

Psalms Primer

A 6-Lesson Study by Keith Blades | Enjoy the Bible Ministries®
Study Overview & Lesson Summaries

About This Series

This series provides a foundational understanding of the Book of Psalms in its proper dispensational context — as part of God’s program with Israel. Keith Blades walks through the doctrinal design and structure of the Psalms, demonstrating how the book’s five sub-books correspond to the five mandates of the Davidic Covenant. Rather than examining individual Psalms verse by verse, this primer equips the student to understand the overall position, purpose, and role of the book — particularly its primary application to the remnant of Israel in the day of the Lord. The series concludes with practical examples of correctly reading individual Psalms in light of their dispensational context, guarding against the misuse and misapplication that so often brings confusion and heartache.



Lessons at a Glance

Lesson	Core Focus
Lesson 1	The position and role of the Book of Psalms in God’s program with Israel
Lesson 2	The Davidic Covenant and its five mandates — the doctrinal backbone of the Psalms
Lesson 3	The five-book structure of the Psalms and Book 1: The Redeemer (Psalms 1–41)
Lesson 4	The second mandate: The Deliverer and His Deliverance (Psalms 42–72)
Lesson 5	The third, fourth, and fifth mandates: Avenger, King, and Blessor (Psalms 73–150)
Lesson 6	Applying the Psalms correctly — four Psalms examined in their dispensational context

Lesson Summaries

L1

The Position of the Book of Psalms *Understanding Its Role in God's Program with Israel*

- The Book of Psalms is not a random collection — it has a deliberate doctrinal design, structure, and flow ordained by God
- The Psalms belong exclusively to God's program with Israel; nothing in the Psalms pertains directly to the dispensation of Gentile grace (kept secret in ages past, Ephesians 3:9)
- The primary users of the Psalms will be the remnant of Israel in the fifth and final installment of the fifth course of punishment — the day of the Lord
- Christians frequently misapply the Psalms by claiming promises and instructions given specifically to Israel's remnant, leading to misunderstanding and heartache
- The Psalms occupy the second position among five poetical books (Job through Song of Solomon), each designed to provide foundational education for the remnant:

The Five Poetical Books and Their Purpose for the Remnant

- Job — describes the remnant's plight in view of Satan's plan of evil; Job functions as a type of the remnant
- Psalms — sets forth Israel's hope of salvation through the fulfillments of the mandates of the Davidic Covenant
- Proverbs — provides the remnant's wisdom for walking worthy during the final two installments
- Ecclesiastes — sets forth the foolishness and sore travail of pursuing the wisdom of this world
- Song of Solomon — portrays the remnant's faithful expectation of the Messiah's return and the joy of His arrival
- The book of Psalms is broken into five sub-books, each corresponding to one of the five mandates of the Davidic Covenant
- A proper dispensational understanding of the Psalms reveals the genius and wisdom of God in providing for His remnant through song and doctrine

L2

The Davidic Covenant *The Doctrinal Foundation of the Book of Psalms*

- You cannot understand the Psalms without understanding the Davidic Covenant (2 Samuel 7)
- God's "Jehovahness" — His self-sufficient nature to meet every need and deliver His people — is the foundation upon which the Davidic Covenant rests
- Before raising up David, God manifested to Israel their plights and predicaments: situations from which they had no ability to deliver themselves
- Israel's five demonstrated needs as revealed through their history: a Redeemer, Deliverer, Avenger, King, and Blesser
- The Davidic Covenant commits the Messiah to fulfill five specific mandates — one corresponding to each of Israel's demonstrated needs
- David's role as psalmist was to expound the mandates of the Davidic Covenant through God-breathed song and prayer

- David functioned as a type of the remnant — his historical experiences become prophetic illustrations for those in the day of the Lord
- The five mandates of the Davidic Covenant form the doctrinal backbone and structural framework of the entire Book of Psalms

L3

The Five-Book Structure *Book 1: The Redeemer and His Redemption (Psalms 1–41)*

- The five books of Psalms correspond directly to the five mandates of the Davidic Covenant:

