

Lecture 2 – Introduction to Course

*Delight yourself in the Lord,
And he will give you the desires of your heart. Psalm 37:4*

*Be still, and know that I am God;
I will be exalted among the nations,
I will be exalted in the earth. Psalm 46:10*

Key Terms

“Psalms & Wisdom Literature” and the Hebrew canon, “The Writings,” human perspective, contemporary relevance, hermeneutical difficulties

Lecture Objectives

- *Describe the place of the Psalms and Wisdom Literature in our Scriptures compared to their place in Hebrew Scriptures.
- *List and describe distinctives of the Psalms and Wisdom Literature.

Preliminary Questions

- *What has been your experience with the Psalms and Wisdom Literature? To what extent and in what ways has it impacted your personal life? The life of your family? The life of your church?
- *Have you ever considered the use of Psalms or Wisdom Literature in sharing the Gospel with your unbelieving friends? How might it be used in that way?

Course Introduction

- I. An Introduction to the Course and Its Contents
 - A. Definition and delimitation of the course
 1. On the difficulty of naming the course
 - a. Poetical books
 - b. On shape of the Hebrew Canon
 - c. Psalms and Wisdom Books
 2. Scope of the course
 - B. Date of “The Writings”
 1. A Qualification
 - a. 1,000 year span from writing of first to last psalm
 2. First Explicit Reference to “The Writings”
 - a. Prologue to Ecclesiasticus (Sirach)
 - b. 3 x - Law, prophets and other writings of our ancestors
 3. NT Witness
 - a. Lk. 24:44
 - b. Mt. 23:34-35
 4. Conclusion
 - C. Distinctives of the psalms and wisdom books
 1. The human perspective
 - a. Guides for us in our struggles
 - b. Our prayers and praises to God
 - c. Man’s response to God and His instruction to us
 2. Contemporary relevance
 - a. Ourselves: Meets us where we are
 - b. Our society: Point of Contact
 - c. Bridge: Show difference to world-*Illustration: Discipline*

- d. Counseling purposes
- 3. Hermeneutical difficulties
 - a. Culture
 - b. Language
 - c. Forms of Hebrew poetry
 - d. Proverbs: What are they?

What do you think about the idea of Psalms and Wisdom Literature as “lived theology”? How does this idea change your perspective on the literature?

What have been some difficulties you have encountered in understanding Psalms and Wisdom Literature?