



24 Hours Through the Bible*

*Primarily sourced from 'Learn the Bible in 24 Hours', by Dr. Chuck Missler, Thomas Nelson

Hour 8: Poetical Books: Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs

Job: The Mystery of Suffering

Morgan: Job The Problem of Pain

- First book of 'The Writings' in the English Bibles, third in the Jewish Scriptures
- Oldest book of the Bible, from about 2000 B.C. or earlier.
- There is every internal evidence that this is an ancient story, probably patriarchal, (A,I, &J era).
- Is he 'Jobab', son of Joktan? (Gen 10:29).
- A literary masterpiece, highly developed poetry, "The greatest masterpiece of the human mind" (Victor Hugo).
- It is enshrouded in mystery: as to authorship, as to the characters presented, location and date.
- Job is confirmed upon the testimony of other parts of Scripture (Ezek. 14:14, 20; James 5:11)
- Its great problem is that of understanding the why of pain.

Man's Relationship to Pain is three-fold:

- First, is the relationship of man to the spirit world of evil and good
- Second, is the inadequacy of human philosophies to account for human pain & problems
- Third, is pain's relationship to the purpose of God in grace.

The Prologue (1:1-5)

- The book opens with a picture full of sunshine and beauty.

Job is seen in three-fold greatness:

- First** is the greatness of his wealth
- Second** is the greatness of his family relationships
- Third** is that of his great relationship with God.
- As to material wealth, he was "the greatest of all the children of the East."
- As to his family, he is seen rejoicing in the joy of his children, while interceding for them spiritually.
- As to his God, he is declared to be "perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and shunned evil."

The Controversy Hell Had with Heaven (1:6-2:10)

- This is a somewhat brief section, and yet absolutely necessary to the understanding of all that follows.
- In it, the veil is drawn aside, and we are given a view of councils in the spiritual world concerning man.
- The sons of god, Angels are seen presenting themselves before God.
- Among them comes one who is called Satan, or the adversary.

The Challenge Part 1

- He expresses his opinion concerning Job in the words, "Does Job fear God for nothing?"
- Satan suggests that Job's confidence in God, his loyalty, are due to the fact that God has blessed him.
- He is suggesting that if the things he possesses are taken from him, his fear of God will cease.
- He is given permission to test Job within the limits Satan suggested, "All that he has is in your power"
- But God adds: "only do not lay a hand on his *person*."
- Immediately we have the story of the calamities which overtake Job.
- The life which was seen in the prologue in calm and sunshine is merged in storm and strain, and agony
- Its strength, however, is proved in the fact that when stripped of everything Job is able to say,
- "The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."
- Thus the enemy is defeated and his slander disproved.

The Challenge Part 2

- Again, the Sons of God appear before God
- Satan, is compelled to admit his defeat thus far
- Being relentless he suggests a new method of attack in an untouched area of Job's life
- Again he is permitted to go forth and do, as he chooses, all that he has suggested.
- He is strictly limited, however, by the command of God-and it cannot be broken.

On Earth

- Job is seen plunged into yet deeper darkness, and in a more terrible trial
- The first section ends with the picture of a man despoiled of earthly possessions
- Bereaved of children, and tempted by the suggestion of his wife that he should "curse God and die."
- He is still able to resist, and does not sin with his lips: He says to his wife: **"Shall we indeed accept good from God, and shall we not accept adversity?" In all this Job did not sin with his lips."**

The Controversy Between Job and His Friends (2:11-37)

- To appreciate all that is to follow, it is necessary that the condition of Job be clearly understood.
- He with no knowledge of what has passed in the councils of Heaven
- Sits in the midst of desolation and darkness, filled with physical, mental, and spiritual pain.
- His greatest anguish is that he cannot understand why these things have happened to him.

Up to this time

- His life has been one of faith in God
- He has never been tested in this way
- He has no consciousness of having committed sin, yet he knows he is a sinner
- Why, then, has he been plunged into the midst of such circumstances?

His Three Friends

- While in the midst of this desolation, and on the very verge of despair, his three friends come to him.
- Their coming is prompted by love for him, and sympathy for him.
- The day of darkness had sifted the crowds of his professed friends.
- In the later movements of the book, Job, in keen disappointment, inquires:
- What has become of all the people he had helped in the day of his prosperity?
- The question is a pertinent one.
- For the three who come we can have nothing but admiration.
- They behold him, and for seven days and seven nights they sit in silence in the presence of his grief.

Job Speaks

- Their silent sympathy appeals to him so that he pours out his great lamentation in their listening ears.
- It was a terrible cry pulsating with pain.
- He first curses his conception and the day of his birth
- He then laments his preservation,
- He thinks of the quietness which would have been his if he could have but ceased to be.
- Finally, he mourns his continued 'being in circumstances of such unceasing and irremediable sorrow'.
- He lost the clarity of his relationship to God, not understanding the trial through which he has passed.

Job's Friends Answer

- In answer to this lamentation the friends speak, and the controversy commences.
- It moves forward in three cycles
- All thru they speak from the standpoint of their own philosophy of life
- He responds out of the midst of his consciousness of the actual experiences through which he is passing
- They have not experienced his plight and therefore they conclude that his plight is the result of sin.

Elihu the last voice of the earthly controversy is now heard (32-37)

- It is a new voice, and opportunity never comes to Job to answer it.
- Elihu introduces himself, with apologies to the ancient men
- Yet he expresses his disappointment that they have been unable to deal with Job and his plight

The Argument of Elihu moves forward in three sections

- He first of all declares that through suffering God is dealing with him for a higher purpose.
- He closes this first movement by challenging Job to hear him while he speaks and then answer
- Job gives no answer, and Elihu proceeds.
- Out of the midst of which presently the voice of God was heard.

Controversy Between the LORD and Job (38-42:6)

- Out of the midst of the whirlwind speaks the LORD's voice, for which Job has long been waiting.
- The LORD first of all sets forth in language of great splendor the truth
- Concerning His creation and of His sustaining the material universe
- At the close of which He challenges Job to respond.
- The answer is full of suggestiveness.
- The man who in mighty speech and strong defiance had been of unbroken spirit
- In the presence of the arguments of his friends now cries out, 40:4 **"Behold, I am vile (of no significance); What shall I answer You?"**
- He has yet to learn that he is very much valued by God.

