

INTERACTIVE TRAVEL GUIDE

DESTINATION: *Psalms 1-150*

The Book of Psalms is a collection of songs, prayers and poetry which expresses the deepest of human emotions. Not only do the Psalms contain more chapters than any other book, they are also the most well known in the Old Testament. These artistic masterpieces were compiled over a period of roughly 1,000 years from the time of Moses in the 15th century B.C. to the time of Ezra and the return from the Babylonian Exile in the 5th century B.C. They were used as the temple hymnbook during the Kingdom period. The Psalms are divided into 10 major types including Messianic, Historical, and Hallelujah Psalms.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS:

1400 B.C.
Moses writes Psalm 90

1000 B.C.
David's Psalms written

971 B.C.
Time of Solomon

931 B.C.
Kingdom divides

722 B.C.
Northern Kingdom (Israel) taken captive

586 B.C.
Southern Kingdom (Judah) taken captive

500 B.C.
Restoration

TRIP PLANNER:

The book of Psalms is filled with lyrics of heavenly music suited to every man's experience. This book of classic works is filled with words of the greatest of sorrow and depression to the most thrilling expressions of joy and gladness. One theme is constant, and that is a complete dependence on the love and power of God. The Psalms are divided into five books.

Book 1 (Psalms 1-41)

Book 2 (Psalms 42-72)

Book 3 (Psalms 73-89)

Book 4 (Psalms 90-106)

Book 5 (Psalms 107-150)

PLACES OF INTEREST:

Zion - A name applied to Jerusalem and portions thereof by King David. The original location was a Jebusite fortress located on the southeast hill of the junction of the Kidron and Tyropoean Valleys. It was taken by David in 2 Samuel 5 and renamed "The City of David." In the Psalms, Zion generally refers to the whole city of Jerusalem.

Temple - The temple is the central place of worship in Judaism. It was here that all sacrifices were made and sins were atoned for. The first temple was constructed by Solomon and destroyed by King Nebuchadnezzar in 586 B.C. The temple was later rebuilt by Zerubbabel after the return from captivity and destroyed again in 70 A.D. by the Roman legion led by Titus. The Psalms speak of both the earthly and Heavenly Temples.

Heaven - Heaven is mentioned 74 times in the Psalms. Sometimes the Psalmists speak of the stars, the sun and the moon as the heavens, but often Heaven is referred to as the dwelling place of God. The longing and hope for this heavenly dwelling place is a strong thread that runs throughout the book of Psalms.

Egypt - Egypt appears 15 times in the Psalms to commemorate the Exodus of Israel from bondage. The great signs and wonders that God executed upon Pharaoh and on behalf of His people are spoken of often and are celebrated in the Psalms.

Babylon - Psalm 137 was written about the Babylonian captivity. Babylon was the capital city of the Babylonian Empire. Its name means "The Gate of God." Judah was taken captive there in 586 B.C. Psalm 137 is written from Babylon, longing to be home in Jerusalem.

Sheol - Reference to Sheol is recorded 65 times in the Old Testament. It is translated as “grave” 31 times, “hell” 31 times and “the pit” 3 times. Sheol is generally looked upon as the place where departed spirits go, both the righteous and the unrighteous. Prior to the Cross, there were two places for the departed: Abraham’s bosom for the righteous and torment for the wicked (Luke 16:19-31). After the finished work of Jesus on the Cross, He took those from Abraham’s bosom to Heaven to be with Himself.

PEOPLE OF INTEREST:

David - The book of Psalms is often attributed to David primarily because he wrote the largest number of Psalms. Of the 150 chapters, 73 Psalms are ascribed to him in their titles, though he probably wrote more. David was called “the sweet psalmist of Israel” and had many talents, including being a shepherd, a soldier, and a king, as well as being an extraordinary musician.

Sons of Korah - Ten Psalms are attributed to this group of musicians. Korah was a grandson of Kohath the Levite and ancestor of this ancient group of worship leaders.

Asaph - Son of Berechiah, a Levite who was appointed by David as the minister of music in the center of worship which was Jerusalem. Asaph is credited with writing Psalms 73-83 and was also a gifted musician.

Solomon - The son of David and third king of Israel. It was Solomon who built the first temple. Solomon is known for his wisdom and for the Book of Proverbs. Psalm 72 and 127 are the words of Solomon.

Ethan - Ethan was the Ezrahite spoken of in 1Kings 4:31. He was renowned for his wisdom in Solomon’s time, and is the author of Psalm 89. This Psalm prophetically speaks of the unchanging covenant that God made with His servant David, establishing his throne forever.

Heman - The son of Joel and grandson of Samuel, Heman was the first of three Levites to conduct the vocal and instrumental music in the tabernacle during David’s time. Referred to as “David’s seer,” Heman also wrote Psalm 88, one of the most melancholy of all Psalms.

Moses - Moses is known as the great deliver of Israel, the man chosen by God to lead the Jews out of Egypt to the Promised Land. Moses wrote the Book of Exodus and the giving of the Law, but Moses was also a Psalmist. He was the composer of the 90th Psalm.

The anonymous Psalms - There are 50 Psalms that do not list the author; however, it is highly likely that David wrote some of these. Psalm 2 is quoted in Acts 4:25 and said to be written by David. Psalm 1 is thought to be by the same author, and it is interesting to compare 1 Chronicles 16:7-22 with Psalm 105 and 1 Chronicles 16:23-36 with Psalm 96.

Crucifixion - Psalm 22 is known as a Messianic Psalm. It begins with the words "My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?" These same words were spoken by Jesus from the cross hundreds of years later. Long before crucifixion was practiced as a legitimate form of execution, God had prophesied the way in which His Son would die hundreds of years later.

Longest and Shortest - The Book of Psalms contains both the longest and the shortest chapters in the entire Bible. Psalm 117 is the shortest chapter, with only two verses, and Psalm 119 is the longest chapter, comprised of 176 verses. The book of Psalms is itself the longest book in the canon.

Tolaath - Tolaath is the Hebrew word for worm that is mentioned in Psalm 22:6. This word is translated scarlet 34 times, worm 8 times, and crimson once. The insides of this worm, when crushed, were used to produce scarlet dye for clothing and materials. This worm before its death would climb a tree and suspend itself from one of the branches. It was there it would give birth to its young, exploding from the inside and leaving a scarlet stain upon the tree. Within days, that scarlet stain would turn white and flake away. It is a reminder to us of Isaiah 1:18, "Come now, and let us reason together," says the Lord, "Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool. "

Psalms - The meaning of the word Psalms comes from a Greek word meaning, "a song that is sung to the accompaniment of a plucked instrument." The Psalms are the inspired responses of various individuals to God's revelation of Himself in the Old Testament era.

QUOTATIONS:

Of the 283 direct quotations from the Old Testament found in the New Testament, 116 are from the Psalms.

Psalm 118 - This is the middle chapter of the entire Bible. There are 594 chapters before and after Psalm 118. The sum of these is 1188. Psalm 118:8 is the middle verse of the entire Bible: "It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to trust in man."