive the "crown of righteousness" (see 2 Ti 4:8).
- c. Concerning the time between the believer's death and his or her bodily resurrection. Scripture teaches the following: (a) At the time of death believers are brought into Christ's presence (2Co 5:8; Phil 1:23). (b) Believers exist in full consciousness (Lk 16:19-31) and experience joy at the kindness and love shown by God (Eph 2:7). Heaven is like a home, i.e., a haven of rest and security (Rev 6:11) and a place of community and fellowship with other believers (Jn 14:2). (d) Activities in heaven will include worship and singing (Ps 87; Rev 14:2-3; 15:3), assigned tasks (Lk 19:17), and eating and drinking (Lk 14:15; 22:14-18; Rev 22:2). (e) While awaiting the bodily resurrection, believers are not invisible disembodied spirits, but clothed with a temporary heavenly form (Lk 9:30-32; 2Co 5:1-4). (f) In heaven believers maintain their personal identity (Mt 8:11; Lk 9:30-32). (g) Believers who have passed on will be concerned about God's purposes on earth (Rev 6:9-11).
- d. Even though much hope and joy awaits the believer at death, believers still grieve when a loved one dies. After Jacob's death, for example, Joseph mourned deeply for his father; his reaction to his father's death is a model for all believers who experience a death of a loved one.

16. The suffering of the righteous, Job 2:7-8

Faithfulness to God does not guarantee believers freedom from trouble; pain and suffering in their lives (see Acts 28:16). In fact, Jesus taught that we are to expect it (Jn 16:1-4,33; 2 Ti 3:12). The Bible provides numerous examples of godly people who experienced significant amounts of suffering for a variety of reasons - e.g., Joseph, David, Job, Jeremiah and Paul.

a. Reasons believers suffer. There are various reasons why believers suffer.

- Believers experience suffering as an ongoing consequence of the fall of Adam and Eve. When sin entered the world, pain, sorrow, conflict and eventual death invaded the lives of all human beings (Ge 3:16-19). Paul affirms this: "Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned" (Ro 5:12). In fact, the whole created universe groans under sin's effects and years for the time of a new heaven and a new earth (Ro 8:20-23; 2Pe 3:10-13). Response: we must always cast ourselves on God's grace, strength and comfort (1 Co 10:13).

- Some believers suffer for the same reason that unbelievers do, i.e., as a consequence of their own actions. The principle that "A man reaps what he sows" (Gal 6:7) applies in a general sense to everyone. If we drive our cars recklessly, we may get into serious accidents. If we are undisciplined in our eating habits, we are likely to have serious health problems. Even though God was not the author of such suffering, if we look to him, we can learn lessons from the pain. Response; we must always act in wisdom and in accord with God's Word, and we must avoid whatever will remove us from God's protective care.

- Believers also suffer, at least in their inner selves, because they live in a sinful and corrupt world. All around us are the effects of sin; we experience distress and anguish as we see the power that evil holds over so many lives (Ezk 9:4; Ac 17:16; 2 Pe 2:8). Response; we must pray to God that he will demonstrate his victory over sin's power.

- Believers suffer at the hands of the devil.

--Scripture makes it clear that Satan as "the god of this age" (2Co 4:4), controls this present evil age (1 Jn 5:19, Gal 1:4, Heb 2:14). He has been given power to afflict us in a variety of ways (1 2Pe 5:8-9). The story of Job centers on an upright, God-fearing man whom God permitted to be tormented by Satan with unspeakable sufferings (Job 1-2). Jesus testified that one of the women he healed had been bound by Satan for eighteen years (Lk 13:11,16). Paul recognized that his thorn in the flesh was "a messenger of Satan to torment

(2Co 12:7). As we engage in spiritual warfare against "the powers of this dark world" (Eph 6:12), we will inevitably suffer adversity. In order to deal with such assaults, God has given us spiritual armor (Eph 6:10-18) and spiritual weapons (2Co 10:3-6). Response: we must put on the full armor of God and pray (Eph 6:10-18), resolving to persevere faithfully in his strength.

--Satan and his followers delight to persecute believers. Those who love the Lord Jesus and follow his principles of truth and righteousness will be persecuted for their faith. In fact, such suffering because of righteousness may be an indication of our genuine devotion to Christ (Mt. 5:10, 1Pe 4:12). Response: since all true believers are called to suffer persecution and reproach because of righteousness, we must stand firm and keep on trusting him who judges justly (Mt 5:10-11; 1 Co 15:58; 1Pe 2:23).

- More positively, another reason why believers suffer is that "we have the mind of Christ" (1 Co 2:16). To be a Christian means to be in Christ, to be one with him; as a result we share in his sufferings (see 1Pe 2:21). For example, just as Christ wept in agony over the wicked city of Jerusalem and their refusal to repent and accept salvation (Lk 19:41), so we are to weep over humanity's sinfulness and lost condition. Included in Paul's list of sufferings for Christ's sake (2Co 11:23-32) was his daily concern for the churches he had founded: "Who is weak, and I do not feel weak? Who is led into sin, and I do not inwardly burn?" (2Co 11:29) Such mental anguish over those whom we love in Christ should be a natural part of our lives: "mourn with those who mourn" (Ro 12:15). In fact, sharing in Christ's sufferings is a prerequisite for being glorified with Christ (Ro 8:17). Response: we must thank God that just as Christ's sufferings is ours, so also is his comfort 2 Co 1:5).

- God himself may use suffering in our lives as a catalyst to spiritual growth or change. (a) He often uses suffering to call his straying people to repent of their sins and renew their faith and trust in him (see the book of Judges). Response; we must confess known sin and examine our lives to see if there is anything that displeases the Holy Spirit. (b) God sometimes uses suffering to test our faith, to see whether we will remain faithful to him. To test Job's faith was the reason he allowed Satan to afflict him see Job 1:6-12; 2:1-6): would Job remain

committed to the Lord, or would he curse God to his face? James calls the various trials we face "the testing of your faith" (Jas 1:3); through them our faith in Christ becomes more mature (1Pe 1:7). Response: we must realize that the genuineness of our faith will result in "praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed" (1Pe 1:7). (c) God uses suffering not only to strengthen our faith, but also to help us to grow in Christian character and righteousness. According to both Paul and James, God wants us to learn patience through suffering (Ro 5:3-5; Jas 1:3). In suffering we learn to depend less on ourselves and more on God and his grace (Ro 5:3, 2Co 12:9). Response: we must be attuned to what God may want us to learn from our suffering. We must use our experience of pain to encourage and strengthen other believers.

- Finally, God can and does use the suffering the world and Satan brings to the righteous to further the cause of his kingdom and his plan of redemption. For example, all the injustices that Joseph experienced at the hands of his brothers and the Egyptians were used in God's redemptive work to "preserve for you a remnant on earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance" (Ge 45:7). The prime example of this principle is the suffering of Christ, "the Holy and Righteous One" (Ac 3:14), who experienced persecution, agony and death so that God's plan of salvation might be fully realized. This does not excuse the wickedness of those who crucified him (Ac 2:23), but it does indicate how God can use the suffering of the righteous at the hands of sinful people for his own purposes and to his own glory.

17. God's relationship to the suffering of believers
 - a. The first thing to remember is this: God is involved in our sufferings. God has promised in his Word that he will not allow us to be tempted beyond what we can bear (1Co 10:13).
 - b. God has also promised to bring good out of all the sufferings and persecution of those who love him and obey his commands (Ro 8:28). Joseph recognized this truth in his own life of suffering (Ge 50:20), and the author of Hebrews shows how God uses the painful parts of our lives for our growth and benefit (Heb 12:5).
 - c. In addition, God has promised to stand by us in our pain, to

walk with us "through the valley of the shadow of death" (Ps 23:4, Isa 43:2). He does so by his Holy Spirit who comforts us in all our troubles (2Co 1:4). To each of his children he sends sufficient grace so that they can bear the trails of life (1Co 10:13, 2Co 12:9).

- d. Finally, do not forget that the Lord Jesus shares your pain. When we pray to him, we have a sympathetic high priest who himself experienced the various dimensions of our trials and sufferings (Heb 4:15). He indeed "took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows" (Isa 53:4); there is healing for our own sufferings through the sufferings that he bore on our behalf (Isa 53:5).

18. Victory over personal sufferings

Now we must address an important issue when experiencing trials and affliction, what steps can we take to cope with such suffering so as to be victorious over it?

- a. First, consider the various reasons human beings suffer and how those reasons apply to you. If you can identify a specific reason, then follow the appropriate response.
- b. Believe that God cares deeply for you, regardless of how severe your circumstances are (Ro 8:36, 2Co 1:8-10, Jas 5:11, 1Pe 5:7). Suffering should never lead you to deny God's love for you or to reject him as your Lord and Savior.
- c. Turn to God in earnest prayer and seek his face. Wait for him until he delivers you from your affliction (Ps 27:8-14, 40:1-3, 130).
- d. Expect God to give you the grace necessary to bear your affliction until deliverance comes (1Co 10:13, 2Co 12:7-10). Always remember that "we are more than conquerors through him who loved us" (Ro 8:37, Jn 16:33). The Christian faith lies not in the removal of weakness and suffering, but in the manifestation of divine power through human weakness (2Co 4:7).
- e. Read the Word of God, especially those psalms that give comfort in times of affliction (Ps 11, 16, 23, 27, 40, 46, 61, 91, 121, 125, 148).

- f. Seek revelation and discernment from god regarding your particular situation - through prayer, Scripture, the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit or the counsel of a godly, mature believer.
- g. During the time of suffering, remember Christ's prediction that you will have trouble in your life as a believer (Jn 16:33). Look forward with eager anticipation to that time when God "will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain" (Rev 21:4).

III. PSALMS

A. Introduction

The Psalms are full of Christ. There is a more complete picture of him in the Psalms than in the Gospels. The Gospels tell us that he went to the mountain to pray, but the Psalms give us his prayer. The Gospels tell us that he was crucified, but the Psalms tell us what went on in his own heart during the crucifixion. The Gospels tell us he went back to heaven, but the Psalms begin where the Gospels leave off and show us Christ seated in heaven.

Christ the Messiah is prominent throughout this book. You will remember that the Lord Jesus, when he appeared after his resurrection to those who were his own, said to them that all things written in the law, the prophets, and the psalms concerning him should be fulfilled, Luke 24:22. Christ is the subject of the Psalms. He is the object of praise in every one of them. Although all have Christ as the object of worship, some of them are called (technically) Messianic Psalms, recording the birth, life, death, resurrection, glory, priesthood, kingship, and return of Christ. There are sixteen Messianic psalms that speak specifically about Christ, but all 150 are about him. The book of Psalms is a hymn book and a HIM book.

In a more restrictive sense, the Psalms deal with Christ belonging to Israel and Israel belonging to Christ. Both themes are connected to the rebellion of man. There is no blessing on this earth until Israel and Christ are brought together. The Psalms are Jewish in expectation and hope. They are songs which were adapted to temple worship. That does not mean that they do not have a spiritual application and interpretation for us today. For instance, God is not spoken of as a Father in this book. The saints are not called sons. In the Psalms he is God the Father, not the Father God. The abiding presence of the Holy Spirit and the blessed hope of the New Testament are not in this book. Failure to recognize this has led many people astray in their interpretation of Psalm 2. The reference in this song is not to the rapture of the church, but to the second coming of Christ to the earth to

establish his kingdom and to reign in Jerusalem.

