

Midterm Exam – Part Two

OT642 Psalm

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1. **What is a Hymn? List the major components of hymn in the Psalter. Select one of the hymns in the Psalter and outline its section.**

The Hymn and Its Major Components

The hymn is a call to worship. It has as its component parts this *call to worship* and the *motive for worship*. The motive is Yahweh Himself and so it is theocentric. It is a corporate affair. Therefore, although it is personal, it is not private. It is vocal and is descriptive of Yahweh's character as well as declarative of His acts.¹ It is also partly an emotional experience and often comes from lives that have suffered.² It offers hope of seeing Yahweh's covenant promise of the Davidic King fulfilled.³

Outlining Psalm 100

A Call to Worship – Verses 1-2, 4: “*Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all ye lands! / Serve the LORD with gladness; / Come before His presence with singing. / Enter his gates with thanksgiving / and his courts with praise; / give thanks to him and praise his name.*”
Motive/Reasons for Worship – Verses 3, 5: “*Know that the LORD is God. / It is he who made us, and we are his; / we are his people, the sheep of his pasture. / For the LORD is good and his love endures forever; / his faithfulness continues through all generations.*”

2. **Outline the Psalter. In this outline mention the divisions of the Psalter and the number of psalms in each division. Mention special features such as the royal, Torah, and thanksgiving themes.**

Division of the Psalter

The Psalter is divided in five books:

Book 1 – Psalms 1-41 (41 psalms)

Book 2 – Psalms 42-72 (30 psalms)

Book 3 – Psalms 73-89 (16 psalms)

Book 4 – Psalms 90-106 (16 psalms)

Book 5 – Psalms 107-150 (43 psalms)

Special Features

The five books of the Psalter were grouped to match the five books of the Pentateuch, the five books of Moses.⁴ The first noteworthy detail is that *Psalms 1 is agreed to be the introduction to the entire Psalter*. This is so because it emphasizes the Torah ordinances and statutes whereby a godly life may be lived. *Torah psalms*, 1, 19, and 119 form a significant feature by virtue of the weight they place on Yahweh's precepts, ordinances, and statutes. The *royal theme* of the Davidic kingship is introduced by Psalm 2 *which is a Messianic psalm*. Grogan references Wilson's division of the psalms, which sees Book 4 as the Psalter's "theological center."⁵ He sees a focus on the divine King, making Yahweh's kingship the dominant motif.⁶ More themes that have been identified are lament, thanksgiving, and trust. Other special features are the *seams, which are psalms, or verses in the final psalm of each book, which function as a doxology*. Book 5 is an exception, as it ends with a doxology of five psalms – Psalms 146-150. Another point of importance is that *most of the Davidic psalms are found in the Books 1 and 2*. In addition, *particular names/titles for God are to be found in certain books*, as in the case of the occurrence of the personal name for God, Yahweh, 273 times in Book 1⁷.

3. What is Parallelism? List at least three types of Parallelism and describe how they work.

Parallelism is the repetition of an idea, which is stated in the first line and repeated in the second line. Among the different types of parallelisms are the synonymous, antithetic, and synthetic. *Synonymous parallelism* is the most frequently occurring one. The first line is supported by the same idea, using different words, as in the case of Psalm 145:1, "I will **extol You**, my God, O King; /And I will **bless your name** forever and ever." In *antithetic parallelism*, the idea in the second line conveys an opposite thought. This is seen in Psalm 119:16, "I will **delight** myself in Your statutes; /I will **not forget** Your word." The contrasting idea of delighting in Yahweh's statutes is having such little pleasure them, that one forgets them. In the case of the *synthetic*, the second line builds on the message of the first. Psalm 119:9 is an example of this, "How can a young man **cleanse** his way? /By **taking heed** according to Your word." "Cleanse" and "taking heed" are neither similar nor opposite thoughts. Rather, "taking heed" answers the question, of how a young man can cleanse his way, by adding an explanation.

¹ Firth and Johnston, P. 89

² Firth and Johnston, P. 95

³ Firth and Johnston, P. 97

⁴ Longman, P. 43

⁵ Grogan, P. 22

⁶ Grogan, P. 24

⁷ Longman, P. 43