The LORD and Job's Friends (42:7-17)

- With the great victory being won in the soul of Job, Jehovah deals with his friends.
- His wrath is kindled against them, yet it is mingled with mercy.
- Their intention was good, but their words, their 'facts' were wrong.
- Jehovah's vindication of Job is marked by the fact that He speaks of him as "my servant,"
- Also by His appointment of Job as intercessor on behalf of his friends.
- They had attempted to restore Job to God by philosophy.
- Job is to be the means of restoring them by prayer.
- As at the beginning there were things to be said in their favor, so at the close.
- Their sincerity is manifest in the fact that they submit to correction.
- The latter days of Job on earth were characterized by greater prosperity than his earlier years.
- God will never be in debt to us.

A Dramatic Poem Framed in an Epic Story

The Prologue (Job 1, 2)

- Satan's Challenge.
- God twice gives permission to touch what is Job's then touch Job himself-with boundaries to Satan

The Prologue

- Job – his piety in prosperity/Satan – his lie and maligning Job.
- Job – his piety in adversity/Satan – his further malignity.
- Job – his piety in extremity/The Dialogues...
- Job was “the greatest of all men of the east,” with 7,000 sheep, 3,000 camels, 500 oxen, 500 she-donkeys
- But we have information that Job didn't! The conversation between God and Satan... Satan = “the god of this age” ... he is real; and, he is malevolent, but...

Insights

- Satan is accountable to God.
- Satan's dark mind is an open book to God.
- Satan is behind the evils that curse the earth.
- Satan is neither omnipresent nor omniscient.
- Satan can do nothing to God's people without Divine permission.
- God's eyes are ever on His own.
- Satan has dangerous tools: in the guise of piety, in the name of religious orthodoxy, false comfort and untrue impressions of God.

The Dialogues (Job 3-37)

Eliphaz: Based on his own observation and experience = “Job suffers because he has sinned.”

- Eliphaz, the Temanite.

Bildad: Rests on tradition = “Job is a hypocrite.”

- Bildad, the Shuhite.

Zophar: Rests on assumptions of orthodox dogma = “Job is a wicked man.”

- Zophar, the Naamathite.

Going Deeper With The ‘Three’

- In the first cycle (4-14)** the three friends speak to him in turn, he replying to each one in order.
- Their statement of the case may be briefly summarized thus:
- God is righteous: He punishes the wicked; He blesses the good.
- It is their obvious deduction that they hold him guilty of some sin
- Of which sin all his sufferings constitute the Divine punishment.

There is an evident method in their statement of Job's case:

- Eliphaz**, in his speech, declares the principle in general terms.
- Bildad**, in his turn, illustrates the principle, while
- Zophar**, applies it more directly to the case of Job.
- To each of these Job replies according to their differing methods,
- That he is not wicked but just, and yet he is afflicted, his main contention being that he is innocent
- Yet God has afflicted him, and his principal desire being some explanation of this mystery

In the second cycle (15-21)

- The three friends address Job in the same order; he replies to each in turn.

- The whole argument in this case may thus be expressed: It is the wicked who are afflicted.
- Job answers by declaring that the righteous also are afflicted
- And the wicked are not always afflicted (Ps. 73).
- On the part of the friends there is now evidence of some anger growing out of personal resentment.
- In his first reply Job has treated them with scorn and sarcasm
- Their consideration for him is not as great as it was in the beginning.
- They are profoundly convinced that such suffering can only be accounted for by the fact of definite sin
- They look upon his attitude toward God as being impious
- Job, on the other hand, more than ever is determined to make his appeal directly to God

In the third cycle (22-31) we have a change.

- Eliphaz and Bildad are the only speakers.
- Their philosophy is still unchanged
- Now they state it with more directness of application to the case of Job.
- They charge him definitely with having sinned, and declare that this is the reason for his suffering.
- He replies to Eliphaz and Bildad, denying their affirmations concerning himself
- He makes a lengthy and solemn protestation of innocence.
- Upon a legal oath he avows his innocence of the charges made against him.

Elihu: Is an intercessor rather than a judge.

- Elihu, the Buzite (from which we get our word buzzard! 🦉).
- Elihu's two quotations are from things which Job had said in the course of the previous controversy.
- The first may be summarized as a contention that he has been afflicted by God, notwithstanding his integrity.
- The second suggests that nothing is gained by loyalty to God.
- In answer to the first, Elihu declares that God cannot do wickedness.
- In the case of the second, he affirms that when Job questions the advantage of serving God
- He sets up his righteousness as being "more than God's."
- After a pause, Elihu commences his last address, which is intended to be a defense of God against Job

The Divine Response (Job 38-42)

- The Voice from the whirlwind gives a science quiz, regarding: The Earth; The Heavens; Living Beings
- God gives a Science Quiz.
- Epilogue:
- God's rebuke of the three "comforters."
- Restoration "in double."
- "Double?": 14,000 sheep, 6,000 camels, 1,000 yoke of oxen, 1,000 she- asses, but children listed (7 sons, 3 daughters) are equal to the originals; thus, the first ones were not lost (in the eternal sense)!!

Some Scientific Insights

- At least 15 facts of science are suggested that were not discovered until recent centuries.
- Planet uniquely designed for life: The "Anthropic Principle."
- Absence of scientific errors...
- Hydrological cycle:
 - Evaporation, circulation, precipitation (Job 28:24-27).
 - How do clouds stay aloft?
 - Air, wind, have weight.
 - Water weighs more than air; how supported?
- Space/Time/Mass universe:
 - "He stretches out the north over empty space, and hangs the earth upon nothing" (Job 26:7).

- The “morning stars singing” at the foundation of the earth. (Job 38:7).
- The Angels were present at the creation of the earth.

Dinosaurs?

- Land-based behemoth (Job 40).
- Sea-based leviathan (Job 41)
- New Zealand, 1977; 900 ft down; 32 ft long, 4,000 lbs.

