

Two Year Bible Trek
Week 37
Week 37 - Psalm 61, 62, 64, 65, 66, 67, 69, 70

Key Concepts: The key concepts here are that the Psalms are a complex mix of genres which were composed over an extended period of time.

Psalm Themes: this group of Psalms contains praise and petition. It is a reminder that many of the Psalms are not uplifting but are cries for help and deliverance.

Psalm 61 – this Psalm is filled with poetic images and metaphors. The writer prays from the ends of the earth; desires to be on a rock higher than himself; proclaims God to be a strong tower; and desires to be safe under God’s wings. In addition he prays for the king. If this is a Psalm of David then David is praying for himself in third person, but that is not clear. Finally there is a pledge to fulfill vows made; perhaps making this a pilgrimage Psalm.

Psalm 62 – once again we turn to a Psalm that focuses on an individual who is being oppressed by those around him, yet knows that God is his rock and salvation. The writer seems to be in the midst of those who curse him, steal from him and are wish to throw him down. Yet he waits upon the Lord in silence. He also encourages his friends to do the same. An interesting note is that he reflects on the transience of life in that “men of low estate are but a breath, men of high estate are a delusion.”

Psalm 64 – this is a Psalm in two parts. The first part has to do with evil doers who make plans to harm others. The language used is very descriptive; “whet their tongues like swords...aim bitter words like arrows...thinking, ‘who can see us?’” The second half of the Psalm is a proclamation of confidence that God will turn the tables. “But God will shoot his arrow at them.” In other words what goes around, comes around and justice will be done.

Psalm 65 – the writer of this Psalm lays out a progression of images. First God hears prayers and forgives. Next God delivers God’s people and constrains the chaos of creation. Finally, God provides rain, grain and growth. This is probably a Psalm praising God for the harvest.

Psalm 66 – this is probably a Psalm used in temple liturgy. It calls for praise of God, remembers God’s past deeds with Israel, lists the offerings which will be brought into the Temple and concludes with a proclamation of God’s faithfulness.

Psalm 67 – this is another Psalm of praise to God for a good harvest. It calls all people and nations to give thanks to God. This Psalm reminds us that in the minds of Israel, God is the universal king and not merely a local deity.

Psalm 69 – though this Psalm is attributed to David, chances are that it is from a later time period. Some have associated it with Jeremiah while others have linked it with the rebuilding of the temple after the exile. Regardless it focuses on someone who has zeal for the temple and yet has been abused by his enemies. There is vivid imagery such as, “They gave me poison for food...and vinegar to drink.” The writer desires not only release but that God’s vengeance be poured out on his enemies.

Psalm 70 - we conclude this set of readings with one more plea for God’s help and deliverance. It concludes with a plea for God not to tarry.

1. For what do you give God thanks in terms of God’s provision for your life?
2. What moments would you include in a Psalm of praise to God which recounts God’s work in your life?
3. Has your faithfulness ever made you the focus of other’s anger and derision? If so did you cry out to God?