The imprecatory psalms have caused the most criticism because of their vindictiveness and prayers for judgment. These psalms came from a time of war and from a people who under law were looking for justice and peace on earth. You cannot have peace without putting down unrighteousness and rebellion. Apparently God intends to do just that, and he makes no apology for it. In his own time he will move in judgment upon this earth. In the New Testament the Christian is told to love his enemies, and it may startle you to read prayers in the Psalms that say some very harsh things about the enemy. But judgment is to bring justice upon this earth. Also there are psalms that anticipate the period when Antichrist will be in power. We have no reasonable basis to dictate how people would act or what they should pray for under such circumstances.

Other types of psalms include the penitential, historic, nature, pilgrim, hallel, missionary, puritan, acrostic, and praise of God's word.

The Book of Psalms is not arranged in a haphazard sort of way. One psalm will state a principle, and then there will follow several psalms that will be explanatory. Psalms 1-8 are an example of this. It is an orderly manner of arrangement, corresponding to the Pentateuch of Moses. There are Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy sections.

The correspondence between the Psalms and the Pentateuch is easily seen. For instance, in the Genesis section you see the perfect man in a state of blessedness, as in Psalm 1. Next you have the fall and recovery of man in view. Psalm 2 pictures the rebellious man. In Psalm 3 is the perfect man rejected. In Psalm 4 we see the conflict between the seed of the woman and the serpent. In Psalm 5 we find the perfect man in the midst of enemies. Psalm 6 presents the perfect man in the midst of chastisement with the bruising of his heel. In Psalm 7 we see the perfect man in the midst of false witnesses. Finally, in Psalm 8 we see the salvation of man coming through the bruising of the head. In Psalms 9-15 we see the enemy and Antichrist conflict and the final deliverance. Then in Psalms 16-41 we see Christ in the midst of his people sanctifying them to God.

Of the 219 quotations of the Old Testament in the New, 116 of them are from the Psalms. You will see 150 spiritual songs which undoubtedly at one time were all set to music.

B. Outline for Psalms

Book One: Psalms 1-41

Chapter

1. Two Ways of Life Contrasted
2. Coronation of the Lord's Anointed
3. Victory in the Face of Defeat
4. Evening Prayer for Deliverance
5. Morning Prayer for Guidance
6. Prayer for God's Mercy
7. Wickedness Justly Rewarded
8. God's Glory and Man's Dominion
9. Praise for Victory Over Enemies
10. Petition for God's Judgment
11. God Tests the Sons of Man
12. The Pure Words of the Lord
13. The Prayer for God's Answer – Now
14. The Characteristics of the Godless
15. The Characteristics of the Godly
16. Eternal Life for One Who Trusts
17. "Hide Me under the Shadow of Your Wings"
18. Thanksgiving for Deliverance by God
19. The Works and Words of God

20. Trust Not in Chariots and Horses but in God
21. Triumph of the King
22. Psalm of the Cross
23. Psalm of the Divine Shepherd
24. Psalm of the King of Glory
25. Acrostic Prayer for Instruction
26. "Examine Me, O Lord, and Prove Me"
27. Trust in the Lord and Be Not Afraid
28. Rejoice Because of Answered Prayer
29. The Powerful Voice of God
30. Praise for Dramatic Deliverance
31. "Be of Good Courage"
32. The Blessedness of Forgiveness
33. God Considers All Man's Works
34. Seek the Lord
35. Petition for God's Intervention
36. The Excellent Loving-kindness of God
37. "Rest in the Lord"
39. The Heavy Burden of Sin
40. Delight to Do God's Will
41. The Blessedness of Helping the Poor

Book Two: Psalms 42-72

Chapter

42. Seek After the Lord
43. "Hope in God"
44. Prayer for Deliverance by God
45. The Psalm of the Great King
46. "God Is Our Refuge and Strength"
47. The Lord Shall Subdue All Nations
48. The Praise of Mount Zion
49. Riches Cannot Redeem
50. The Lord Shall Judge All People
51. Confession and Forgiveness of Sin
52. The Lord Shall Judge All People
53. A Portrait of the Godless
54. The Lord Is Our Helper
55. "Cast Your Burden on the Lord"
56. Fears in the Midst of Trials
57. Prayers in the Midst of Perils
58. Wicked Judges Will Be Judged
59. Petition for Deliverance from Violent Men
60. A Prayer for Deliverance of the Nation
61. A Prayer When Overwhelmed

- 62. Wait for God
- 63. Thirst for God
- 64. A Prayer for God's Protection
- 65. God's Provision through Nature
- 66. Remember What God Has Done
- 67. God Shall Govern the Earth
- 68. God Is the Father of the Fatherless
- 69. Petition for God to Draw Near
- 70. Prayer for the Poor and Needy
- 71. Prayer for the Aged
- 72. The Reign of the Messiah

Book Three: Psalms 73-89

Chapter

- 73. The Perspective of Eternity
- 74. Request for God to Remember His Covenant
- 75. "God Is the Judge"
- 76. The Glorious Might of God
- 77. When Overwhelmed, Remember God's Greatness
- 78. God's Continued Guidance in Spite of Unbelief
- 79. Avenge the Defilement of Jerusalem
- 80. Israel's Plea for God's Mercy
- 81. God's Plea for Israel's Obedience

82. Rebuke of Israel's Unjust Judges
83. Plea for God to Destroy Israel's Enemies
84. The Joy of Dwelling with God
85. Prayer for Revival
86. "Teach Me Your Way, O Lord"
87. Glorious Zion, City of God
88. Crying from Deepest Affliction
89. Claiming God's Promises in Affliction

Book Four: Psalms 90-106

Chapter

90. "Teach Us to Number Our Days"
91. Abiding in "the Shadow of the Almighty"
92. It Is Good to Praise the Lord
93. The Majesty of God
94. Vengeance Belongs Only to God
95. Call to Worship the Lord
96. Declare the Glory of God
97. Rejoice! The Lord Reigns!
98. Sing a New Song to the Lord
99. "Exalt the Lord Our God"
100. "Serve the Lord with Gladness"
101. Commitments of a Holy Life
102. Prayer of an Overwhelmed Saint

- 103. Bless the Lord, All You People!
- 104. Psalm Rehearsing Creation
- 105. Remember, God Keeps His Promises
- 106. "We Have Sinned"

Book Five: Psalms 107-150

Chapter

- 107. God Satisfies the Longing Soul
- 108. Awake Early and Praise the Lord
- 109. Song of the Slandered
- 110. The Coming of the Priest-King-Judge
- 111. Praise for God's Tender Care
- 112. The Blessings of Those Who Fear God
- 113. The Condescending Grace of God
- 114. In Praise for the Exodus
- 115. To God Alone Be the Glory
- 116. Love the Lord for What He Has Done
- 117. The Praise of All Peoples
- 118. Better to Trust God than Man
- 119. An Acrostic in Praise of the Scriptures
- 120. A Cry in Distress
- 121. God Is Our Keeper
- 122. "Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem"

123. Pleas for the Mercy of God
124. God Is on Our Side
125. Trust in the Lord and Abide Forever
126. "Sow in Tears...Reap in Joy"
127. Children Are God's Heritage
128. Blessing on the House of the God-Fearing
129. Plea of the Persecuted
130. "My Soul Waits for the Lord"
131. A Childlike Faith
132. Trust in the God of David
133. Beauty of the Unity of the Brethren
134. Praise the Lord in the Evening
135. God Has Done Great Things!
136. God's Mercy Endures Forever
137. Tears in Exile
138. God Answered My Prayer
139. "Search Me, O God"
140. Preserve Me from Violence
141. "Set a Guard, O Lord, over My Mouth"
142. "No One Cares for My Soul"
143. "Teach Me to Do Your Will"
144. "What Is Man?"
145. Testify to God's Great Acts

- 146. "Do Not Put Your Trust in Princes"
- 147. God Heals the Brokenhearted
- 148. All Creation Praises the Lord
- 149. "The Lord Takes Pleasure in His People"
- 150. "Praise the Lord"

C. The Christ of Psalms

Many of the Psalms specifically anticipated the life and ministry of Jesus Christ, the One who came centuries later as the promised Messiah ("Anointed One"). There are five different kinds of Messianic psalms:

1. Typical Messianic

The subject of the psalm is in some respects a type of Christ Jesus (see 34:20); 69:4, 9).

2. Typical prophetic

The psalmist uses language to describe his present experience, which points beyond his own life and becomes historically true only in Christ (see 22).

3. Indirectly Messianic

At the time of composition the psalm refers to a king of the house of David in general, but awaits final fulfillment in Christ (see 2; 45; 72).

4. Purely prophetic

Refers solely to Christ without reference to any other son of David (see 110)

5. Enthronement

Anticipates the coming of Yahweh and the consummation of His kingdom which will be fulfilled in the person of Christ (see 96-99)

D. Specific Messianic Prophecies

Some of the specific messianic prophecies in the Book of Psalms include:

<u>Reference</u>	<u>Prophecy</u>	<u>Fulfillment</u>
2:7	God will declare Him to be His Son	Matthew 3:17
8:6	All things will be put under His feet	Hebrews 2:8
16:10	He will be resurrected from the dead.	Mark 16: 6, 7
22:1	God will forsake Him in His hour of need.	Matthew 27:46
22:7,8	He will be scorned and mocked.	Luke 23:35
22:16	His hands and feet will be pierced.	John 20:25, 27
22:18	Others will gamble for His clothes.	Matt. 27:35, 36
34:20	Not one of His bones will be broken	John 19:32,33,36
35:11	He will be accused by false witnesses	Mark 14:57
35:19	He will be hated without a cause.	John 15:25
40:7,8	He will come to do God's will.	Hebrews 10:7
41:9	He will be betrayed by a friend.	Luke 22:47
45:6	His throne will be forever.	Hebrews 1:8
68:18	He will ascend to God's right hand.	Mark 16:19
69:9	Zeal for God's house will consume Him.	John 2:17
69:21	He will be given vinegar and gall to drink.	Matthew 27:34
109:4	He will pray for His enemies.	Luke 23:34
109:8	His betrayer's office will be fulfilled by by another.	Acts 1:20

110:1 His enemies will be made subject to Him.	Matthew 22:44
110:4 He will be a priest like Melchizedek.	Hebrews 5:6
118:22 He will be the chief cornerstone.	Matthew 21:42
118:26 He will come in the Name of the Lord	Matthew 21:9

E. Keys to Psalms

1. Key word: Worship - The central theme of the book of Psalms is worship - God is worthy of all praise because of who He is, what He has done, and what He will do. His goodness extends through all time and eternity. The psalms present personal responses to God as they reflect on His program for His people. There is a keen desire to see His program fulfilled and His name extolled. Many of the psalms survey the Word of God and the attributes of God, especially during difficult times. This kind of faith produces confidence in His power in spite of circumstances.

The psalms were used in the two temples and some were part of the liturgical service. They also served as an individual and communal devotional guide.

2. Key verses: Psalm 19:14; 145:21
3. Key chapter: Psalm 100 - So many of the favorite chapters of the Bible are contained in the Book of Psalms that it is difficult to select the key chapter among such psalms as Psalms 1:22; 23; 24; 37; 72; 100; 101; 119; 121; and 150. The two central themes of worship and praise are beautifully wed in Psalm 100.

F. Survey of Psalms

The Psalter is really five books in one, and each book ends with a doxology (see chart). The last psalm is the closing doxology for the Book 5 and for the Psalter as a whole. After the psalms were written, editorial superscriptions or instructions were added to 116 of them. These superscriptions are historically accurate and are even numbered as the first verses in the Hebrew text.

1. These designations would divide the psalms as follows:
 - a. They designate fifty-seven psalms as "*mizmor*", (psalm) - a

song accompanied by a stringed instrument.

