

The Books of Poetry

- The Poetical Books of the Bible are: Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon
- In our western world, we tend to think of Poetry in terms of rhyme, rhythm and having a definite swing or meter to it. **Hebrew Poetry is different and depends on parallelism of thought rather than on the phonetic coupling of words.** An idea is stated in one way and then repeated in another, usually in one of three different ways.
 - Synonymous Parallelism- the second half of the verse repeats the content of the first half only in different words (Ps. 2:4, Ps 140:1)
 - Antithetic Parallelism- a thought is stated in the first verse only to be contrasted in the second. (Ps 34:10, Prov. 12:10)
 - Synthetic Parallelism- a thought is given and then expanded in succeeding lines, each line building on the first. (Ps. 1:3, Prov. 9:1-2)
- Acrostics are favorite devices used as well. They built their poems with each verse beginning with a separate letter of the Hebrew alphabet. Lamentations is built this way and Psalms 111, 112, and 119.

Dr. John Phillips states about the poetical books: “Spiritually these books present the experiences of the renewed heart from the hour self is revealed in all its unattractiveness (Job 42:5-6) until Christ becomes all in all (SOS 5:16). The subject matter of these books may be summarized this way:

Job	The Problem of Pain
Psalms	The Way to Pray
Proverbs	The Behavior of a Believer
Ecclesiastes	The Folly of Forgetting God
Song of Solomon	The Art of Adoration

A Look at the Book of Psalms

- It is the Hebrew Hymnbook and is a collection of 5 books of psalms each ending with a doxology and each corresponds to a book of the Pentateuch. (see chart and outline on separate sheet)
- It has been suggested that the first book, mostly written by David, was collected by Solomon, the second was collected by the Levites who descended from Korah, the third was collected by King Hezekiah and the remaining two books were collected by Ezra and Nehemiah. If this is true, then the collection and arrangement fo the Psalms took nearly 500 years to complete!
- Many Psalms were composed for private and public worship born out of deep experiences of the soul. They include meditations, historical recitals, instructions and passionate entreaties.
- Sin, sorrow, shame, repentance, hope, faith, and love are all expressed, universal in scope, timeless in nature, and the very stuff from which prayer is made so they are a treasury from which to draw when approaching God in prayer privately or corporately. In Psalms we see man’s soul bared!