Astronomical Insights

- “Where is the way where light dwells?”
 - Light is dynamic; darkness is static (Job 38:19).
 - “Can you bind the influences of the Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion?”
 - (These are the only visible eye constellations in direct gravitational bondage; Job 38:31.)
 - Mazzeroth* (Zodiac) are signs of God’s plan of redemption (Job 38:12).
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Psalms: Israel’s Hymnal

- Real life poetry laced with strong theology.
- Hebrew, *Tehillim*: “Praises” (55 addressed to “the chief musician.”)
- Greek: *psalmoi*, “a poem to be sung to a stringed instrument”; *psalter*, for harp or stringed instrument.

Morgan

The Word "Psalm" is the Anglicized form of a Greek word

- Which really means a poem set to music.
- The Hebrew title of the book was simply ‘Praises’, or ‘Book of Praises’.
- It is pre-eminently the worship book of the Hebrew people
- Consists of a collection of songs which express the attitude of the soul in the presence of God ...
- When contemplating past history, existing conditions, or prophetic hopes.
- The whole collection consists, in the Hebrew Bible, of five books.

We have no definite proof who the editor was

- His method becomes evident by an examination of the grouping of the Psalms.
- It is perfectly clear that neither authorship nor chronology was in his view.
- The key to the method of the editor is to be found in the doxologies with which the five books close.
- Each of the five has such a doxology, and an examination of these will reveal a certain conception of God
- An attitude of the soul in worship resulting from such a conception.

They may be grouped thus:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Book I. Psalm 1-41:13. | -Worship of Jehovah as the Becoming One, who is the Helper. |
| Book II. Psalm 42-72:18, 19. | -Worship of Jehovah as the wonder-working God. |
| Book III. Psalm 73-89:52 | -Worship of Jehovah as ceaseless. |
| Book IV. Psalm 90-106:48 | -Worship of Jehovah rendered. |
| Book V. Psalm 107-150:1-6. | -Worship of Jehovah consummated. |

- The individual psalms are natural and yet supernatural expressions by many authors
- The editing gathers these individual songs around the notes of truth dominant in each.

-These notes are indicated in each book by the particular title of Jehovah which dominates.

Divine Titles

- Is too great a subject one to be discussed at length now
- But as an introduction to the study of the Psalms, a recognition of differences is necessary.
- Four Divine titles are used in the book of Psalms

Jehovah

- In the ancient Hebrew Scriptures this particular title was always written as YHVH
- Its meaning is, "the Becoming One."
- Yahweh is almost always regarded as the third person singular, masculine, imperfect tense, from the root 'Hawah', an old form of the root 'Hayah'.
- The one meaning of the root 'Hawah' is 'become.'
- So that the force of 'Yahweh', congregated as a verb, would be: 'He will become,' 'He who becomes,' 'The Becoming One.'
- The truth suggested is, first of the essential Being of God which enables Him to become
- And by deduction, that God in infinite grace does become whatever man needs.

Elohim

- This is a plural noun, but it is plural in a sense peculiar to the Hebrew language.
- Girdlestone says: "It is well known that the Hebrews often expressed a word in the plural to give it a special or technical meaning, as in the case of the words blood, water, wisdom, salvation, righteousness, life. . . ."
- In the case of the Divine Name, the plural form expresses the truth that the finite word conveys an inadequate idea of the Being Whom it represents.
- Other names of God will be found to be plural also
- It is worthy of notice that in the well-known passage in **Ecclesiastes (12:1)** the Hebrew runs thus, **'Remember now your Creators (singular 'creator' in English Bibles) in the days of your youth.'** "
- The root idea of the word 'Elohim' is that of strength or might;
- The thought of God suggested by it is that of His strength as revealed in creation
- And in all the operations of His triune power.

Adonai

- Its simple signification is "Master" or "Lord"; and the thought it suggests is that of sovereign supremacy.
- Dr. Arnold:** The third specific term of Lordship is the Hebrew word 'Adonai', which is built on the singular word 'Adon' which is used of both God and man. It is used of man more than three-hundred different times in the Hebrew Bible).
- Adonai** is a plural form technically meaning "my Lords," emphasizing God as a master.
- Whereas the singular Adon is used of both God and man,
- The plural Adonai is used only of God.
- It is used a total of 449 times: 135 times it is used all by itself; 315 times it is used with the name Jehovah; 310 times it is 'Adonai (Lord) Jehovah (LORD)' and 5 times Jehovah (LORD) Adonai (Lord).

Jah

- This is the shorter form of the name 'Jehovah'
- Found in Scripture: twice in Exodus, a few times in Isaiah
- In thirty-five passages in the book of Psalms.

Significance of the Names

- These names reveal the 'Theology of God', which creates the worship of man.
- Recognizing that Jehovah and Jah have the same essential significance

There are three lines of thought suggested:

Jehovah/Jah: First, the essential Being of God, and the fact that He becomes in grace what man needs.

Elohim: Second, the essential Might of God, and the fact that it operates in power.

Adonai: Third, the essential Lordship of God, and His consequent sovereignty over man.

Focusing

The Nature of Poetry

- History instructs; law teaches; prophecy announces, rebukes, chastens; morality persuades...
- Psalms is the medicine and succor for the comfort and encouragement of all.
- They are written to the individual— all of us, individually.
- Musical odes: poems to be set to music. Lyrics: poems intended for lyre or harp.
- Phonetic Design
- Rhyme; the parallelism of sound.
- Rhythm; the parallelism of time.
- Conceptual Design
- The parallelism of ideas.
- Comparative; to illuminate
- Contrastive; antithetic or in direct contrast
- Compleative; synthetic
- Selah = a pause to connect ideas.

Selah and Its Use

- It is commonly assumed that this refers to musical instructions
- However *Selah* is to connect subject matter, not music.
- It connects the end of one strophe with the beginning of the next
- It is the connecting of the two subjects together.
- Sometimes synthetic; sometimes antithetic.
- Concerned with truth, not tunes.
- If derived from salah, “to pause,”** it is not the instruments of music which are to pause while voices continue to sing,
- But it is our hearts which are to pause and to note the connection of precious truths.
- If derived from *salal*, “to lift up,”** then it is not the instruments which are to lift up their sound in louder degree.....
- But our hearts which are to be lifted up to consider solemnly the two truths which are thus connected.