- b. Another twenty-nine are called "*shir*", (song), and thirteen are called "*maschil*", (contemplative poem).
 - c. Six are called "*miktam*", perhaps meaning epigram or inscription poem.
 - d. Five are termed "*tepillah*", (prayer - see Hab. 3)
 - e. One is called "*tehillah*", (praise - 145).
2. In addition to these technical terms, the psalms can be classified according to certain themes:
- a. Creation psalms (8, 19)
 - b. Exodus psalm (78)
 - c. Penitence (6)
 - d. Pilgrimage (120-134)
 - e. Messianic psalms (see Christ in Psalms)
3. There are 79 acrostic psalms in which the first verse or line begins with the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet, the next begins with the second, and so on (9, 10, 25, 34, 37, 111, 112, 119, 145).
4. First Chronicles 16:4 supports another approach to classification: "to invoke, to thank, and to praise the Lord, the God of Israel" (RSV). This leads to three basic types:
- a. Lament
 - b. Thanksgiving
 - c. Praise
5. The following classification further divides the psalms into ten types:
- a. Individual lament: Directly addressed to God, these psalms petition Him to rescue and defend an individual. They have these elements:

- An introduction (usually a cry to God)
- The lament
- A confession of trust in God
- The petition
- A declaration or vow of praise

Most psalms are of this type (e.g., 3-7, 12, 13, 22, 25-28, 35, 38-40, 42, 43, 51, 54-57, 59 61, 63, 64, 69-71, 86, 88, 102, 109, 120, 130, 140-143).

- b. Communal lament Psalms: The only difference is that the nation rather than an individual makes the lament (e.g., 44, 60, 74, 79, 80, 83, 85, 90, and 123).
- c. Individual thanksgiving Psalms: The psalmist publicly acknowledges God's activity on his behalf. These psalms thank God for something He has already done or express confidence in what He will yet do. They have these elements:
 - A proclamation to praise God
 - A summary statement
 - A report of deliverance
 - A renewed vow of praise (e.g., 18, 30, 32, 34, 40, 41, 66, 106, 116, and 138)
- d. Communal thanksgiving Psalms: In these psalms the acknowledgement is made by the nation rather than by an individual (see 124-129).
- e. General praise Psalms: These psalms are more general than the thanksgiving psalms. The psalmist attempts to magnify the name of God and boast about His greatness (see 8, 19, 29, 103, 104, 139, 148, 150). The joyous exclamation "hallelujah" (Praise the Lord!) is found in several of these psalms.

- f. Descriptive praise Psalms: These psalms praise God for His attributes and acts (e.g., 33, 36, 105, 111, 113, 117, 135, 136, 146, 147).
- g. Enthronement Psalms: These psalms describe Yahweh's sovereign reign over all (see 47, 93, 96-99). Some anticipate the kingdom rule of Christ.
- h. Pilgrimage songs: Also known as Songs of Zion, these psalms were sung by pilgrims traveling up to Jerusalem for the three annual religious feasts of Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles (see 43, 46, 48, 76, 84, 87, 120-134).
- i. Royal Psalms: The reigns of the earthly King and the heavenly King are portrayed in most of these psalms (e.g., 2, 18, 20, 21, 45, 72, 89, 101, 110, 132, and 144).
- j. Wisdom and didactic Psalms: The reader is exhorted and instructed in the way of righteousness (see 1, 37, 119).
- k. Imprecatory Psalms: There is a problem with the so-called imprecatory ("to call down a curse") psalms. These psalms invoke divine judgment on one's enemies (see 7, 35, 40, 55, 58, 59, 69, 79, 109, 137, 139, and 144). Although some of them seem unreasonably harsh, a few things should be kept in mind:
 - They call for divine justice rather than human vengeance
 - They ask for God to punish the wicked and thus vindicate His righteousness
 - They condemn sin (in Hebrew thinking no sharp distinction exists between a sinner and his sin)

A number of special musical terms (some obscure) are used in the superscriptions of the psalms. "To the Chief Musician" appears in fifty-five psalms indicating that there is a collection of psalms used by the conductor of music in the temple, perhaps for special occasions. "Selah" is used seventy-one times in the psalms and three times in Habakkuk 3. This word may mark a pause, a musical interlude, or a crescendo causing the listener or reader to stop and consider the thought.

G. Psalms: Bless the Lord, O' My Soul

Psalms is one of the most practical books of the Bible, wondrously suited to the human heart. It is special to every child of God, perhaps because there is no experience of the believer which does not find its counterpart in the Psalms. Someone, in speaking of the whole Bible as "the Temple of Truth" and the different books as different rooms of that temple, has called Psalms "The Music Room." It is filled with heavenly music suited to man's every experience.

H. Preparation for Study

1. Be acquainted with the various literary devices used by the authors of poetic writing. Some main ones are:
 - a. Simile: Comparison of two things, usually employing the words 'as' or 'like' (e.g., "The Lord is a sun and shield," Psalms 84:11).
 - b. Metaphor: Comparison of two things without using the words 'as' or 'like' (e.g., "The Lord is a sun and shield," (Psalms 84:11).
 - c. Hyperbole: Exaggeration for effect (e.g., "every night I make my bed swim, I dissolve my couch with my tears," Psalms 6:6).
 - d. Personification: Applying personality traits to inanimate objects (e.g., "all by bones will say, 'Lord, who is like Thee,'" Psalms 35:10).
 - e. Apostrophe: Addressing inanimate things (e.g., "What ails you, O sea that you flee?" Psalms 114:5).
 - f. Synecdoche: Representing the whole by a part, or a part of the whole (e.g., "the arrow that flies by day," Psalms 91:5).
2. Praise and prayer are keynotes of the Psalms.

I. Background

1. Title

The title in the Hebrew means "Praises" or "Book of Praises". The title in the Greek suggests the idea of an instrumental accompaniment. Our title comes from the Greek "*psalmos*". It is the book of worship. It is the hymn book of the temple.

2. Name

When the individual lyrics of David and the other authors were brought together as one anthology, possible as early as 500 B.C., the Hebrew title given to the anthology was "*tehillim*", meaning praise songs.

The Greek Septuagint translators gave the title "*Psalmoi*", meaning "songs to the accompaniment of a stringed instrument," and this was the Greek title used in the days of Jesus (read Acts 1:20).

3. Place in the Bible

In the Hebrew Scriptures the scroll of Psalms appeared at the beginning of the third division called "Writings." The three divisions of the Hebrew Bible are: Law, Prophets, and Writings (Luke 24:44). As such, this collection of sacred songs was the inspired prayer and praise book of the nation of Israel.

In the fourfold grouping of books in our English Bibles (law, history, poetry, prophets), the book of Psalms is the second book of the third division.

4. Authors

The book of Psalms is commonly spoken of as David's because he wrote the larger number of individual psalms (73 are ascribed to him in their titles). Psalms 2 is ascribed to him in Acts 4:25 and Psalms 95 is ascribed to him in Hebrews 4:7. He was known as "the sweet psalmist of Israel" (II Samuel 23:1), and had an extraordinary combination of talents. On one occasion he was referred to as being "a skillful musician, a mighty man of valor, a warrior, one prudent in speech, and a handsome man; and the Lord is with him" (I Samuel 16:18, II Samuel 6:5, 15). David could be the author of some of the "*Orphanic*" Psalms. He was peculiarly endowed to write songs from experience as well as a special aptitude for song writing. He arranged those in existence in his day for temple use.

Twenty-seven psalms are ascribed to authors other than David. They are descendants of Korah, ten; Asaph, twelve; Solomon, two; Etan, one; Heman, one; and Moses, ten.

Fifty psalms are anonymous. However, there is reason to believe that some of these were written by David. For example, Psalm 2 is ascribed to David in Acts 4:25. And Psalm 1 seems to be by the same author. Also compare I Chronicles 16:7-22 with Psalm 105 and I Chronicles 16:23-36 with Psalm 96.

David also arranged the Temple service song (I Chronicles 25), probably writing much of its music.

5. Dates

On the basis of authorship and historical references of some of the psalms were written over a period of about five hundred years, between 1000 and 500 B.C. Very little is known about the facts (who, when, why, and so forth) of the collection process of the psalms.

6. Types

Because many subjects are treated by the psalms, they have a wide application. The psalmist may be reviewing the past (history); envisioning the future (prophecy); or reflecting the present (experience). In all of the psalms the writer is responding to the very real fact of a living God and His relation to men. The outstanding subjects of the psalms have to do with God: the person of God, the Son of God, the Word of God, the works of God, and the people of God.

When classified more specifically as to subject matter and attitude of writing, many types emerge. These are the major types:

- a. Didactic. Psalms of formal instruction, (e.g., Psalms 1, 5, 7, 15, 17, 50, 73, 94, 101)
- b. History. These psalms are almost wholly composed of references to historical events of the nation of Israel. A summary of the highlights of practically all of Israel's history is given in the historical psalms (e.g., Psalms 78, 105, 106, 136).
- c. Hallelujah - The theme of praise (e.g., Psalms 106, 111-13, 115-17, 135, 146-150)
- d. Penitential. Confession of sin occupies the greater part of each of these. Psalm 51 is the classic example of this type (e.g., Psalms 6, 32, 38, 51, 102, 130, 143).
- e. Supplication. The psalmist cries to God in his own need, or he intercedes for another's need (e.g., Psalm 86).
- f. Thanksgiving. The note of praise and thanksgiving pervaded the whole book of Psalms, but some individual psalms are particularly thanksgiving psalms (e.g., Psalms 16:18).
- g. Messianic. There is a strong prophetic character of the Psalms. Many of the hymns prophesy the suffering and sorrows of God's people, Israel, and their coming deliverance, restoration, and blessing in a future glorious Kingdom. But,

- most of all, they prophesy of Christ in His two events: His first events in humiliation, and His second event in glory. Such psalms are called Messianic psalms. Some of the Old Testament's most minute prophecies of Christ are found here. They are about His person (God and man); His character (righteous and holy); His work (death and resurrection); and His offices (priest, judge, and king), (e.g., Psalms 2, 20, 24, 41, 68, 118).
- h. Nature. God's handiwork is an inspiring subject for any poetical writing (e.g., Psalms 8, 19, 29, 33, 65, 104).
 - i. Pilgrim. This group of psalms, each bearing the title "Song of Degrees," was probably a hymnbook used by the Jews on their pilgrimage up to the Temple on the occasions of the national feasts, (e.g., Psalms 120-34).
 - j. Imprecatory. The cursing passages of these psalms are generally looked upon with a great deal of perplexity. Many cannot understand how such utterances could be acceptable to God. The problem is answered when one recognizes the age and the setting of their writing.

A man of God writes: "It is important to realize that prior to the first event of Christ; the only tangible way in which the truth of Scripture could be demonstrated to human observers was by the pragmatic test of disaster befalling those who were in error and deliverance being granted to those who help the truth. As long as the wicked continued to triumph, their prosperity seemed to refute the holiness and sovereignty of the God of Israel. A Hebrew believer in the Old Testament age could only chafe in deep affliction of soul as long as such a state of affairs continued. Identifying himself completely with God's cause, he could only regard God's enemies as his own, and implore God to uphold His own honor and justify His own righteousness by inflicting a crushing destruction upon those who either in theory or in practice denied his sovereignty and His law".

One way to study the psalms systematically is to study them group by group, according to the classifications cited here.

