

PSALMS OF PRAISE & THANKSGIVING

DEFINITION

A Psalm of Thanksgiving is a type of poem in the Book of Psalms where the psalmist expresses gratitude to God for His blessings, deliverance, or faithfulness.

Typical features of a Psalm of Thanksgiving usually include:

1. **Introduction or Invocation:** The psalmist calls on God or summons the congregation to join in thanking God.
2. **Declaration of Thanksgiving:** The psalmist declares their intention to give thanks or praise to God.
3. **Narrative of Deliverance:** The psalmist tells a story of being in a difficult situation, calling to God for help, and God answering that call, rescuing or delivering them from distress.
4. **Praise of God:** The psalmist praises God for His love, faithfulness, or power, often using poetic or metaphorical language to describe God's attributes or actions.
5. **Call to Others:** Often, the psalmist calls on others to join them in their thanksgiving or to learn from their experience.

An example of a Psalm of Thanksgiving is Psalm 107. It opens with a call to give thanks to the Lord, recounts stories of deliverance, and repeatedly calls on the people to consider God's steadfast love.

However, like other types of psalms, not every Psalm of Thanksgiving will include all of these elements, and the elements may not always appear in this order.

Here are five Psalms that are typically classified as Psalms of Thanksgiving:

1. **Psalm 30**
 - This psalm expresses gratitude for deliverance from distress. David thanks God for lifting him up and not letting his foes rejoice over him.
 - Key verse: "You turned my wailing into dancing; you removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy."
2. **Psalm 32**

- It starts with a reflection on the joy of forgiveness and moves to the theme of guidance and trust in God.
- Key verse: "Blessed is the one whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered."

3. **Psalm 40**

- David speaks of waiting patiently for the Lord, who then lifts him out of despair, sets him on a rock, and gives him a new song of praise.
- Key verse: "He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God. Many will see and fear the Lord and put their trust in him."

4. **Psalm 92**

- Titled "A psalm. A song. For the Sabbath day.", it gives thanks to the Lord for his love and faithfulness.
- Key verse: "It is good to praise the LORD and make music to your name, O Most High, proclaiming your love in the morning and your faithfulness at night."

5. **Psalm 107**

- This psalm begins with a call for the redeemed to thank God. It recounts various scenarios of people in distress and how God delivered them.
- Key verse: "Let them give thanks to the LORD for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for mankind."

Each of these Psalms offers gratitude to God for His acts of deliverance, guidance, and faithfulness in the life of the psalmist and the life of the Israelite community.

PSALMS OF PRAISE

DEFINITION

Psalms of praise, often referred to as hymns of praise, focus on adoring and celebrating the nature, attributes, and acts of God. **They differ slightly from Psalms of Thanksgiving**, which are more about thanking God for specific deeds or deliverances. Here are the typical features of a Psalm of Praise:

1. **Call to Praise:** These psalms often begin with a direct exhortation to praise or worship God. Common phrases include "Praise the Lord" or "Sing to the Lord."
2. **Reasons for Praise:** After the initial call, the psalmist provides reasons for offering this praise. These can center on God's character (like His mercy, power, or holiness), His acts in creation, or His intervention in history on behalf of His people.
3. **Recounting of God's Deeds:** Some psalms of praise detail the mighty acts of God, which could range from the act of creation to specific moments of intervention in the history of Israel.
4. **Descriptions of God's Nature:** The psalmist might use various metaphors, similes, and descriptions to talk about the nature of God. This includes attributes like His eternal nature, His justice, and His role as a protector.
5. **Universal Call:** Many Psalms of praise invite not just Israel but all nations, or even all of creation, to join in the praise of God. This emphasizes the universality of God's reign.
6. **Conclusion or Reaffirmation:** These psalms often conclude by reiterating the call to praise or by summarizing the reasons for praise.

Here are five Psalms that are typically classified as Psalms of Praise:

1. **Psalm 8**
 - A reflection on the majesty of God's name throughout the earth and how He has set His glory above the heavens. It marvels at how God has made humans only a little lower than angels and crowned them with glory and honor.
 - Key verse: "O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!"
2. **Psalm 19**

- This psalm praises God for His revelation in both creation (the heavens) and the Torah (the law).
- Key verse: "The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands."

3. Psalm 33

- A song of praise about God's righteous word, His creation of the earth, and His love for justice and righteousness.
- Key verse: "By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, their starry host by the breath of his mouth."

4. Psalm 100

- Known as a "Psalm for giving grateful praise," it calls for all the earth to shout joyfully to the Lord and serve Him with gladness.
- Key verse: "Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name."

5. Psalm 148

- This psalm calls for all of creation, from the heavens to the earth, including all creatures and all peoples, to praise the name of the Lord.
- Key verse: "Praise the Lord from the heavens; praise him in the heights above."

BELOW ARE THREE EXAMPLES TO STUDY.