Sources of the Psalms

73	David
12	Asaph, Head of David's choir
12	Sons of Korah
1	Heman, the Ezrahite
1	Ethan, the Ezrahite
1	Moses
<u>50</u>	Anonymous
150	

The Psalms: A “Pentateuch” of Sorts

Genesis	1-41	About Man
Exodus	42-72	Deliverance
Leviticus	73-89	Sanctuary

Numbers	90-106	Unrest; Wandering
Deuteronomy	107-150	Word of the Lord

Inscriptions

- 34 Without inscriptions.
- 52 Simple Inscriptions: "A psalm of David"; "A psalm of Asaph," etc.
- 14 Historical Inscriptions: "A Psalm of David when he fled from Absalom, his son" etc.
- 4 Inscription denoting purpose: "For the sabbath day" etc.
- 15 "Songs of Degrees": ["Steps" on the Temple? ...clues from Hezekiah...]
- 31 Special inscriptions: Musical instructions, etc.
- 150

Psalms Outside of The Book of Psalms

Habakkuk's Psalm

- Hab. 3:1 The Superscription: "A Prayer of Habakkuk the Prophet, upon Shigionoth"
- The Psalm itself Hab. 3:2-19
- The Subscription Hab. 3:19: "To the Chief Musician upon Neginoth"

Hezekiah's Psalm

- Isaiah 38:9 The Superscription: "The writing of Hezekiah, King of Judah, when he had been sick and was recovered of his sickness."
- Isaiah 38:10-20: The Psalm itself
- Isaiah 38:20: The Subscription: "Therefore we will sing my songs to the stringed instruments, all the days of our life, in the house of the lord."

"The Songs of [the] Degrees" Psalms 120-134

- Traditions say: "Ascents?" "Steps?"
- The definite article is in the Hebrew: "the" degrees. Which degrees?
- The great sundial of Ahaz in Jerusalem. Confirmation of 15 years added to Hezekiah's life (2 Kings 20:8-11).
- There were 15 degrees; there are 15 "songs of degrees" arranged by Hezekiah in 5 groups of 3 each: trust, trouble, triumph.
- Two by Hezekiah, and one by either David or Solomon.

The Messianic Psalms

- The Book of Psalms is quoted in the NT more than any other book in OT (even more than Isaiah).
- Christ's birth, betrayal, agony, death, resurrection, ascension, coming again in glory, and His worldwide reign—all pictured in inspired vividness in the Psalms.
- Constitute irrefutable testimony to the Divine inspiration of the Scriptures.

Psalms with Messianic Details

- Psalm 2, 8, 16, 22, 23, 24, 40, 41, 45, 68, 69, 87, 89, 102, 110, 118, et al.

Messiah's Person

- Son of God 2:7; 45:6,7; 102:25,27
- Son of Man 8:4-6; etc.
- Son of David 139:3,4,27,29

Messiah's Offices

-Prophet	22:22, 25; 40:9,10
-Priest	110:4
-King	2; 24; 72; etc.

The Messianic Profile thruout the Psalms

-To speak in parables	78:2
-Will calm the storm	89:10
-To be despised	2:6; 69:19-22
-To be rejected	118:22
-To be mocked	22:7-8; 89:51-52
-To be whipped	129:3
-To be derided	69:8, 20
-Impaled on a cross	22:1-2, 14-17
-Thirsty	22:16
-Given wine mixed with gall	69:20-22
-Lots cast for his garments	22:18-19
-Not a bone to be broken	34:21
-To rise from the dead	16:10
-To Ascend to heaven	68:19
-At the right hand of God	110:1; 80:17
-Is the High Priest	110:4
-Will judge the nations	89:3-5
-Reign to be eternal	89:35-37
-Is the Son of God	2:7
-Is the Son of David	110:1; (Mt 22:42-45)
-People to sing Hosanna to him	118:25-26
-Blessed forever	45:1-4, 8, 18
-Will come in glory in last days	102:16-23

The Coming Kingdom

-The Coming of the Kingdom	Psalm 46
-“Thru Tribulation”	
-The Range of the Kingdom	Psalm 47
-“all the earth”	
-The Center of the Kingdom	Psalm 48
-“Zion”	

The Shepherd Psalms (John 10:14 Jesus said, ‘I AM the Good Shepherd’)

-The Suffering Savior	Psalm 22
-The Good Shepherd John 10	
-The Living Shepherd	Psalm 23
-The Great Shepherd Hebrews 13	
-The Exalted Sovereign	Psalm 24
-The Chief Shepherd 1Peter5:4	

Psalm 22: The Suffering Savior

Psalm 22:1, 7-8; cf. Mt 27:43, 46 **22:1** My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? **7** All that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, **8** “He trusted on the LORD that he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delights in him.”

Psalm 22:14, 15 14 I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint (*not in the Gospels*): my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels. 15 My strength is dried up like a pottery; and my tongue cleaves to my jaws; and you have brought me into the dust of death.

Psalms 22:16-18 cf. Mt 27:35 16 For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet. 17 I may tell all my bones: they look and stare upon me. 18 They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.

Psalm 23 The Shepherd Psalm

The Lord is my shepherd

I shall not want.

-I shall lack nothing.

He makes me to lie down in green pastures.

-I shall not lack provision.

He Leads me beside the still waters.

-I shall not lack peace.

He leads me in the paths of righteousness.

-I shall not lack guidance.

Yes, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,

I will fear no evil.

-I shall not lack courage in the dark hour.

Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

-I shall not lack true comfort.

You prepare a table before me in the presence of mine enemies.

-I shall not lack protection, preservation, honor.

You anoint my head with oil.

-I shall never lack joy.

My cup runs over.

-I shall never lack fullness of blessing.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life.

-I shall not lack Divine favor during my earthly life.

And I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

-I shall not lack a heavenly home when my earthly tour is over.