J. Prominent Subjects

1. David

David, who wrote so many of the psalms, had given the reader an insight into the rich and varied experiences of his life with God, to the extent that no

other writer has done. He was, at different times in his life, a humble shepherd boy, a servant in the king's palace, a successful warrior, a fugitive, a great king, an exile, an old man. He was sometimes poor and sometimes rich, sometimes hated and sometimes beloved, sometimes persecuted and sometimes honored, sometimes obscure and sometimes prominent, sometimes profligate and sometimes penitent, sometimes sad and sometimes joyful. But in all these varied experiences, and under all these changing circumstances, David talked to God, pouring forth his heart, his thoughts, and his feelings to his Maker. David's utterances to God at these times are recorded in the psalms, and, as the psalms are inspired by the Holy Spirit, they show us what kind of talking to God and what kind of heart attitude is acceptable to Him when we, too, pass through similar experiences.

2. Names of God

God himself is the key person of the Psalms, for without Him there could be no song at all. Observe how God is identified, whether by name, attribute, or action ascribed to Him. Four names of God are prominent in Psalms: El, Adonai, Jehovah, and *Shaddai*.

3. Worship and praise

Many of the psalms are about Mount Zion, its sanctuary, and worship by God's people. Beginning at Psalm 90 most of the hymns are of a liturgical nature, associated with public worship. It is not difficult to see why Psalms is sometimes called the hymnbook of Scripture. Praise is the dominant note of these psalms. The last five psalms (Psalms 146-150) are the climatic group, and are appropriately called "The Great Hallel," or "The Hallelujah Chorus."

One man of God wrote of Psalm 150: "We have now reached the last summit of the mountain chain of Psalms. It raises high into the clear azure, and its brow is bathed in the sunlight of the eternal world of worship. It is rapture. The poet-prophet is full of inspiration and enthusiasm. He stays not to argue, to teach, to explain; but cries with burning words, 'Praise him, Praise him, Praise ye the Lord.'"

4. Sin and righteousness

Since man's worship of God is a prominent theme in the Psalms, the spiritual conditions for such access to a holy God are referred to throughout the book. Psalm 1 which in many ways introduces the whole book of Psalms, clearly distinguishes between the righteous man and the wicked man. The righteous man fellowships with God; sin is a wall that separates sinful man from God.

There is a clean-cut distinction between sin and righteousness, the wicked and the righteous. The prominence of this subject in Psalms is supported by the repetition of such words as these:

- a. "righteous" and "righteousness" - over 130
- b. "sin" and "iniquity" - at least 65
- c. "good" and "evil" - about 40 times
- d. "judgment" and its cognates - more than 100 times

5. Prophecies of Christ

The Messianic psalms prophesy about the person and work of Christ. In many ways the prophecies supplement what the New Testament records about Christ. For example we read in Matthew 27:35-36 that men nailed Jesus to the cross; that they parted His garments among them and cast lots over His vesture; that they sat around the cross and watched His sufferings. The gospels also record a few words which Jesus spoke at this time. But they do not reveal much of the thoughts and feelings of Jesus.

It is Psalm 22 that affords us the experience of listening to Jesus communing with His Father in that dread hour. Notice that Matthew 27:35 states that Psalm 22 is a prophecy of Christ. We recognize the agonized cry of the opening verse of the psalm, and such verses as 16 and 18 shows that the prophecy goes far beyond any of David's experiences.

The Messianic psalms speak of Christ as the royal Messiah (Ps. 2, 18, 20, 21, 44, 61, 72, 89, 110, 132); the suffering Messiah (Ps. 22, 35, 41, 55, 69, 109); and the Son of man (Ps. 16, 40). Other Messianic psalms are: Ps. 23, 24, 31, 50, 68, 96-98, 102, 118.

K. Features

The Psalms record deep devotion, intense feeling, exalted emotion, and dark dejection. They play upon the keyboard of the human soul with all the stops pulled out. It is located at the very center of God's word. Psalm 119 is in the very center of the word of God, and it exalts his word.

This book has blessed the hearts of multitudes down through the ages. Ambrose, one of the great saints of the church said, "The Psalms are the voices of the

church". Augustine said, "They are the epitome of the whole Scripture". Martin Luther said, "They are a little book for all saints.

It has been said that there are 126 psychological experiences, with all of them recorded in the book of Psalms. It is the only book which contains every experience of a human being. The Psalms run the psychological gamut. Every thought, every impulse, every emotion that sweeps over the soul is recorded in this book.

The place Psalms have held in the lives of God's people testifies to their universality, although they have a peculiar Jewish application. They express the deep feelings of all believing hearts in all generation.

L. Applications

The psalms are unsurpassed for devotional reading. Every reader can identify with them because their authors write as those totally dependent on God's grace and mercy, which He gives to undeserving sinners. Only eternity will reveal how many souls in desperation have fled to psalm for help and strength.

IV. PROVERBS

A. Outline of Proverbs

I.	The Purpose of Proverbs	1:1-7
II.	Proverbs to the Youth	1:8-9:18
A.	Obey Parents	1:8, 9
B.	Avoid Bad Company	1:10-19
C.	Seek Wisdom	1:20-2:22
D.	Benefits of Wisdom	3:1-26
E.	Be Kind to Others	3:27-35
F.	Father Says Get Wisdom	4:1-13
G.	Avoid the Wicked	4:14-22
H.	Keep Your Heart	4:23-27
I.	Do Not Commit Adultery	5:1-14

J.	Do Be Faithful to Your Spouse	5:15-23
K.	Avoid Surety	6:1-5
L.	Do Not Be Lazy	6:6-19
M.	Do Not Commit Adultery	6:20-7:27
N.	Praise of Wisdom	8:1-9:12
O.	Foolish Woman	9:13-18
III.	Proverbs of Solomon	10:1-24:34
A.	Contrasting the Godly and the Wicked	10:1-15:33
B.	Proverbs Encouraging Godly Lives	16:1-22:16
C.	Proverbs Concerning Various Situations	22:17-24:34
IV.	Solomon's Proverbs Copied by Hezekiah's Men	25:1-29:27
A.	Proverbs Regulating Relationships	25:1-26:28
B.	Proverbs Regulating Various Activities	27:1-29:27
V.	The Words of Agur	30:1-33
VI.	The Words of King Lemuel	31:1-31
A.	Wisdom for Leaders	31:1-9
B.	Wise Woman	31:10-31

B. Writer

Solomon is the writer of three books of poetry, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon. Proverbs is the book on wisdom. Ecclesiastes is the book on folly. Song of Solomon is the book on love. Love is the happy medium between wisdom and folly. Solomon was an expert on all three subjects. The word of God says that he spoke 3,000 proverbs and wrote 1,005 songs (I Kings 4:32). We would wonder about the songs he wrote, as we have only one of his songs. In reality, we have few of his proverbs. His wisdom was the greatest man had known to his time, and its breadth extended to trees, plant life, fish, fowl, beasts, and much more, (I Kings 4:33,34).

In the book of Proverbs, we read the Wisdom of Solomon. A proverb is a saying that conveys a specific truth in a pointed and pithy way. Proverbs are short sentences drawn from long experience. A proverb is a truth that is couched in a form that is easy to remember, a philosophy based on experience, and a rule for conduct. A proverb has been called a sententious sentence, a maxim, an old saying, an old saw, a bromide, and an epigram.

C. Key Verse

The key verse is found in the first chapter, verse 7.

D. Features

The orient and the ancient east are the home of proverbs. Probably Solomon gathered many of them from other sources. He was the editor of them all and the author of many. This means that we have an inspired record of proverbs either Solomon's or from other sources, but God has put his stamp upon them.

It should be noted that there is a change in the pronoun in the book from the second person to the third person. The conclusion of scholars is that the proverbs which used the second person were taught to Solomon by his teachers, and the proverbs using the third person were composed by Solomon himself.

Some characteristics we should note include:

1. Proverbs bears no unscientific statement or inaccurate observation. For example, Proverbs 4:23 speaks of keeping our hearts with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life. This is a remarkable statement because it wasn't until about 2,700 years later that it was discovered that the blood circulates and that the heart is the pump. In contrast, in an apocryphal book called the Epistle of Barnabas, mention is made of the mythical phoenix, a bird that consumes itself by fire and rises in resurrection. Such a fable does not appear in the book of proverbs or anywhere else in the Bible. It is strange that here is an ancient book that contains hundreds of proverbs and not one of them is unscientific today.

2. Proverbs is a book on a high moral plane.

You will not find in its pages the immoral sayings which occur in other writings. Justin Martyr said that Socrates was a Christian before Christ, which is of course an impossibility. His admirers say that he portrays a high conception of morals. However, Socrates also gave instructions to harlots on how to conduct themselves.

3. Proverbs does not contradict itself.

Man's proverbs often are in opposition to each other. You can see this often, as in:

- a. "look before you leap" vs. "he who hesitates is lost"
- b. "a man gets no more than he pays for" vs. the best things in life are free"
- c. "leaves well enough alone" vs. progress never stands still"
- d. "a rolling stone gathers no moss" vs. a setting hen does not get fat"

The proverbs of man contradict each other, because men's ideas differ. There is no contradiction in the book of Proverbs because it is inspired by God.

While the book of Proverbs seems to be a collection of sayings without any particular regard for orderly arrangement, some of us believe that it tells a story. You can see this story begin to unfold as the young man gets his first lesson starting out in life in chapter 1, verse 7, which is the key to the book.

The advice given in the book of Proverbs transcends all dispensations. Whether one lives in Old Testament or New Testament times, its truths are still true. It is not a hodgepodge of unrelated statements, nor is it a discourse on mundane things. It is a book that makes sense, and it does have an arrangement and an organization. Solomon has something to say about his own teaching, which he divulges in Ecc. 12:9: "the preacher was wise, teaching the people knowledge, and giving good heed to it, while he set in order many proverbs".

E. Literary Structure of Proverbs

A man of God has written a helpful analysis:

"The literary form of Proverbs is mostly in the form of couplets. The two clauses of the couplet are generally related to each other by what has been termed parallelism, according to Hebrew poetry". Hebrew poetry does not have meter or rhyme as most poetry does. Hebrew poetry consists of a parallelism of ideas. Three kinds of parallelism have been pointed out:

1. "Synonymous parallelism"

Here the second clause restates what is given in the first clause, expressing the same thought in a different way (see 19:29).

2. "Antithetic (contrast) parallelism".

Here a truth, which is stated in the first clause, is made stronger in the second clause by contrast with an opposite truth, see 13:9.

3. "Synthetic parallelism"

The second clause develops the thought of the first, as in 20:2.

F. Survey of Proverbs

Proverbs is the most intensely practical book in the Old Testament because it teaches skillful living in the multiple aspects of everyday life. Its specific precepts include instruction on wisdom and folly, the righteous and wicked, the tongue, pride and humility, justice and vengeance, the family, laziness and work, poverty and wealth, friends and neighbors, love and lust, anger and strife, masters and servants, life and death. Proverbs touches upon every facet of human relationships, and its principles transcend the bounds of time and culture.