The Five Books of Psalms

- Book 1 (Psalms 1–41): The Redeemer and His Redemption
- Book 2 (Psalms 42–72): The Deliverer and His Deliverance
- Book 3 (Psalms 73–89): The Avenger and His Avenging
- Book 4 (Psalms 90–106): The King and His Kingdom
- Book 5 (Psalms 107–150): The Blessor and His Blessings
- Isaiah 9:6 names the Messiah's five roles corresponding to these mandates: Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace
- The core Psalms of Book 1 — Psalms 22, 23, and 24 — walk through the sequence of the Redeemer's work:

Core Psalms of Book 1

- Psalm 22: The Redeemer's suffering and redemptive work on behalf of Israel
- Psalm 23: The Deliverer's care — its two halves reflect the two halves of the day of the Lord
- Psalm 24: The King arriving to establish His kingdom
- David functioned as a type of the remnant; his historical experiences are prophetically designed to provide the remnant with doctrine, assurance, and instruction for their own circumstances
- The Psalms' superscriptions are not incidental — they identify the type and its prophetic application to the remnant's future experience

L4

The Second Mandate *The Deliverer and His Deliverance (Psalms 42–72)*

- Book 2 of the Psalms (Psalms 42–72) focuses on the second mandate of the Davidic Covenant: the Deliverer and His Deliverance
- The core Psalms of Book 2 are Psalms 50–60 — the constant, repeated theme is the remnant's prayer for God to put His deliverance into effect
- The Deliverer and Avenger mandates operate simultaneously during the day of the Lord — Christ comes as both at the same time
- David's experiences of being hunted, surrounded by enemies, and ultimately delivered become prophetic types for the remnant's experience in the great tribulation
- The remnant's prayers in Book 2 echo David's cries: urgent appeals to God to arise and act on behalf of His people against their enemies
- Christ's coming as Deliverer rescues the remnant from Satanic captivity, enemy oppression, and the afflictions of the day of the Lord
- Understanding David as a type enables the remnant to find their own

situation, prayers, and assurance reflected and addressed in these Psalms

L5

The Third, Fourth, and Fifth Mandates *Avenger, King, and Blessor* (Psalms 73–150)

- Book 3 (Psalms 73–89) — The Avenger and His Avenging: the Lord deals with Israel's enemies, vindicates His remnant, and executes righteous judgment
- Book 4 (Psalms 90–106) — The King and His Kingdom: the Lord's arrival and establishment of His reign as King over all the earth

Book 4 Core Psalms: Psalms 96–100 (The New Song Psalms)

- The "new song" Psalms of Book 4 are directly connected to the new song sung in Revelation 5 and 14
- Psalm 96: "Sing unto the Lord a new song" — the proclamation of the King's arrival and glory among the nations
- Psalms 97–100: The responses of the nations and the joy of Israel under the King's righteous rule
- Book 5 (Psalms 107–150) — The Blessor and His Blessings: the Lord's comprehensive blessings on Israel in the fully established kingdom
- Psalm 150 closes all five books with universal praise — the culmination and crescendo of every mandate of the Davidic Covenant fulfilled
- Together, all five books provide the remnant with the doctrinal framework to understand, endure, and rejoice through every phase of God's program with Israel

L6

Applying the Psalms Correctly *Four Psalms Examined in Their* *Dispensational Context*

- The Psalms are greatly loved but frequently abused through misuse — misapplication generally results in confusion, false expectations, and disappointment
- This lesson demonstrates how to read individual Psalms correctly, using four Psalms as worked examples

Psalm 23 — The Primary Example

- Psalm 23 is commonly used as a funeral Psalm, but God did not write it for that purpose
- Its two halves correspond to the two equal time periods of the day of the Lord — the first half and second half of the great tribulation
- The remnant of Israel in the day of the Lord will call upon Psalm 23 for doctrinal strength, assurance, and practical guidance in the exact circumstances they face

Additional Psalms and Principles

- Psalms 22 and 24 are revisited as examples of the full arc of the Redeemer mandate: suffering, care, and triumphant return
- The superscriptions of the Psalms (David's historical circumstances) are keys to unlocking the prophetic purpose of individual Psalms
- The more a student understands God's program with Israel and the Davidic Covenant, the greater the appreciation for God's genius in providing for His remnant through memorizable song

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- Correct application of the Psalms requires asking: Who is this written TO? What program does it pertain to? What mandate of the Davidic Covenant is in view?