Seven Compound Titles With LORD (YHWH)

YHWH-jireh	The Lord will provide	Gen 22
YHWH-rapha	The Lord that heals	Ex. 15
YHWH-shalom	The Lord our peace	Jud. 6
YHWH-tsdkenu	The Lord our righteousness	Jer. 23
YHWH-shammah	The Lord ever-present	Ezek. 48
YHWH-nissi	The Lord our banner	Ex17
YHWH-raah	The Lord our shepherd	Ps 23

Psalm 2 A Triune Conversation

The Holy Spirit speaking of the kings of the earth...

Psalm 2:1-3 1 Why do the nations rage, And the people plot a vain thing? 2 The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together, Against the LORD and against His Anointed, saying, 3 "Let us break Their bonds in pieces And cast away Their cords from us."

The Holy Spirit Who Must Deal with the People, responds ...

Psalms 2:4-6 4 He who sits in the heavens shall laugh; The LORD shall hold them in derision. 5 Then He (*the Father*) shall speak to them in His wrath, And distress them in His deep displeasure: 6 "Yet I have set My King (the Son) On My holy hill of Zion."

Verse 7: Son, quoting the Father...

Psalm 2:7 7 "I will declare the decree: The LORD has said to Me, 'You are My Son, Today I have begotten You.

Verses 8-9 The Father Responds to the Son

8 Ask of Me, and I will give You The nations for Your inheritance, And the ends of the earth for Your possession. **9** You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel.' "

Verses 10-12 The Holy Spirit to the kings of the earth...

10 Be wise now therefore, O kings: be instructed, you judges of the earth. **11** Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling. **12** Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and you perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.

Other Psalm Groups

-Hallelujah Psalms	106, 111, 112, 113, 135, 146-150
-Penitential Psalms	6, 32, 38, 39, 51, 102, 143
-Imprecatory* Psalms	35, 57, 59, 69, 83, 109, 137, et al.
-Acrostic ** Psalms	9, 25, 34, 37, 111, 112, 119, 145

* To invoke a curse or seek vengeance on enemies

** a poem, word puzzle, or other composition in which certain letters in each line form a word or words.

For example

Psalm 119 22 sections (for each Hebrew letter); each section has 16 lines in 8 couplets, each couplet beginning with same letter of the Hebrew alphabet.

The Book of Proverbs

Proverbs: Practical Spiritual Wisdom

- The Book of Proverbs is one of the wisdom books of the Hebrew people.
- The word itself occurs frequently,
- Synonymous with it are: knowledge, understanding, discretion, subtlety.
- Each of these expresses some application of wisdom
- The word wisdom itself being greater than any, because it includes all.
- In all its teaching this book takes for granted the wisdom of God
- And seeks to instruct man concerning what His wisdom really is.

The Wise Man

- The perfectly wise man lives and thinks and acts in right relationship to the All-Wise God.
- His wisdom commences emotionally in the fear of God
- Is manifest intellectually in his acquaintance with the manifestations of the Divine nature
- Is active volitionally in obedience to the will of God, as revealed in His word and His work.

Meaning of the Word

- The word translated proverb really means 'likeness'
- We come nearest to the thought in our word parable.

-In this book we have the setting forth of wisdom by discourses on its values, and its practical applications

The book may be divided thus:

Introduction (1:1-7)

Instructions on Wisdom (1:8-ch. 9)

First Collection of Proverbs (10-24)

Second Collection of Proverbs (25-29)

Appendix (30-31)

Introduction (1:1-7)

- The first verse constitutes the title of the book,
- The following six contain the preface.
- Then follows a statement of method which is necessary for the correct use of the book....
- ‘The beginning of wisdom is the fear of the Lord’.
- The fact of God, and of man's relation to Him must be taken for granted
- And responded to correctly if there is to be any true wisdom.

Instructions on Wisdom (1:8-ch. 9)

- These general instructions prepare the way for the proverbs proper.
- The first is a parent counsel, in which the wisdom of recognizing true friends is set forth
- Words which urge the habit of loyalty to father and mother
- The folly of forming false friendships is set forth in a series of warnings.
- Then Wisdom is personified, and her first call is stated.
- It is an appeal to turn from simplicity (absence of true wisdom) and scorning and hatred of knowledge
- With the promise that she will reward such as search after her.

The Series of Parent Counsels (1:8-19)

- Begins with the words "my son."
- They deal with the value of wisdom, and make practical application of the teaching.
- The first of these addresses deals with the search for wisdom
- In the search there must be willingness and desire to know, accompanied by devotion.
- The values are the discerning and discreet heart
- Which enables man to understand his pathway and ability to refuse false friendships
- With all the benefits arising from true friendships.

Then an appeal to cultivate wisdom (1:20-33)

- It consists of a declaration of the essence and excellencies of wisdom
- In the next address the father urges his own experience.
- His father had given him advice, which he declares was good.
- Then, conscious of the temptations which beset the path of the young, he urges obedience.
- The attitude toward temptation is to avoid it completely
- With persistent looking straight ahead, and untiring caution

Then follows an exhortation against impurity

- Expressed in words of great delicacy and beauty.
- The allurements of evil are vividly described.
- It is put into immediate contrast with the issue of yielding to it.

- It is a change from honey to wormwood, from the path of life to the highway of death.
- Impurity of conduct may seem to be of silken texture in its enticement;
- it becomes a hard and unyielding cable when it binds the life in slavery.

The parental exhortations are continued against suretyship, laziness, the evil in man

- And certain specific things which the Lord hates.
- These counsels close with two solemn warnings on the same subject.
- Each commences with tender and urgent entreaties to attend to the good advice given
- In the hour of sin's glamor it is good for the soul to look through to the end, to death and Sheol

The foundations of Wisdom are next declared

- Essentially these are prudence (wise caution), knowledge, discretion.
- The foundation is the 'fear of the Lord', which expresses itself in the hatred of all He hates.
- In such Wisdom lie the secrets of strength.

Wisdom claims an age-abiding relationship to Deity

- In the beginnings of creation, The LORD possessed Wisdom.
- Through all the processes Wisdom wrought with God, and God delighted in Wisdom
- Until man, the crowning creation of all, which gave Wisdom its chief delight.
- The call ends with a final appeal to those who attend to the call of Wisdom
- Those who sin against Wisdom wrong their own soul.