The Hebrew word for proverb ("marshal") means comparison, similar, parallel. A proverb uses a comparison or figure of speech to make a pithy but poignant observation. Proverbs have been defined as simple illustrations that expose fundamental realities of life. These maxims are not theoretical but practical; they are easily memorized, based on real-life experience, and designed for use in the mainstream of life. The proverbs are general statements and illustrations of timeless truth, which allow for, but do not condone, exceptions to the rule. The key word is "*hokhmah*", (wisdom): it literally means "skill" (in living). Wisdom is more than shrewdness or intelligence. Instead it relates to practical righteousness and moral acumen. The book of Proverbs may be divided into six segments: 1. the purpose (1:1-7), 2. The proverbs to youth (1:8-9:18), 3. Solomon's (10:1-24:34), 4. Solomon's copied by Hezekiah's men (25:1-29:27), 5. Words of Agur (30:1-33) and 6. Words of King Lemuel (31:1-31)

1. The purpose of Proverbs (1:1-7):

The brief prologue states the author, theme, and purpose of the book

2. The proverbs to the youth (1:8-9:18):

Following the introduction, there is a series of ten exhortations, each beginning with "My son" (1:8-9:18). These messages introduce the concept of wisdom in the format of a father's effort to persuade his son to pursue the path of wisdom in order to achieve godly success in life. Wisdom rejects the invitation of crime and foolishness, regards seekers of wisdom on every level, and wisdom's discipline provides freedom and safety (1-4). Wisdom protects one from illicit sensuality and its consequences, from foolish practices and laziness, and from adultery and the lure of the harlot (5-7). Wisdom is to be preferred to folly because of its divine origin and rich benefits (8 & 9). There are four kinds of fools, ranging from those who are naive and uncommitted to scoffers who arrogantly despise the way of God. The fool is not mentally deficient; he is self-sufficient, ordering his life as if there were no God.

3. Proverbs of Solomon (10:1-24:34):

There is a minimal amount of topical arrangement in these chapters. There are some thematic clusters (e.g., 26:1-12, 13-16, 20-22), but the usual units are one verse maxims. It is helpful to assemble and organize these proverbs according to such specific themes as money and speech. This Solomonic collection consists of 375 proverbs of Solomon. Chapters 10-15 contrast right and wrong in practice, and all but nineteen proverbs use antithetic parallelism, that is, parallels of paired opposite principles. Chapters 16:1-22:16 offer a series of self-evident moral truths and all but eighteen proverbs uses synonymous parallelism, that is, parallels of paired identical or similar principles. The words of wise men (22:17-24:34) are given in two groups. The first group includes thirty distinct sayings (22:17-24:22), and six more are found in the second group (24:23-34).

4. Proverbs of Solomon copied by Hezekiah's men (25:1-29:27):

This second Solomonic collection was copied and arranged by "the men of Hezekiah (25:1). These proverbs in chapters 25-29 further develop the themes in the first Solomonic collection.

5. The words of Agur (30:1-33):

The last two chapters of Proverbs form an appendix of sayings by two otherwise unknown sages, Agur and Lemuel. Most of Agur's material is given in clusters of numerical proverbs.

6. The words of King Lemuel (31:1-31):

The last chapter includes an acrostic of twenty-two verses (the first letter of each verse consecutively follows the complete Hebrew alphabet) portraying a virtuous wife (31:10-31).

G. Proverbs: Walking in the Fear of the Lord

Proverbs is the second of the three Bible books designated as "Wisdom Literature," the other two being Job and Ecclesiastes. One man of God identifies the "wisdom" theme of Proverbs as a message about the fear of God.

The book of Proverbs contains the distilled essence of wisdom which is based on a fear of God, setting forth in remarkable figures of speech, with innumerable contrasting clauses, what is right and what is wrong, in the sight of God, pertaining to man's conduct...The basic truth constantly affirmed in Proverbs is expressed in the famous statement, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom" (1:7 and 15:33).

H. Preparation for Study

What different things does the word wisdom suggest to you? With the help of a concordance, study what the New Testament teaches about true wisdom. Compare your findings with the following description of the Old Testament concept of wisdom.

In the Old Testament there are six different Hebrew words setting forth various aspects of wisdom, as discernment, knowledge, meditation, prudence, etc. Wisdom among the Hebrews differs from wisdom among Oriental peoples in that it rested firmly on a personal and holy God. It assumes that the universe is regulated by reason and law. It is practical and not speculative as it was with the Greeks. Its exhortations have a universal application - it is interesting to note that neither the word Israel nor Jerusalem is even referred to in Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, or Job. Wisdom is derived from experience and is often expressed in similitudes and parables taken from nature, rarely by historical events. The wise man, according to the Old Testament, is one who walks in the way of the Lord, which is a way of truth and righteousness, whose life is consequently blessed by God, and is a benediction to those within his family and circle of influence, and brings contentment to his own heart.

I. Background

God inspired the writings of Proverbs partly as an antidote to the spiritual apostasy of His people, Israel. Like all Scripture, the book of Proverbs arose out of an immediate, local setting, involving people and their relationship to each other and to God. An understanding of the setting and characteristics of this twentieth book of

the Bible greatly enhances one study of its text.

The common title of the book is Proverbs, from the opening phrase "The proverbs of Solomon" in 1:1. The Hebrew word for proverb, "mashal", comes from a root meaning to be like, or to represent. Most proverbs use comparison to teach their truths, as in 25:28. Proverbs are terse maxims about conduct and character, primarily in the realms of the spiritual, moral, and social.

Most proverbs originated with Solomon, son of David. Chapters 30 and 31 are assigned to Agur and Lemuel, respectively, whose identities are unknown. If the wise men of Proverbs 22:17 lived before Solomon's time, Solomon may have been the one to assemble their writings and add them to his own.

The proverbs of chapters 25-29 were written by Solomon and edited about two hundred years later by a committee appointed by King Hezekiah. Some think that this group called men of Hezekiah (25:1) may have included Isaiah and Micah, who were contemporaries of Hezekiah.

Solomon is the author of three books in the Bible. One commentator has suggested this possibility of the books being written at different stages of his career. Song of Solomon was written when he was young and in love. Proverbs was written during middle age, when his intellectual powers were at their peak. Ecclesiastes was written in Solomon's old age, when he was disappointed and disillusioned with the carnality of much of his life.

As noted above, most of Proverbs was written by Solomon. This would date his work around 950-900 B.C. Hezekiah's collection was formed around 700 B.C. The various groups of proverbs were brought together as one book around that date, 700 B.C.

Proverbs and Psalms are written close together. David's psalms give us a vivid view of the worship of God's people before the kingdom's decline, and the book of Proverbs reflects the zealous concern of believers for a righteous walk. The prophets came later, during the years of Israel's apostasy and idolatry, it to call the people to a saving knowledge of God.

J. Purpose

Read 1:2-4 and note the book's own statement of its purpose: to impart wisdom. This wisdom is not mere head knowledge, but divinely enlightened understanding of what is good and what is evil (1 Kings 3:9), and a personal experiential knowledge of the Lord.

Solomon also wrote about the purpose of his proverbs in Ecclesiastes 12:9-14. Compare the passage with the phrase "instruction for righteousness" of II Timothy

3:16 (KJV).

One cannot help but be impressed after reading Proverbs that God is so vitally interested in the smallest details of the daily walk of His children.

K. Place in the Bible

In the English canon, Proverbs is the third of the five poetical books. In the Hebrew canon, it is the second of eleven books in the final section called "Writings." In both canons it follows Psalms. The New Testament writers quote and allude to Proverbs several times. Read the references listed below:

PROVERBS	N. T. QUOTE OR ALLUSION
3:7	Romans 12:16
25:21-22	Romans 12:20
3:34	James 4:6
24:21	I Peter 2:17
16:7	I Peter 3:13
11:31	I Peter 4:18
26:11	II Peter 2:22
3:11-12	Hebrews 12:5-6
4:26	Hebrews 12:13
10:12	I Peter 4:8
22:9	II Corinthians 9:7
25:6-7	Luke 14:10

The epistle of James is one book of the New Testament which concentrates on the conduct of believers, just as Proverbs does in the Old Testament. In fact, James is sometimes referred to as Proverbs of New Testament.

The relation of Proverbs to Christ is deeper than appears on the surface. A foundational connection is that wisdom spoken of in Proverbs is found completely in

Christ (I Corinthians 1:30). "The aspiration in Proverbs is for wisdom to become incarnate (Proverbs 8), as indeed it did when 'all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge' became flesh in Christ (Colossians 2:3)." The "wise" man of Proverbs is the righteous man. And no man is righteous except as he is clothed with the righteousness of Christ. So the truly wise man today is the born again Christian.

L. Literary Characteristics

1. Type

As noted earlier, the book of Proverbs is classified as "Wisdom Literature." In Old Testament times Israel was ruled by judges and kings, and ministered to by such groups as priests, prophets, scribes, historians, singers, and "wise men," or philosophers. King David was both king and singer. His son Solomon was both king and philosopher. Hebrew "wise men" were usually elders associated with schools of wisdom who share their practical views of life and the world with their Jewish brethren.

2. Style

The following descriptions show the variety of styles and forms in which the proverbs appear:

- a. Various forms: poetry, brief parables, sharp questions, minute stories. 1:20-33 "Wisdom's Cry of Warning" (a dramatic monologue) 3:1-10 "The Commandment and Reward" (a sonnet)
- b. Common devices: Antitheses - comparing opposite things (16:22) Comparison - comparing similar things (17:10 Imagery
- using picture language (26:27) Personification
- assigning personality to an inanimate thing (9:1)
- c. Prominent teaching method: contrast - scan chapters 10-15 and note the repeated word "but."
- d. Length: Unit proverbs (one to four verses); and clusters (group of unit proverbs). In the early chapters the common unit proverb is one verse. An example of a cluster is the passage about fools in 26:1-12.
- e. Symmetry: Most of the proverbs are symmetrical (e.g., the

antithetical maxims of two lines connected by the word "but").

M. Prominent Subjects

1. King Solomon

- a. The book of Proverbs is not a narrative about Solomon, but its pages reveal much about this wise man. Solomon was a unique character in many ways; he was musician, poet, botanist, zoologist, businessman, administrator, and king. From I Kings 3:12 and 4:29 we learn that his wisdom was a direct gift from God. This was in answer to Solomon's petition (I Kings 3:5-9). He was the author of 3,000 proverbs and 1,005 songs (I Kings 4:32). Read I Kings 3:16-28; ; 4:29-34; and 10:1-9, noting other things said about Solomon.
- b. Personal ethics. The proverbs are God's detailed instructions and exhortations to His people concerning their thought-and-deed life. Much of the book is addressed especially to young people (e.g., 1:4, 8). The proverbs are mainly about personal ethics, not as the sinner's way to God, but as the believer's walk with God on this earth. Although the book is not intended to elaborate on the way of salvation, such key phrases as "the fear of the Lord" (1:7) tell basically how a sinner is brought into fellowship with God. The counsel of Proverbs is profitable for all people - saved or unsaved - but the unsaved do not gain salvation by performing good deeds (Ephesians 2:8-9).
- c. Variety of illustrations and applications. The list of different subjects written about in Proverbs seems endless: wisdom, sin, tongue, wealth, pride, idleness, love, pleasure, success, temperance, and morals. Contrasting subjects include: God and man; time and eternity; truth and falsehood; wealth and poverty; purity and impurity; justice and injustice; pleasure and misery. Topics about evil people: prating fool; talebearer; whisperer; backbiter; false boaster; and speculator. Those about social relations include: master and servant; rich and poor; husband and wife; parents and children.

N. Applications

The book of Proverbs is filled with commands and exhortations about daily conduct. The reader has hardly begun to read the book when he is confronted with such words as "If sinners entice you, do not consent" (1:10). God knew that His people would need to be reminded again and again about how to think, speak, and act, so He inspired the writing and collection of Proverbs.

