

## Questions:

1. As a distinct kind of literature, psalms require special care in reading and interpreting, in this case, what does the reader need to do?
2. What are the natures of Psalms?
3. What are the features of Psalms as literature?
4. What are the types of psalms?
5. What are the common abuses of wisdom literature?

## Answers:

1. They need to understand the psalms' nature and their various types, as well as their forms and functions.
2. Hebrew poetry by its very nature, was addressed to the mind through the heart. The psalms themselves are musical poems. The vocabulary of poetry is purposefully metaphorical.
3. Psalms are of several different types; each psalm is also characterized by its formal structure; each type of psalm was intended to have a given function in the life of Israel; there are also various patterns within the psalms; each psalm has its own integrity as a literary unit.
4. They are laments, thanksgiving Psalms, hymns of praise, and salvation-history Psalms.
5. People often read these books only in bits and pieces and thus fail to see that they have an overall message; people sometimes misunderstand the terms and categories of Hebrew wisdom, as well as its styles and literary modes, this also leads to misuse; especially in a wisdom discourse like Job, people often fail to understand what the book is all about, and thus also fail to follow the line of argument.

## Terms:

1. Imprecatory psalms: Psalms that contain verbalizations to God of anger at others.
2. Wisdom: it is the ability to make godly choices in life.
3. Prudential wisdom: memorable aphorisms people can use to help themselves make responsible choices in life.

## Summary:

The book of Psalms is a collection of Hebrew prayers and hymns, it is rich in styles, functions, patterns, and structures. Although they are most loved by Christians, they are very poorly interpreted as well.

On the other hand, wisdom literature in the Old Testament is not as popular as Psalms. Christians often misunderstand or misapply them, when applied properly, they could be blessings to us.