The Last Address is a Contrast between Wisdom and Folly

- Each is personified as a woman calling to youth.
- Wisdom has built her house and spread her feast in the high places of the city.
- Folly, in the garb of the evil woman, sits at the door of the house also in the high places of the city.
- She also calls to a feast, but it is a feast of death.
- Between the two we read that the effect produced will depend upon the attitude of those who hear.

What, then, is this first Wisdom?

- It is the fear of the Lord and the knowledge of the Holy One.
- In every city, on every street, by every door of opportunity
- Two voices are appealing to men: Wisdom and Folly.
- To obey the call of Wisdom is to live; to yield to the clamor of Folly is to die.

How shall we discern between the voices?

- By making the fear of the Lord the central inspiration of our life
- By humbly yielding our being at its depths to Him for correction and guidance.

First Collection of Proverbs (10-24)

Here begins the Proverbs proper

- In this first collection they are antithetical (*mutually incompatible*).
- They present a sharp contrast between wisdom and folly in the outworking of each in practical life.
- Seeing that this is indeed a collection of proverbs, there is no direct connection or system
- Except in the underlying purpose of contrast.
- No chapter exposition is possible except that of taking each proverb and considering it alone

Second Collection of Proverbs (25-29)

- Having been gathered together in the days of Hezekiah.

- Speaking generally, the proverbs in this collection are more picturesque than the former.
- They were for the most part antithetical (*in direct opposition*) and logical.
- These are parabolic pictures

Appendix (30-31)

In this appendix we have the words of Agur and King Lemuel

- It is impossible to say who Agur was
- From his writings, we have, first, an introduction
- He affirms human incompleteness in wisdom
- He then utters the memorable prayer, in which he reveals his faith in the Lord
- His desire is for that balanced life which is one of safety
- We have his observations on various matters affecting conduct.
- This is followed by two groups of four things
- Four evil things and four things perpetually dissatisfied.
- Then follows another proverb, and four groups of four things.
- The whole movement ends with a proverb.

There are many conjectures as to the identity of King Lemuel

- Nothing can be certainly affirmed.
- His words recorded here fall into two parts.
- The first of these consists of his mother's advice to him
- She urges him against becoming the slave of passion
- Warning him that the man who takes to strong drink must be ready to perish
- It must utterly be avoided by kings and princes.
- The first duty of the king is that of caring for all who are oppressed and needy.

The second part consists of a beautiful picture of a virtuous woman

- It may be supposed to be King Lemuel's picture of his mother.
- After a fine description of her beauty and her diligence
- And the helpful influence she exerted in bringing her husband to places of power
- He ends with the declaration:
- ‘Many daughters have done virtuously, But you excel them all’

Focusing

- Proverbs are to our practical life what Psalms is to our devotional life.
- Pro*, for; *verba*, words: terse maxim.
- A proverb does not argue; it assumes.
- Solomon wrote 3,000 (1Kings 4:32).
- Arranged during the reign of Hezekiah.

Proverbs By the Numbers

1) Extolling Wisdom 1-9

- 15 Sonnets (rather than Proverbs)
- Sonnets are short poems, devoted to one particular theme, and molded into a special form.
- English: 14 lines; Italian pattern: octave + sextet, expressing two phases of same thought.
- 2 monologues.

2) Maxims Enjoining Prudence (*wise caution*) 10-24

- 375 pithy observations in couplets;
- 16 short ingenious poems
- 3) More Maxims on Prudence 25-31**
- 7 epigrams (pithy sayings);
- 55 couplets
- 13 sayings of Agur;
- Oracle of Lemuel's mother;
- The Acrostic on the Virtuous Woman.

Structural Method

- Contrastive Proverb (Antithesis)
- Compact presentation of a striking contrast.
- Completive Proverb
 - Second line agrees, carries, amplifies, the 1st.
- Comparative Proverb
 - Figures of comparison.

Colorful Imagery

- Contrastive:** "A fair woman without discretion is like a jewel of gold in a swine's snout."
- Completive:** "As cold water to a thirsty soul is like good news from a far country."
- Comparative:** "The tongue of a nagging woman is a continual dripping on a very rainy day."

Pictures and Analogies

- The sluggard who is like vinegar to the teeth and smoke to the eyes of his employer.
- The offended brother who is harder to win than a strong city.
- The coming of poverty to the slothful, like "an armed man".
- Wise reproof to an earring of gold on an obedient ear
- Riches flying away on wings like those of an eagle

Mrs. "Far-Above-Rubies" (Proverbs 31:10-31)

She is a Good Woman

- She works diligently 13, 15, 19
- She contrives prudently 16, 22, 24
- She behaves uprightly 25

She is a Good Wife

- She seeks husband's good 12
- She keeps his confidence 11
- She aids his prosperity 23, 24

She is a Good Mother

- She clothes family wisely 21
- She feeds household well 15, 27
- She shops sensibly 14, 18

She is a Good Neighbor

- She helps the poor 20
 - She uplifts the needy 20
 - She speaks graciously 26
-

Ecclesiastes

Ecclesiastes: The Vanity of Life Under the Sun

- The Word 'Ecclesiastes' means preacher or teacher
- This book is one systematic discourse.
- The theme of the book is the "vanity" of everything "under the sun." (apart from the Son)
- This is first announced, then proven from the preacher's personal experience, and observations.
- Finally, by appeal and declaration, he shows that the whole of life is only found
- In recognition of things above the sun as well as of those under the sun
- of things spiritual as well as material.
- It makes the one appeal which, if obeyed, issues in the correction of the despair of 'Life Under the Sun'.

It may be thus divided:

The Theme Stated (1:1-11)

The Evidence Amassed (1:12-ch. 8)

The Effect Revealed (ch. 9-11:8)

The Correction Declared (11:9-12:14)

The Theme Stated (1:1-11)

- In the statement of his theme the preacher employs phrases which recur through the whole of the book
- "vanity," (emptiness, futility) "what profit," "under the sun."
- The statements are a declaration of the emptiness of life
- When it is wholly lived in and thru 'things' and only under the sun, apart from The Son.