Here are some suggestions for interpreting the maxims of Proverbs, leading to application:

1. Recognize that the proverbs are instructions from the Lord, not mere secular maxims. It is very significant that the name "Lord" (Jehovah) appears 86 times in the book.
2. Interpret "wisdom" in the book as representing righteousness, or holiness, which describes the heart of that person who truly knows God. Likewise, interpret such words as "fool" and "folly" as representing wickedness of the unsaved man.
3. Recognize the device of personification whenever it appears in the book. For example, the foolish woman of 9:13-15 is not primarily an individual person as such, but spiritual folly, or wickedness (the opposite of spiritual wisdom, or righteousness).
4. Let the surrounding verses shed light on a proverb when its meaning is unclear. However, because of the miscellaneous character of the listings of many proverbs, it may be necessary to refer to more distant verses (e.g., in another chapter or event in another book) where a similar phrase appears, for its clarification. (For example, the phrase "strange woman" in 20:16 KJV, is partly explained by 2:16.) An exhaustive concordance is a valuable help here.
5. When the most obvious interpretation of a proverb seems to contradict another Scripture, seek its deeper meaning. (Proverbs 10:27 and Genesis 4; and Proverbs 16:7 and Acts 14:19.)
6. If a proverb is unclear or ambiguous in the Bible version you are using, compare the reading of a modern paraphrase.
7. Let the key verse 1:7 be the controller of all your interpretations of the many proverbs of this book of God.

The book of Proverbs is very practical because it concerns the believer's daily walk. It does not include much doctrine but it does emphasize practice. Proverbs truly shows how the believer "may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things" (Titus 2:10, KJV). Even unbelievers recognize the value of Proverbs as a manual

for conduct. How much more should it apply to Christians, who have the indwelling Spirit to help them live the life it describes.

V. ECCLESIASTES

A. Outline of Ecclesiastes

Part One: The Thesis That "All Is Vanity" (1:1-11)

- I. Introduction of Vanity 1:1-3
- II. Illustration of Vanity 1:4-11

Part Two: The Proof That "All Is Vanity" (1:12-6:12)

- I. Proof of "All Is Vanity" from Experience 1:12-2:26
 - A. Vanity of Striving After Wisdom 1:12-18
 - B. Vanity of Striving After Pleasure 2:1-3
 - C. Vanity of Great Accomplishments 2:4-17
 - D. Vanity of Hard Labor 2:18-23
 - E. Conclusion: Be Content 2:24-26
- II. Proof of "All Is Vanity" from Observation 3:1-6:12
 - A. Immutability of God's Program 3:1-22
 - B. Inequalities of Life 4:1-16
 - C. Insufficiencies of Human Religion 5:1-7
 - D. Insufficiencies of Wealth 5:8-20
 - E. Inescapable Vanity of Life 6:1-12

Part Three: The Counsel for Living with Vanity (7:1-12:14)

- I. Coping In A Wicked World 7:1-9:18

A.	Wisdom and Folly Contrasted	7:1-14
B.	Wisdom of Moderation	7:15-18
C.	Strength of Wisdom	7:19-29
D.	Submit to Authority	8:1-9
E.	Inability to Understand All God's Doing	8:10-17
F.	Judgment Comes to All Men	9:1-6
G.	Enjoy Life While You Have It	9:7-12
H.	Value of Wisdom	9:13-18
II.	Counsel for the Uncertainties of Life	10:1-12:8
A.	Wisdom's Characteristics	10:1-15
B.	Wisdom Related to the King	10:16-20
C.	Wisdom Related to Business	11:1-6
D.	Wisdom Related to the Youth	11:7-12:8
III.	Conclusion: "Fear God and Keep His Commandments"	12:9-14

B. Writer

Solomon is the writer. This fact is very well established among conservative expositors, and there is no other reasonable explanation for the book. In this book we see the foolishness of Solomon contrasted with the Wisdom of Solomon in Proverbs.

C. Vanity under the Sun, but Hope is in God

It is a book that investigates life and tells what kind of life is worth living. It is the quest of a soul who sees only vanity all about him until his eyes are opened to see the hope offered by God. The book has been described as a confession of failure and pessimism when God is excluded.

Ecclesiastes is a perplexing book to many, partly because its perspectives and purposes are not understood. The background that follows will help to throw light

on these important concerns.

Throughout the book of Ecclesiastes, Solomon presents the position of one who is searching for truth and reality and meaning. From this standpoint, then, it would be correct to say that it is a book of philosophy and not doctrine. Keep this in mind to avoid misinterpretation and to reap maximum instruction.

E. Background

Not many details are known about the immediate setting of Ecclesiastes. This lack only serves to let the book shine forth in its essential quality, as a timeless and contemporary message to all generations since its writing.

1. Title

The title for this book comes from the opening phrase, "The words of the Preach" (1:1). The word "Preacher" is traced back to the original Hebrew text as follows: Hebrew - "*goholeth*" - from "*gahal*", meaning to assemble; Greek version - *ecclesiastes* - from "*ek*", meaning out of, and "*klesis*", meaning a calling; English - Preacher (1:1) - one who speaks to an assembly of people. In Old Testament days a *goholeth* was an official speaker to an assembly of people.

2. Author

The author is not named in the Bible text. In 1;1, he is identified as "the son of David, king of Jerusalem." Internal evidences favor the traditional view that Solomon is meant by this phrase. The following descriptions in the text coincide with what is known about Solomon from the historical record (e.g., 1 Kings).

- a. The author's unrivaled wisdom (1:16)
- b. His wealth (2:8)
- c. His extensive building projects (2:4-6)
- d. His collection of Proverbs (12:9)

3. Place in the Bible

Ecclesiastes is the fourth of five poetical books in our English Bible: Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon. In the Hebrew Bible it is the fourth of five Megilloth writings: Song of Solomon, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther. (Lamentations is included because it is

written in poetical style also).

D. Style

Proverbs, Job, Ecclesiastes, and parts of other Old Testament books are classified as "Wisdom Literature." The style of these books is that of the philosopher who shares his observations, reflections, reasoning's, and conclusions in verse and brief lines, often in poetical form. Throughout the book the author shows two opposite life views. First, he views things around him as the natural man would do, without the light of divine revelation. But the author writes as one to whom God has revealed Himself, and now his observations and conclusions have the ring of surety and hope.

When the author writes from the second perspective, it is not as one who knows God from full revelation. He views life as a man does who knows and worships God primarily as Creator. This is confirmed by the fact that every time he names Him he uses the word "Elohim", which is the name especially associated with work of creation. The name "Lord" (Jehovah), which is the Old Testament equivalent of Redeemer-Savior, does not appear once in the book. Today when he reader of Ecclesiastes reaches the last command of the book, to fear God, he is ready to be introduced to Christ the redeemer (Heb. 1:1).

E. The Christ of Ecclesiastes

Ecclesiastes convincingly portrays the emptiness and perplexity of life without a relationship with the Lord. Each person has eternity in his heart (3:11), and only Christ can provide ultimate satisfaction, joy, and wisdom. Man's highest good is found in the "one Shepherd" (12:11) who offers abundant life (John 10:9, 10).

F. Keys to Ecclesiastes

1. Key word: Vanity

Ecclesiastes reports the results of a diligent quest for purpose, meaning, and satisfaction in human life. The Preacher poignantly sees the emptiness and futility of power, popularity, prestige, and pleasure apart from God. The word vanity appears thirty-seven times to express the many things that cannot be understood about life. All earthly goals and ambitions when pursued as ends in themselves lead to dissatisfaction and when pursued as ends in themselves lead to dissatisfaction and frustration. Life "under the sun" (used twenty-nine times) seems to be filled with inequities, uncertainties, changes in fortune, and violations of justice. Then again, the phrase "I said in my heart" lets us know that the cogitations of a man's heart is contained herein. But Ecclesiastes does not give an answer of atheism or skepticism; God is referred to throughout. In fact, it claims that the search for man's "*summum*

bonum" must end in God. Satisfaction in life can be found only by looking beyond this world. Ecclesiastes gives an analysis of negative themes but it also develops the positive theme of overcoming the vanities of life by fearing a God who is good, just, and sovereign (12:13, 14). Wisdom involves seeing life from a divine perspective and trusting God in the face of apparent futility and lack of purpose. Life is a daily gift from God and it should be enjoyed as much as possible (see 2:24-26; 3:12, 13, 22; 5:18-20; 8:15; ;9:7-10; ;11:8, 9). Our comprehension is indeed limited, but there are many things we can understand, *Qoheleth* recognized that ultimately God will judge all people. Therefore he exhorted: "Fear God and keep His commandments" (12:13).

2. Key verses: Ecclesiastes 2:24 and 12:13, 14

3. Key chapter: Twelve

At the end of the book of Ecclesiastes, the Preacher looks at life through "binoculars." On the other hand, from the perspective of the natural man only sees life "under the sun," the conclusion is, "All is vanity. Life's every activity, even though pleasant for the moment, becomes purposeless and futile when viewed as an end in itself.

The Preacher carefully documents the latter view with a long list of his own personal pursuits in life. No amount of activities or possessions has satisfied the craving of his heart. Every earthly prescription for happiness has left the same bitter after taste. It is only when the Preacher views his life from God's perspective "above the sun" does it take on meaning as a precious gift "from the hand of God" (2:24).

Chapter 12 resolves the book's extensive inquiry into the meaning of life with the single collusion, "Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man" (12:13).

G. Purposes of Ecclesiastes

The purposes of Ecclesiastes are to show the futility of pursuing materialistic, earthly goals as an end in themselves, and to point to God as the source of all that is truly good. The theme of the book is determined by these purposes, and may be stated in this twofold way:

1. Every pursuit of man is futile if God is excluded.
2. Only God's work endures, so that only He can impart true value to man's life and service.

The purpose of any book of the Bible is important to the correct understanding of it.

Man has tried to be happy without God; it is being tried every day by millions of people. This book shows the absurdity of the attempt. Solomon was the wisest of men, and he had a wisdom that was God-given. He tried every field of endeavor and pleasure that is known to man and his conclusion was that all is vanity. The word vanity means empty, purposeless. Satisfaction in life can never be attained in this manner.

God showed Job, a righteous man that he was a sinner in His sight. God showed Solomon, the wisest man, that he was a fool in God's sight. In spite of all the attempts of the learned unregenerate men to be wise, they are fools in the sight of God. Knowledge and information are worth nothing without the basic principle of the fear of the Lord, which is the basis of wisdom.

H. Estimations of the Book

In Ecclesiastes we learn that without Christ we cannot be satisfied - even if we possess the whole world and all the things that men consider necessary to make their hearts content. The world cannot satisfy the heart because the heart is too large for the object. In the Song of Solomon we will learn that if we turn from the world and set our affections on Christ, we cannot fathom the infinite preciousness of his love, the object being too large for the heart.

I. Survey of Ecclesiastes

Ecclesiastes is a profound and problematic book. It is the record of an intense search for meaning and satisfaction in life on this earth, especially in view of all the iniquities and apparent absurdities that surround us. It takes the perspective of the greatest answers that wisdom under the sun produce. If the Preacher is identified as Solomon, Ecclesiastes was written from a unique vantage point. The book is difficult to synthesize, and several alternate approaches have been used. The one used here is: the thesis that "all is vanity" (1:1-11), the proof that "all is vanity" (1:12-6:12), the counsel for living with vanity (7:1-12:14).

The Preacher describes his multiple quests for meaning and satisfaction as he explores his vast personal resources. He begins with wisdom in 1:12-18, but finds that "he who increases knowledge increases sorrow." Due to his intense perception of reality he experiences just the reverse of "ignorance is bliss." The Preacher moves from wisdom to laughter, hedonism, and wine and then turns to works, women and wealth; but all lead to emptiness.

The Book of Ecclesiastes is a dramatic autobiography of King Solomon's life when he was away from God. As the book of Proverbs reveals Solomon's wisdom, the book of Ecclesiastes reveals his foolishness.

