



# The Book of Psalms

An Introduction

# Illustrative



They paint a picture for us:

*The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.  
(Psalm 23:1)*

# Illustrative



*As a deer pants for flowing streams, so pants my soul  
for you, O God. (Psalm 42:1)*

# Emotionally Honest



They give us permission to express our feelings:

*How long, O LORD? Will you forget me forever?*

*How long will you hide your face from me? (Psalm 13:1)*

# Emotionally Honest



*I am weary with my moaning;  
every night I flood my bed with tears;  
I drench my couch with my weeping. (Psalm 6:6)*

# Prophetic



They point us toward Jesus:

*16 For dogs encompass me; a company of evildoers encircles me; they have pierced my hands and feet—  
17 I can count all my bones—they stare and gloat over me; 18 they divide my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots. (Psalm 22:16-18)*

# Prophetic



*Then He said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.”  
(Luke 24:44)*

# Offer Hope



They offer us hope for the future:

1 *Hear my cry, O God, listen to my prayer;*  
2 *from the end of the earth I call to you when my*  
*heart is faint. Lead me to the rock that is higher than*  
*I, 3 for you have been my refuge, a strong tower*  
*against the enemy. (Psalm 61:1-3)*

# True to Life



They speak to our spiritual journey:

*“In Psalms, we find poems of **orientation**, poems of **disorientation**, and poems of **reorientation**. These correspond to the realities of human life . . . Human life consists in satisfied seasons of well-being that evoke gratitude for the constancy of blessing . . . Human life also consists in anguished seasons of hurt, alienation, suffering, and death . . .”*

# True to Life



*“These evoke rage, resentment, self-pity, and hatred  
... Finally, human life consists in turns of surprise  
when we are overwhelmed with the new gifts of God,  
when joy breaks through the despair.”*

*(W. Brueggemann)*

# True to Life



*“The dominant message in the Book of Psalms is twofold: (1) God is good, and (2) life is difficult. The life of faith is lived between these two realities.” (The Nelson Study Bible)*

# The Journey



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2. *On this journey, we will experience times of awakening (orientation), sorrow (disorientation) and renewal (reorientation).*
3. *We are not to walk this journey alone.*
4. *There is always hope!*