In this first division

- The generations come and go, while the earth abides.
- The sun rises and sets and repeats its daily cycle.
- The wind moves in a ceaseless circuit.
- Rivers run into the sea only to return to the places from which they came.
- Man comes on the scene with desires which are never satisfied
- The intention of the passage is to impress upon the mind the fact of the constant grind of the universe
- This is still in the consciousness of men who have lost their vision of true spiritual realities

The Evidence Amassed (1:12-ch. 8)

- The discourse now states the grounds upon which such conclusions have been arrived at.

They are twofold:

- First, the actual experiences of the king
- Secondly, the widespread observation of other men, and of matters in general.

Commencing with his experience

- He states the vanity of knowledge, of mirth, of wealth.
- He had come to the conclusion that they were all vanity
- Knowledge unilluminated by spiritual consciousness is utterly dis-satisfying.

Turning to the pathway of pleasure

- The king had given himself up to mirth, seeking the false stimulus of wine.
- In this also he had been disappointed, finding that mirth was madness
- And all pleasure incompetent to satisfy.

He next turned to his great possessions

- Attempting to acquire and use them to bring satisfaction not found elsewhere.
- He surrounded himself with every kind of luxury, gathered large possessions
- Gave himself over to music and to women, allowing a full rein of experience to all his desires.
- All this he had found to be vanity, nothing but a striving after wind
- He again is driven to the conclusion that there was no profit under the sun.

He went from things mostly physical to those of the mind

- These were better, and he found that "wisdom excels folly."
- Yet he also perceived that "one event happens to all," death for the wise and the fool
- This also ended in disappointment as keen as the others.....
- With these terrible words: "I hated life . . . I hated all my labor . . . under the sun."
- Everything was vanity.

He turns from his personal experience to the evidence gained by observation

- In greater detail he describes the mechanism of the universe, referring to its ceaseless routine
- Deducing from there a conception of God as a Being Who absolutely cannot be personally prevented ..
- From Whom there is no escape.
- With this consciousness he is confused: In the place of judgment and of righteousness, wickedness exists.
- In this state man is no better than the beasts.

The observation of the religious life brings no truer satisfaction

- The whole attitude of mind revealed here is that of cynicism
- It is the attitude of a man who had lived his life only "under the sun."
- But the preacher expresses no contempt for religion
- The recognition of God is irksome, and issues, at its best, in a caution based on fear.
- But there is in his outlook no joy, no satisfaction.
- Do not hoard anything, but enjoy it. It is the advice of utter selfishness.
- Poverty is preferable to wealth, because wealth leads to great, unexperienced disappointment

His Summary of his observations, 'under the sun':

- Being wealthy rather than poor, he returns to a full declaration of the sorrows of the wealthy.
- The more a man possesses under the sun, the more profoundly conscious he becomes of the vanity and vexation of it all.
- He recommends that men should take things as they come and gives illustrations....
- Righteousness does not always pay right away; wickedness sometimes does.

The Effect Revealed (ch. 9-11:8)

- He affirms all is vanity 'under the sun' and what is the effect of this on the mind of man
- He praises worldly wisdom.
- It is to be granted that all things are in the hand of God
- The only certain thing is the one event to all, righteous and wicked, to all only 'under the sun' ... death
- Therefore, there is but one thing to do: enjoy the present life; eat and drink, and experience the life of vanity.
- Wisdom 'under the sun' is of some relative value, but in the long run it is of little worth.

How, then, does worldly wisdom work?

- The preacher shows that its first manifestation is that of discretion based upon selfishness.
- It is, moreover, that of diligence of pursuit of the things of this life.

- In the same wail of disappointment which has characterized the whole discourse he says:
- "If a man lives many years, let him rejoice in them all; but let him remember the days of darkness, for they shall be many. All that comes is vanity."

The Correction Declared (11:9-12:14)

- The first word of the last division of the book, is the true thought and desire of God for man: "Rejoice."
- A man is to enter life his present life-with extreme eagerness
- He is constantly to do so in the sight of God, remembering his relationship to Him.
- Everything is to be tested first by the supremacy of God.
- To attempt to find Him through the medium of our 'self-pleasing' life will utterly fail.
- To enthrone Him first, and then to find life through Him, is to cancel forever the word "vanity."

We then reach the epilogue of the sermon

- It first repeats the theme 'vanity' as announced at the beginning
- And How the preacher, through study and diligence, still attempted to teach the people knowledge
- In the concluding two verses, a great statement of truth is made
- At the center is this statement: "This is the whole of man." (NKJV reads: '**For this is man's all**')
- He asks: what is the whole of man? "To fear God and keep His commandments."
- To do this is to find life not merely under the sun, but life that is over and beyond it as well
- To do this is to have light upon the facts and problems of life, which otherwise are dark and dismal.

Focusing

Ecclesiastes, Hebrew: *Kohleth*, the Preacher.

- Solomon's sermon on the natural man's quest for the chief good.
- A cumulative treatise of component parts.
- Concludes: "All is Vanity."
- Bravely honest rather than pessimistic.
- Sees beyond life's ironies and wearying repetitions to Divine control
- Solomon's authorship significant: "Old and foolish king" followed by "poor and wise youth"
- Woman = seductress more bitter than death;
- Solomon had not found one true woman in a 1000... (7:28)

In contrast to Proverbs: Is not scattered precepts, but a cumulative argument toward an end.

- This book has been widely misunderstood: penetrates human condition, looks beyond death...
- The cause and cure for pessimism

Solomon gives three causes of pessimism:

- 1st: Viewing life selfishly rather than socially.
- 2nd: Viewing life apart from God rather than controlled by Him.
- 3rd: Viewing life as bounded by the grave rather than having a destiny beyond.

Ten Vanities

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| Human Wisdom: | Wise and Foolish alike have one end—death. |
| Human Labor: | Worker no better than the shirker in the end. |
| Human Purpose: | Man proposes, but God disposes. |
| Human Rivalry: | Success brings more envy than joy. |
| Human Avarice: | "Much" feeds lust for the elusive "more." |
| Human Fame: | Brief, uncertain, and soon forgotten. |

Human Insatiety: Money does not satisfy; only feeds others.
Human Coveting: Gain cannot be enjoyed despite desire.
Human Frivolity: Only camouflages inevitable sad end.
Human Awards: Good and bad often get wrong desserts.