This is not a book without rhyme or reason, not just a bunch of verses stuck

together. It begins with the problem stated: "All is vanity in this world". Then we will find that the experiments are made. Solomon will seek satisfaction through many different avenues, in many different fields. He will try science, the laws of nature, wisdom and philosophy; he will try pleasure and materialism, living for the "now". He will explore fatalism, egoism, religion, wealth, and morality. Then in the final verses of the book he will give us the result of his experiments.

Keep in mind that the conclusions in each experiment are human, not God's truth. This is man under the sun.

Do not misunderstand what is meant by "inspiration" when we say that the Bible is inspired by God. Inspiration guarantees the accuracy of the words of Scripture, not always the thought that is expressed. The context should be considered, and attention paid to the person who made the statement and under what circumstances the statement was made. For example, in the betrayal of Christ by Judas, the record of the event is inspired, but the act of Judas was not God-inspired; it was satanic. Also the statements that Solomon makes, while he is searching for satisfaction apart from God, are not always in accord with God's thoughts. Inspiration guarantees that what Solomon said has been accurately recorded in Scripture.

The following selected verses are an introduction to the subject of vanity (futility) in this book:

Human wisdom - 1:15-16

Human labor - 2:19-21

Human purpose - 2:26

Human rivalry - 4:4

Human avarice - 4:8

Human fame - 4:16

Human fame - 4:16

Human insatiation-5:10

Human coveting - 6:9

Human frivolities - 7:4

Human awards - 8:10, 14

He realizes that wisdom is far greater than foolishness, but both seem to lead to futility in view of the brevity of life and universality of death. He concludes by acknowledging that contentment and joy are found only in God.

At this point, Ecclesiastes turns from his situation in life to a philosophical quest; but the conclusion remains the same. He considers the unchanging order of events and the fixed laws of God. Times are short, and there is no eternity on earth in 3:1-15. The futility of death seems to cancel the difference between righteousness and wickedness. Chapters 4 and 5 explore the futility in social relationships and in

religious relationships. In addition, the world's offerings produce disappointment, not satisfaction. Ultimate meaning can be found only in God.

A series of lessons on practical wisdom is given in 7:1-9:12. Levity and pleasure-seeking are seen as superficial and foolish; it is better to have sober depth of thought. Wisdom and self-control provide perspective and strength in coping with life. One should enjoy prosperity and consider in adversity that God made both. Avoid the twin extremes of self-righteousness and immorality. Sin invades all men, and wisdom is cut short by evil and death. The human mind cannot grasp ultimate meaning. Submission to authority helps one avoid unnecessary hardship, but real justice is often lacking on the earth. The uncertainties of life and certainty of the grave shows us that God's purposes and ways often cannot be grasped. One should, therefore, magnify opportunities while they last, because fortune can change suddenly.

Observations on wisdom and folly are found in 9:13-11:6. Wisdom, the most powerful human resource, is contrasted with the meaningless talk and effort of fools. In view of the unpredictability of circumstances, wisdom is the best course to follow in order to minimize grief and misfortune. Wisdom involves discipline and diligence. In 11:7-12:7, the Preacher offers exhortations on using life well. Youth is too brief and precious to be squandered in foolishness or evil. A person should live well in the fullness of each day before God and acknowledge Him early in life. This section closes with an exquisite allegory of old age.

The Preacher concludes that the "good life" is only attained by revering God. Those who fail to take God and His will seriously into account are doomed to lives of foolishness and futility. Life will not wait upon the solution of all its problems; nevertheless, real meaning can be found by looking not "under the sun" but beyond the sun to the "one Shepherd" (12:11).

VI. SONG OF SOLOMON

A. Outline of Song of Solomon

- | | | | |
|-----|-----------------------|--------------------|-----------|
| I. | The Beginning of Love | 1:1-5:1 | |
| | A. | Falling in Love | 1:1 - 3:5 |
| | B. | The Wedding | 3:6-5:11 |
| II. | Broadening of Love | 5:2-8:14 | |
| | A. | Struggling in Love | 5:2-7:10 |
| | B. | Growing In Love | 7:11-8;14 |

B. Union and Communion

A healthy balance in Bible study is maintained when Song of Solomon is studied along with Ecclesiastes. Ecclesiastes focused on the intellect of man - his mental outlook on life. The Song of Solomon is a book about the emotions of man - in particular, the emotion of love.

It is a recognized fact that man's total experience is directed by these three responses; intellect, emotions, and will. Actually, all three responses are involved in a full experience of genuine love, just as this is true of genuine faith. To say that the Song of Solomon is a book about the emotion of life is not to rule out intellect and will. It is just that the emotion aspect is prominent in the story.

The Song of Solomon is more than a human love story. It is a picture of the love between the Lord God and His people. If your study of the Song of Solomon will arouse in you a more genuine love for your Lord, as well as a deeper gratitude for His love to you, then it will not surprise you that God chose to include such a love story in the Holy Scriptures.

C. Background

1. Title

The opening verse gives the title "The Song of Songs." This is the Hebraic way of expressing the superlative. Of Solomon's 1,005 songs (I Kings 4:32), this one was his best or most important. Sometimes the book is referred to as Canticles ("series of songs").

2. Author

The traditional view is that Solomon was the author. This is strongly supported by internal characteristics of the book. The name Solomon appears at these places in the book: 1:1,5; 3:7, 9, 11; ;8:11, 12. The reference at 1:1 may be translated either "of Solomon" or "about Solomon."

3. Date written

Solomon probably wrote this book while he was still young, before being drawn away from Jehovah by his seven hundred wives (I Kings 11:3-4). A suggested date is 965 B.C

4. Relation to other books of the Bible

In our English Bibles it is the fifth of the poetical books: Job, Psalms,

Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and then Song of Solomon. In the Hebrew Bible, it is the first of the "Five Rolls" (Megilloth): Song of Solomon, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther. Portions of it were sung on the eighth day of the Passover feast, which was the Jew's first and greatest of the annual feasts. In ancient times the Jews revered Canticles as uniquely sublime. They likened Proverbs to the outer court of the Temple; Ecclesiastes to the holy place; and Song of Solomon to the most holy place. The New Testament book that has the same type of purpose as it - reflection about a bridegroom and His bride - is the epistle to the Ephesians.

5. Form

The book is a unified lyrical poem. It is a series of stanzas or songs of varied lengths. The phraseology of the poetry is strictly Oriental, and must be read in that light.

6. Setting

The main characters are Solomon, a Shulamite woman, and a group called "daughters of Jerusalem:"

- a. Solomon - The king of Israel (I Kings 1:32-27), was the son of David and Bathsheba (II Sam. 13:24).
- b. A Shulamite woman - The name "Shulamite" appears only at 6:13 (KJV). It is probably derived from the place called Shunem, located a short distance north of Jezreel near the plain of Megiddo.
- c. Daughters of Jerusalem - The identity of these women is not disclosed. They may have been companions of the bride, attendants of the king's palace, or interested onlookers.

D. The Christ of Song of Solomon

In the Old Testament, Israel is regarded as the bride of Yahweh (See Isa. 54:5, 6; Jer. 2:2; Ezk. 16:8-14; Hosea 2:16-20). In the New Testament, the church is seen as the bride of Christ (see 2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:23-25; Rev 19:7-9; 21:9). The Song of Solomon illustrates the former and anticipates the latter.

E. Keys

1. Key words: Love in marriage. "Beloved" is the name for him; "Love" is the name for her.

The purpose of this book depends on the viewpoint taken as to its primary thrust. Is it fictional, allegorical, or historical?

- a. Fictional: Some hold that this song is a fictional drama that portrays Solomon's attraction and marriage to a poor but beautiful girl from the country. However, the book gives every indication that the story really happened.
- b. Allegorical: In this view, the primary purpose of the Song is to illustrate the truth of God's love for His people whether the events were fictional or not. Some commentators insist that the book is indeed historical, but its primary purpose is typical, that is, to present God's love for His bride Israel or Christ's love for His Church. In other scriptures the husband and wife relationship is used symbolically (Ezekiel 16:23; Hosea 1-3), but these are always indicated as symbols. This may be an application of the book, best not to be considered the primary application.
- c. The Song of Songs is a poetical record of Solomon's actual romance with a Shulamite woman. The various scenes in the book exalt the joys of love in courtship and marriage and teach that physical beauty and sexuality in marriage should not be despised as base or unspiritual. It offers a proper perspective of human love and avoids the extremes of lust and asceticism. Only when sexuality is viewed in the wrong way, as something akin to evil, is an attempt made to allegorize the book. But this is part of God's creation with its related desires and pleasures, and it is reasonable that He would provide us with a guide to a pure sexual relationship between a husband and wife. The union of two illustrates the oneness of the Godhead (see Genesis 1:27; 2:24; I Corinthians 6:16-20). Thus, the Song is a bold and positive endorsement by God of marital love in all its physical and emotional beauty. This interpretation does not mean that the book has no spiritual illustrations and applications. It certainly illustrates God's love for His covenant people Israel, and anticipates Christ's love for His bride, the Church.

2. Key verses: Song of Solomon 7:10 and 8:7

3. Key chapter: Song of Solomon

Since the whole book is a unity, there is no key chapter; rather, all eight chapters beautifully depict the love of a married couple.

F. Survey of Song of Solomon

Solomon wrote 1,005 songs (I Kings 4:32), but this beautiful eulogy of love stood out among them as the "song of songs" (1:1). The great literary value of this song can be seen in its rich use of metaphor and oriental imagery as it extols the purity, beauty, and satisfaction of love. It is never crass (stupid and coarse), but often intimate, as it explores the dimensions of the relationship between two lovers: attraction, desire, companionship, pleasure, union, separation, faithfulness, and praise.

Song of Solomon is a parabolic poem. The interpretation, not the inspiration, causes the difficulty. There are some who actually feel it should not be in the Bible; however, it is in the canon of Scripture. Song of Solomon is the great neglected book of the Bible. The reader who is going through the word of God for the first time is puzzled when he comes to it. The carnal Christian will misunderstand and misinterpret it. Actually this little book has been greatly abused by people who have not understood it.

Origen and Jerome tell us that the Jews would not permit their young men to read this book until they were thirty years old. The reason was that they felt there was the danger of reading into it the salacious and the suggestive, the vulgar and the voluptuous, the sensuous and the sexual. On the contrary, this is a wonderful picture of physical, human, wedded love. It gives the answer to two erroneous groups of people: those who hold to asceticism and think it is wrong to get married, and those who hold to hedonism and think that the satisfying of their lusts is of primary importance. This book makes it very clear that both are wrong. It upholds wedded love as a very wonderful thing, a glorious experience.

Like Ecclesiastes, this little book is not easily outlined. It abounds with sudden changes of speakers, and they are not identified. The beginning of love is seen in 1:1-5:1, and the broadening of love is found in 5:2-8:14.

1. The beginning of love (1:1-5:1):

King Solomon has a vineyard in the country of the Shulamite (6:13; 8:11). The Shulamite must work in the vineyard with her brothers (1:6, 8:11, 12); and when Solomon visits the area, he wins her heart and eventually takes her to the palace in Jerusalem as his bride. She is tanned from hours of work outside in the vineyard, but she is "fairest among women" (1:6, 8).

This song is arranged like scenes in a one-act drama with three main speakers - the bride (the Shulamite), the king (Solomon), and a chorus (the daughters of Jerusalem). It is not always clear who is speaking, but this is a likely arrangement:

- a. The bride: 1:2-4, 5-7, 12-14, 16, 17; 2:1, 3-6, 8-17; 3:1-4; 4:16; 5:2-8, 10-16; 6:2, 3:11, 12; 7:9-13; 8:1-3, 6, 7, 10-12, 14
- b. The groom: 1:8-10, 15; 2:2-7; 3:5; 4:1-15; 5:1; 6:4-10, 13; 7:1-9; 8:4, 5, 13
- c. The chorus: 1:4, 11; 3:6-11; 5:9; 6:1, 13; 8:5, 8, 9.