Key Doctrinal Distinctions

The Psalms Belong to Israel's Program — Not the Dispensation of Grace

Nothing in the Book of Psalms pertains directly to believers in the dispensation of Gentile grace. The dispensation of grace was kept secret in ages and generations past (Ephesians 3:9), and none of the psalmists wrote anything about it. The Psalms address God's program with Israel — past, present (from their perspective), and future. Applying Psalms directly to "us today" bypasses right division and leads to mishandling Scripture (2 Timothy 2:15).

David as a Type of the Remnant

David wrote the majority of the Psalms not merely as personal devotional expressions, but as a type of Israel's remnant in the day of the Lord. God placed David in circumstances that prefigured the experiences of the remnant — being hunted by enemies, suffering affliction, crying out for deliverance, and ultimately being vindicated. The historical superscriptions of the Psalms are therefore doctrinal markers, not incidental details, identifying the type and its prophetic fulfillment.

The Five Books of Psalms and the Five Mandates of the Davidic Covenant

The structure of the Psalms is not accidental. God organized the 150 Psalms into five distinct books, each corresponding to one of the five mandates of the Davidic Covenant: (1) Redeemer, (2) Deliverer, (3) Avenger, (4) King, (5) Blessor. The Psalms within each book deal with the subject matter of that mandate — its need, its fulfillment by the Messiah, and the remnant's response. This is the divine design for the remnant's edification, paralleling the progressive doctrinal design of Romans through Philemon for believers today.

God's Jehovahness and Israel's Five Demonstrated Needs

Before the Davidic Covenant was given, God systematically demonstrated to Israel that they faced five categories of need from which they could not deliver themselves: the need for a Redeemer, Deliverer, Avenger, King, and Blessor. These needs were not arbitrary — they arose from the outworking of God's program with the nation throughout their history. The Davidic Covenant then commits God to meet each need through the Messiah, making the Psalms the remnant's curriculum for understanding how every need will be met.

Correct vs. Incorrect Application of Individual Psalms

Correct application of any Psalm requires three questions: (1) Who is this Psalm written TO? (2) What mandate of the Davidic Covenant does it belong to? (3) What circumstances in Israel's program is it

addressing? Psalm 23, for example, is not a funeral Psalm or a general devotional for Christians today — it is a Psalm for the remnant in the day of the Lord, with its two halves reflecting the two halves of the great tribulation. Misapplying Psalms by making them directly applicable to believers today is a mishandling of the word of truth.

Key Scripture References

2 Samuel 7	The Davidic Covenant — God’s commitment to Israel through five Messianic mandates
Leviticus 26	The five courses of punishment defining Israel’s history, including the fifth and final installment
Isaiah 9:6	Five names of the Messiah corresponding to the five mandates of the Davidic Covenant
Ephesians 3:9	The mystery “hid in God” — confirming that the dispensation of grace is not revealed in the Psalms
2 Timothy 2:15	Rightly dividing the word of truth — the foundational principle for correctly understanding the Psalms
Amos 8:11	The famine of the word of the Lord — explaining the 400 years of silence before John the Baptist
Psalms 1	Opening of Book 1 — the righteous remnant and the blessing that attends faithfulness
Psalms 22–24	Core Psalms of Book 1 — Redeemer (22), Deliverer’s care (23), King’s return (24)
Psalms 50–60	Core Psalms of Book 2 — the remnant’s persistent prayer for the Deliverer to act
Psalms 96–100	Core Psalms of Book 4 — the King and His kingdom; the “new song” Psalms
Romans 11:25	Israel’s fullness yet to come when the fullness of the Gentiles is come in
James 5:11	James directs the remnant to the example of Job — confirming Job’s role as a type of the remnant

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