

OT642: Psalms
Professor Dost/ Professor Mack
Mays/ Keel Approach to Psalms
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September 16, 2020

Psalter. The Book of Psalms; a copy of the biblical Psalms.

In the book, *Interpretation: A Biblical Commentary for Teaching and Preaching*, Author James L. Mays approaches the book of Psalms systematically. In his introduction to the book, the author is very careful to lay down the foundation of the Psalms, providing the tools on how to rightly divide and study this book. He does so in a way, that he meticulously lists out a thorough breakdown, from the importance of the book, all the way to the history and theology of it, with everything in between.

One of the points Mays made regarding the Anatomy of a Psalm (pg.4) was highlighting the fact that the Psalms is a book of poetry. It is a statement that has been made through Biblical studies and even church Bible studies and ministries, but I'm not too sure we understand how deep of a poetry book it is and what that actually entails. With that, Mays discussed the importance of keeping the fact that it is a poetry book top of mind. According to Mays, to read and study the Psalms requires an "imaginative, open, evocative reading that involves feeling as well as thought" (pg. 5).

What I also found interesting is the way the author created consistency in the introduction by posing the same question, *what is a psalm* within each subtopic. This created synergy where the reader would not be confused about the many different facets of the book of Psalms. This created a clear concise read that fostered understanding on how the book is broken down.

In conclusion, Mays does a great job at carefully breaking down the specifics and nuances of the book of Psalms. Not only is it a book for prayer, praise, teaching and preaching, but it is indeed a book that can be a guide for pastoral care also.