SYUDY ONE

Psalm 100 is a joyful and concise psalm of praise and thanksgiving. In this psalm, the psalmist encourages all people to approach God with a heart full of joy and gratitude, recognizing His sovereignty and enduring love. It emphasizes God's faithfulness across generations, making it a timeless reminder of God's enduring goodness.

Psalm 100: A Psalm of grateful praise.

1. **Call to Joyful Praise (verses 1-2)**
 - Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth.
 - Worship the Lord with gladness; come before Him with joyful songs.
2. **Acknowledgment of God's Sovereignty (verse 3)**
 - Recognize that the Lord is God.
 - He made us, and we are His; we are His people, the sheep of His pasture.
3. **Invitation to Enter His Presence (verse 4)**
 - Enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise.
 - Give thanks to Him and praise His name.

4. **Proclamation of God's Enduring Goodness (verse 5)**

- The Lord is good; His love endures forever.
- His faithfulness continues through all generations.

STUDY TWO.

Psalm 107 is a **hymn of thanksgiving for God's deliverance**. It tells of various scenarios where people cried out to God in their distress, and God rescued them. Each section concludes with the refrain, "Let them thank the Lord for his steadfast love, for his wondrous works to the children of man!" The psalmist celebrates God's providential deliverances for His people in various situations.

Psalm 107

1. **Introduction: God's Enduring Steadfast Love (verses 1-3)**

- Call to give thanks to the Lord for His steadfast love and wondrous works.
- Mention of the redeemed ones whom God gathered from different lands.

2. **First Situation: Desert Wanderers (verses 4-9)**

- Description of some wandering in desert wastelands, hungry and thirsty.
- Their cry to the Lord and His subsequent deliverance.
- Conclusion of praise for God's deliverance and His satisfying of the thirsty.

3. **Second Situation: Prisoners in Darkness (verses 10-16)**

- Description of those who sat in darkness and the shadow of death, bound in affliction and iron.
- Their cry to the Lord and His breaking of their chains.
- Conclusion of praise for God's shattering of gates of bronze and cutting bars of iron.

4. **Third Situation: The Foolish and Their Suffering (verses 17-22)**

- Description of fools afflicted because of their rebellious ways.
- Their cry to the Lord and His healing and deliverance.
- Call to offer sacrifices of thanksgiving and declare His works with joy.

5. **Fourth Situation: Sailors in a Storm (verses 23-32)**

- Description of sailors on the sea witnessing God's wondrous works in the deep, facing storms and high waves.
- Their cry to the Lord and His stilling of the storm.
- Conclusion of praise, exhorting them to extol Him in the congregation and assembly of elders.

6. **God's Sovereignty Over Nature and Nations (verses 33-42)**

- Description of God turning rivers into a desert and fruitful lands into salt wastelands as punishment.
- God also turning the desert into pools of water and dry ground into springs, blessing the hungry with a fruitful harvest.
- The righteous see this and rejoice, while iniquity stops its mouth.

7. Conclusion: Call for Reflection (verse 43)

- Exhortation for the wise to consider God's steadfast love in all these situations. Throughout Psalm 107, the recurring theme is the enduring steadfast love of the Lord, and the repeated pattern is one of distress, cry for help, divine intervention, and then praise.

STUDY THREE.

Psalm 19 beautifully illustrates the ways God speaks to humanity, first through the silent yet powerful testimony of creation and then through the explicit and transformative words of the Torah. It concludes with a deeply personal reflection on the nature of sin and a prayer for a life pleasing to God.

Psalm 19

1. Revelation Through Creation (verses 1-6)

- **Heavens Declare God's Glory (verses 1-4a)**
 - The skies proclaim His craftsmanship daily.
 - They communicate without words, understood universally.
- **Sun as a Symbol of God's Revelation in Nature (verses 4b-6)**
 - Description of the sun's rising, its circuit, and its powerful impact, illustrating the pervasive nature of God's revelation in creation.

2. Revelation Through God's Law (verses 7-11)

- **Character and Impact of the Law (verses 7-9)**
 - The law revives the soul.
 - Testimonies make wise the simple.
 - Precepts give joy to the heart.
 - Commands illuminate the eyes.
 - Fear of the Lord is pure, enduring forever.
 - Decrees are trustworthy and righteous.
- **Value and Reward of Heeding the Law (verses 10-11)**
 - More desired than gold and sweeter than honey.
 - By them, one is warned, and in obeying them, there is great reward.

3. Prayer for Personal Purity and Acceptability (verses 12-14)

- **Recognition of Unintended Sins (verse 12)**
 - Seeking protection and forgiveness for hidden faults.
- **Plea Against Willful Sins (verse 13)**
 - A prayer to be kept from insolent acts and that they not dominate him.
- **Closing Prayer (verse 14)**
 - Desiring that words and meditation be pleasing to God, the rock and redeemer.

HOMEWORK.

1. Write a Psalm of Praise
2. Write a Psalm of Thanksgiving.