

LAMENT

Invocation

- Direct address to God
- Why do you stand far off [10:1]
- How long, O Lord, will you forget me [13:1]
- O Lord, the nations have come [79:1]

Complaint

- Sickness [Ps 6]
- False accusation Pss 7, 31]
- Plea for asylum [Ps 61]
- Bloodshed in Jerusalem [Ps 79:2-4]

Grounds for Deliverance

- Who God is
- What others will think
- The dead can't praise

Petition

- Specific call for deliverance
- "Get me out of this!"

Conclusion

- Affirmation that God has heard
- Pre-emptive thanksgiving

Examples → Pss 5, 54, 88

SONGS OF CONFIDENCE

- Confidence in God's ability to save
- Invitation for others to trust
- Declaring his saving attributes
- Examples → Pss 23, 121

HYMN OF PRAISE

Introduction

- Imperatives (praise! Make music! Sing! Call out!)
- Hallelu-Yah
- Lord's name

Body

- Reason to praise [corporate]
- Exodus, Creation, God's relationship to Israel

Conclusion

- Hallelu-Yah
- Prophetic Warning
- Examples → Pss 8, 100, 105

WISDOM PSALMS

"Blessed" Ashrei, [אַשְׁרֵי]

- Blessed are those who dwell in your house [84:4]
- How blessed is the man who fears the Lord [112:1]

Turn from Evil

- Depart from Evil and do good [34:14]
- Depart from Evil and you will do good [37:27]
- Acrostics [Pss 111, 112, 119]

Better than" sayings

- Better is a little of the righteous than the abundance of many wicked
- The law of your mouth is better to me than thousands of gold and silver pieces [119:72]

"Instruction", "teaching", "Counsel"

- I will teach you the fear of the Lord [34:11]
- Make me know your ways O Lord, teach me your paths [25:4]

"The way," [דֶּרֶךְ]

- I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go [32:8]
- Therefore, he instructs sinners in the way [25:8]

The "Fear of the Lord"

- I will teach you the fear of the Lord [34:11]
- The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom [111:10]

Stereotypes of good and bad behavior

- The wicked plots against the righteous [Ps 37:12]
- Examples → Pss 34, 37, 111, 112

THANKSGIVING

- Individual or community
- Responding to specific act
- "Give thanks" [הוֹדוּ]
- Narrative of deliverance
- Renewed vow of praise
- Examples → Pss 107, 118

KINGSHIP PSALMS

Proclaim a divine king

"God is King" [מֶלֶךְ]

God rules/reigns [מְלִיכָה]

Examples → Pss 93, 97, 99

ROYAL PSALMS

Mentioning Human enthronement or king

- I have enthroned my king on Zion
- Messianic application

Mentions God's anointed

- Rulers take counsel together against the Lord and his anointed [2:2]
- He shows loving kindness to his anointed [18:50]
- Examples → Pss 2, 20, 61, 72

MINOR GENRES

These are genres that are not recognized by all

- Entrance Liturgy [Pss 15, 24]
- Zion Psalms [Pss 48, 87]

General Notes: *Keep in mind that some psalms display mixed characteristics and cannot be defined clearly under a single category. It is important that when you are trying to establish a genre, that you read the whole psalm and identify as many characteristics of a single genre as possible. Thus, Wisdom Psalms may begin with words of praise, but contain more wisdom elements.*