Chapter 1-3 gives a series of collections of the courtship:

- d. The bride's longing for affection at the palace before the wedding (1;2-8)
- e. Expressions of mutual love in the banquet hall (1:9-2:7)
- f. A springtime visit of the king to the bride's home in the country (2:8-17)
- g. The Shulamite's dream of separation from her beloved (3:1-5)
- h. The ornate wedding procession from the bride's home to Jerusalem (3:6-11).

In 4:1-5:1, Solomon praises his bride from head to foot with a superb chain of similes and metaphors. Her virginity is compared to "a garden enclosed" (4:12), and the garden is entered when the marriage is consummated (4:16-5:1). The union is commended, possibly by God, in 5:1.

2. The broadening of love (5:2-8:14):

Some time after the wedding, the Shulamite has a troubled dream (5:12) in the palace while Solomon is away. In her dream, Solomon comes to her door, she answers too late, and he is gone. She panics and searches for him late at night in Jerusalem. Upon his return, Solomon assures her of his love and praises her beauty (6:4-7:10). The Shulamite begins to think of her country home and tries to persuade her beloved to return there with her (7:11-8:4). The journey takes place in 8:5-7 and their relationship continues to deepen. Their love will not be overthrown by jealousy or circumstances. At her homecoming (8:8-14) the Shulamite reflects on her brothers' care for her when she was young (8:8,9). She remains virtuous ("I am a wall," 8:10) and is now in a position to look out for her brothers' welfare (8:11, 12). The song concludes with a dual invitation of lover and beloved (8:12, 14).

A man of God's description of the setting of this story, as summarized, is

quoted here at length:

"King Solomon had a vineyard in the hill country of Ephraim, about 50 miles N of Jerusalem, 8:11. He let it out to keepers, 8:11, consisting of a mother, two sons, 1:6, and two daughters - the Shulamite, 6:13, and a little sister, 8:88. The Shulamite was "the Cinderella of the family, 1:5, naturally beautiful, but unnoticed. Her brothers were likely half brothers, 1:6. They made her work very hard tending the vineyards, so that she had little opportunity to care for her personal appearance, 1:6. She pruned the vines and set traps for the little foxes, 2:15. She also kept the flocks, 1:8. Being out in the open so much, she became sunburned, 1:5.

"One day a handsome stranger came to the vineyard. It was Solomon disguised. He showed an interest in her, and she became embarrassed concerning her personal appearance, 1:6. She took him for a shepherd and asked about his flocks, 1:7. He answered evasively, 1:8, but also spoke loving words to her, 1:8-10, and promised that some day he would return. She dreamed of him at night and sometimes thought he was near, 3:1. Finally he did return in his entire kingly splendor to make her his bride, 3:6-7.

G. Schools of Interpretation

1. Naturalistic

It is a human love story, of literary merit, with no typical or figurative meaning intended.

2. Allegorical

It is purely figurative, not based on historical fact.

3. Typical

It is teaching by (1) example, from historical facts; and (2) type, from viewing these historical facts as figurative representations.

H. Typical Interpretation

As indicated earlier, the characters of the dialogue of Canticles are Solomon, the Shulamite woman, and the daughters of Jerusalem. In the story, Solomon is the bridegroom, and the Shulamite woman is the bride. Two applications of typical teaching may be intended.

1. Israel is the bride, and the God the Bridegroom. Read these other Old Testament passages where the bride and groom relationship is clearly taught: Isaiah 54:5-6; Jeremiah 2:2; Ezekiel 16:8-14; Hosea 2:16, 18:20.

Jewish believers of Old Testament times clearly saw this typical intent of Canticles, which helped to impress them regarding the book's canonicity.

2. The church is the bride, and Christ the bridegroom. Read Ephesians 5:23-25; II Corinthians 11:1, 2; Revelation 19:7-9, 21:9.

A third application is derived from the second, in the sense that an individual believer (of the whole believing Church) is the particular object of Christ's love. From a practical standpoint this is the most intimate application which a Christian can make of the book's typical teaching for his own Christian life.

The reason why there are different views as to the "plot" of Canticles is that the speakers are not identified by name in the Bible text. For example the two-speaker view (Solomon, Shulamite woman) says that Solomon is the speaker of all of 4:1-15; whereas the three speaker view says that Solomon is the speaker of 4:1-6, whole 4:7-15 are the words of the shepherd-lover. But, as one man of God points out, "The abiding value of the Song of Solomon is clear whichever view is taken. As human life finds its highest fulfillment in the love of man and woman, the spiritual life finds its highest fulfillment in the love of Christ and His Church."

An interesting comparison has been made between Ecclesiastes and the Song of Solomon involving their pointing to Christ:

- a. In Ecclesiastes we learn that without Christ we cannot be satisfied, even if we possess the whole world - the heart is too large for the object.
- b. In the Song of Solomon we learn that if we turn from the world and set our affections on Christ, we cannot fathom the infinite preciousness of His love - the Object is too large for the heart.

I. Purposes

The purposes of the Song of Solomon are:

1. Literal: to honor pure human love and marriage.
2. Figurative: to show the Lord's love for Israel, and Christ's love for His church and for each individual Christian; how the bride in each case should return that love.

J. Unique Characteristics

The Song of Solomon is unique among the books of the Bible in many ways. Some of these are described below:

1. It is one of the most misunderstood books of the Bible. Its Oriental expressions of intimate love partly account for this.
2. It is the only book of the Bible where love between humans is the main plot and theme. (Other similar passages of love are to be found in Psalm 45 and the book of Ruth.)
3. There is only one direct reference to God in the book ("the Lord", 8:6). (In the King James Version there is no such reference. Instead, at 8:6, the Hebrew word "Yah" is translated vehement. The book of Esther records no name of God.)
4. There is no specific or direct reference to the religious realm as such.
5. There is no specific or direct reference to sin.
6. No other Old Testament book is alluded to here.
7. The book is not alluded to by Christ, nor is it quoted in N.T.

K. Applications

This book was written especially to stir up the feelings of God's people. Ecclesiastes stresses thinking; the Song of Solomon stresses feeling, of the meditative type. Andrew Miller wrote long ago, "There is nothing which the men of this world dread more than solitude and reflection. They would rather be overspread with engagements than have leisure for thought." Has human nature changed since then?

The Christological purpose of Canticles is to inspire Christians to take time to meditate on Jesus Christ. "The calm, reflective quiet of the soul in communion with the Person of the exalted Lord, is what characterizes the sweetest moments while here on earth."

Canticles' teachings about love should be applied in two ways: typical and literal.

1. Typical

The book as a love story is unexcelled only if Christ is the Lover in its pages - for one can surpass His love: "Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me" (Gal. 2:20). In the Song of Solomon it is the person of Christ, not His work, which is the prominent characteristic. The Christian reader who involves himself in the book is overwhelmed by the beautiful and reassuring truth of his union and communion with such a Savior.

2. Literal

No other book of the Bible gives such an extended description of the beauties of a love relationship between a man and a woman. The inclusion of this human love story in God's book demonstrates the sacred honor which He has given to the union of husband and wife. Study the Song of Solomon to learn its literal teachings about the kind of human love that honors God. Below is a partial list of aspects of love which are referred to in the book:

3. Physical

Here is described beauty, purity, body, sexual instincts, desire, attraction, satisfaction, giving and receiving, presence and separation, physical wedlock.

4. Non-physical (social, mental, and spiritual):

We see here attraction, companionship, union and communion, hope, pleasure, giving and receiving, presence and separation, tenderness, sacrifice, faithfulness, praise, beauty, love, purity, wholesomeness, humility.

RESOURCE MATERIALS AND BIBLIOGRAPHY OF WORKS CITED

Holy Bible, Amplified Expanded Edition, KJV, Zondervan Corporation and Lockman Foundation, 1987.

Holy Bible, Open Bible, NKJV, Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville, 1979.

Holy Bible, Dake's Annotated Reference Bible, KJV, Finis Jennings Dake, Lawrenceville, Georgia: Dake Bible Sales, Incorporated, 1985.

Holy Bible, Full Life Study Bible, NIV, Grand Rapids, MI, Zondervan Corporation, 1992.

Holy Bible, Thompson Chain Reference, Frank Charles Thompson D.D., Ph.D., Indianapolis, Indiana, B.B. Kirkbride Bible Company.

Holy Bible, KJV, Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson Publisher, 1989.

Course Notes, Musgrove, Raymond, Dr. Th.D., Ventura, California: Golden Grain Bible College, 1988

The Biblical Illustrator, Joseph S. Exell, M.A., Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1973

Strong's Concordance, James Strong, L.L.D., S.T.D. Nelson Publishers, 1995.

Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words, W.E. Vines, Merrill F. Unger, William White, 1985.

Lockyer, Herbert Dr. *All the Books and Chapters of the Bible* Zondervan, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Webster's Dictionary of the American Language, College Edition, Cleveland and New York: World Publishing Company, 1960.

Achtemeier, Paul J., General Editor, *Harpers Bible Dictionary*, San Francisco, California: Harper and Row Publisher, 1985.

McGhee, J. Vernon, *Thru The Bible*, Pasedena, California: Thru the Bible Books, 1986.

Rice, John R. D.D. *Christ in the Old Testament*, Murfreesboro, Tennessee: Sword of the Lord Publishers.

COURSEWORK RECOGNITION

COURSE RESEARCHED AND DEVELOPED: Thompson, Verda L., Th.D.
Shepard, Nellie, B.Th. 1992
EXPANDED/REVISED BY: Price, Roger, Th.D. 1998
REVISED/EDITED BY Oakley, Elizabeth, Th.D., D.D. 2004

ICBT PASTORAL ADVISORS: Chapman, Del, Th.D.
Hall, Leo, D.D., D. Min.
Peaks, Kathy, D.D.
Peaks, Tony, D.D.

AMT-KWA BOARD MEMBERS & STAFF:

Baldock, Michael, Th.D.	Oakley, Elizabeth, D.D.
Carr, Mary, D. Min., D.D.	Oakley, Walter, D.D.
Cunningham, Kay, D.D.	Port, David, M.Min., B.Th., B.A., B.A. (<i>Languages</i>)
Cunningham, Randy, D.C.C.	Price, Roger, D.R.E., Ph.D., Th.D.
Finch, Ed, Th.D.	Sansfacon, Mario, A.Min
Goneau, Dean, M.A.	Sansfacon, Teresa, A.Min.
Hale, Paulette, B.Min.	Shepard, Sally, A.B.S.
Kisner, Brian, D.D.	Thompson, Tom, D. Min.
Neal, Barbara, B.Th.	Thompson, Verda, Ph.D., D.R.E., D.C.C., D.D., Th.D.
Neal, Charles, M.Th.	West, Vernetta, D. Min., D.D., D. Mis.

Thank You

Information for King's Word Academy (KWA) courses has been researched and compiled by many members in the Body of Christ. We have been blessed by gifted brothers and sisters from many areas of ministry.

We want to thank those who have helped to write and compile courses for our curriculum. We gratefully thank all those in five-fold ministry, helps and lay ministry that have labored with us. A special thank you is extended to authors of various books, and leadership of other schools that have been so very giving and gracious to us. It is not possible to name everyone by name. Laborers with KWA have compiled many courses. Let us all say "to God be the glory."

CHRISTIANS ARE CO-LABORERS

"Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase. Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labor. For we are laborers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building. According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

I Corinthians 3:5-11