The Final Significance

Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter:

-Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole ~~duty~~ of man. (KJV)

-For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it is good, or evil.

Song of Solomon

- Here is a book with only 117 verses, 470 Hebrew words (47 of which appear only in this book),
- Yet it is among the least studied and most emotionally controversial books of the Bible.
- It is also perhaps the most difficult and mysterious book in the Bible.
- A cursory glance at the Song's history of interpretation reveals a diversity of opinion
- Unequaled in the study of any other biblical work. (Over 500 commentaries in the first 1700 years.)

No book has been more controversial

- The interpretations may be divided into two main classes:
- The Sensual and The mystical
- It May be a mistake to treat one method or the other as the exclusive truth
- On the extreme left are those who declare it to be simply a sensual eastern love song.
- On the extreme right those who say it is only a portrayal of the love existing between Jehovah and Israel and Christ and His Church.

Jesus Said: The Volume of the Book Speaks of Me

- How so in the Song of Solomon?
- In order to understand the value of the book, we think it necessary to recognize
- First**, it is based on actual facts and an actual love relationship and has human interest and Instruction
- Second**, it gives a picture of the exalted love between Christ and Individual Christians and collectively His Church, His Bride

The Story As Is

- We shall find that the songs are idylls (= "little pictures")
- Behind them is the actual story of the wooing and winning of a bride.
- It is necessary to construct the story by careful examination of the songs themselves.

An Outline of these Idylls

A Suite of Seven Idylls?

(Idyll = "little picture", from Greek *eidullion*.)

The Royal Wedding Relived	1-2:7
The Bride's Courtship Reminiscences	2:8-3:5
The Occasion of Betrothal Recalled	3:6-5:1
The Bride's Troubled Dream Related	5:2-6:3
The King's Meditation on His Bride	6:4-7:10
The Bride Longs to See Her Old Home	7:2-8:4
The Renewal of Love at Lebanon	8:5-8:14

What do the Idylls Tell Us?

- They first interpretation sets forth the love existing between a bride and bridegroom.
- A Second as setting forth that love existing between Jehovah and Israel, which is exclusively Hebrew.
- In the prophets this is clearly made manifest.
- Moreover, Jewish expositors have so interpreted these songs
- It is certainly probable that Solomon had some such intention in mind.

In the New Dispensation-the Church

- The same figure most gloriously sets forth the nature of the relationship between Christ and His Church.
- Some church writers have interpreted these songs in the light of this New Testament truth

The Balanced View

- First** the songs should be treated then as tender songs of human affection.
- When they are thus understood, reverently the thoughts may be lifted into the higher value
- Secondly** as the joys of individual communion between the spirit of man and the Spirit of God
- And from the second: **Thirdly** and ultimately it is a love story of Christ and His Bride, the Church.

The Story Behind the Opera

- Solomon is the hero of the piece
- Shulamite is the Cinderella of the piece.
- Jewish tradition (the Mishnah, the Talmud, and the Targum) viewed the book as an allegorical picture of the love of God for Israel.
- ‘Shulamite’ is simply the feminine of Solomon: “Mr. & Mrs. Solomon.”
- In the mountain district of Ephraim, King Solomon had a vineyard (8:11)
- He leased it out to an Ephraimite family as keepers.
- The husband and father had apparently passed away,
- But there was a mother and at least two sons and two daughters.
- The older daughter, called the Shulamite, is the “Cinderella” of the piece.
- Her brothers did not appreciate her and foisted hard tasks upon her
- Denying her the privileges that a growing girl might have expected in a Jewish home. “My mother’s sons were angry with me.” (Half-brothers?)
- She laments: “Mine own vineyard I have not kept.”
- No opportunity to look after herself.
- Sunburned but naturally beautiful.

The Handsome stranger promises to return

- One day she encounters a handsome stranger-shepherd, who views her as without blemish.
- Friendship ripens to affection, and finally, love.
- He promises to return and make her his bride.
- The Family is skeptical during his extended absence
- Her brothers, skeptical, regard her as deceived by this stranger.
- He is gone a long time.
- She would dream of him in the darkness; she trusted him.
- The King has sent for you... It’s the handsome shepherd!
- “I am my beloved’s, and his desire is toward me.”

One day a glorious cavalcade arrives, and the attendants announce, “The King has sent for you.”

- In obedience, she responds.
- When she looks into the face of the King,
- Behold the King was the shepherd who had won her heart:

"I am my beloved's, and his desire is toward me."

Focusing

Church leaders, including Hippolytus, Origen, Jerome, Athanasius, Augustine, and Bernard of Clairvaux, have viewed the book as an allegory of Christ's love for His bride, the church.

-It was the favorite book of D.L. Moody, C. H. Spurgeon, and St. John of the Cross.

-John Gill, a Puritan preacher, developed 122 sermons from it

The Song has been interpreted as:

a) an allegory

b) an extended type

c) a drama involving either two or three main characters

d) a collection of Syrian wedding songs (a view held by some scholars) in which the groom played the role of a king and the bride played the role of a queen,

e) a collection of pagan fertility cult liturgies (held by Theophile Meek), and

f) an anthology of disconnected songs extolling human love (held by Robert Gordis).

Is She Modeled After Abishag?

-Abishag was a beautiful young woman who spent her youth working in the fields and vineyards

-Abishag was not a lady of the courts—she was a country girl.

-She came from an area called Shunam, presumably in the Galilee. (Attempts to locate have proven fruitless.)

-Who was selected to lie beside the elderly King David and serve his needs during his dying years.

-The text is clear that her virginity was not taken away by the elderly King David (1 Kgs 1:4).

-Her ministry to him was completely a matter of physical care, not sexual pleasure.

-Solomon, part of the household at that time, became attached to her.

-When his brother Adonijah tried to get his brother's approval for taking Abishag to wife thru Bathsheba

-Since he lost the kingdom to Solomon

-Solomon was enraged and ultimately had Benaiah his executioner kill Adonijah (1Kgs 2:21- 25).
