

Lecture 12 – The Psalms, VI

*There are six things the Lord hates,
Seven that are detestable to him:
Haughty eyes,
A lying tongue,
Hands that shed innocent blood,
A heart that devises wicked schemes,
Feet that are quick to rush to evil,
A false witness who pours out lies
And a man who stirs up dissension among brothers. Proverbs 6:16-19*

Key Terms

Psalter, divisions, growth

Lecture Objectives

- *Briefly outline the structures and development of the Psalter.
- *Identify implications of the structure and development for rightly interpreting the psalms.

Preliminary Questions

- *To what extent can we interpret one psalm in light of another psalm? By what criteria may we do so?

Dr. Long begins with a devotional on Proverbs 6:16-19.

The Psalms, VI

I. The Psalms

- A. Introduction
- B. Classification schemes
- C. Psalm titles?
- D. Explicating Hebrew poetry: Psalm 2
- *E. The shape of the Psalter
 - 1. Structure/divisions
 - a. Introductory remarks
 - b. The five books

See handout: The Psalms: Classification Schemes (Appendix 4)

- c. Groupings associated with persons
- d. Groupings according to subject matter
- e. Inferences drawn from the above features: Psalter like a cathedral
Kidner "...mixture of order and informality..."
- 2. Growth of the Psalter
 - a. Direct biblical evidence for earlier collections
 - b. Indirect biblical evidence for earlier collections

See handout on Psalm 14 & Psalm 53 (Appendix 6)

- c. Summary:

Does it bother you that the Psalms were edited/compiled over time? What bearing does this have on our views of inspiration and canonicity?

3. Recent studies on the editorial shape of the Psalter

See handout: Recent Theories on the Editing of the Psalms (Appendix 7)

- a. Is the present shape of the Psalter accidental or intentional?
Walton, John H. "Psalms: A Cantata about the Davidic Covenant"
Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society 34/1 (1991): 21-31
- b. Is there thematic progression throughout the Psalter?
- c. Should the psalms be interpreted individually or in relation to one another?

How would you answer these questions about the editorial shape of the Psalter?