

The BOOKS OF POETRY

1. This group of books known as the POETICAL BOOKS or BOOKS OF POETRY include: Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon. *Some also put Lamentations in this grouping; however, I will include it under the Major Prophets in our next study since it was written by Jeremiah and was his funeral dirge over the burning Jerusalem in the wake of its third attack by Babylon under King Nebuchadnezzar.*

2. They might also be grouped together under this heading: BOOKS OF WISDOM.

3. For the most part, these books belong to THE GOLDEN AGE OF HEBREW HISTORY - that is, the reigns of Kings David and Solomon.

However, Job is generally assigned to an earlier date and some of the Psalms are later.

4. WHO WROTE THESE BOOKS?

The book of Job – some believe Moses wrote it while in the wilderness of Midian; others believe Job himself wrote it near the end of his life.

The Psalms - for the most part, David.

Proverbs - for the most part, Solomon

Ecclesiastes - Solomon

Song of Solomon - Solomon

THE BOOK OF JOB

1. Job is a fascinating book.

2. We do not know the time of Job's life - *when* he lived.

We do not know *where* he lived. (Someone will respond, "Well, it was the Land of Uz." Yes, but where was Uz?)

It is possible, if, indeed, not probable, that Job lived in the time of the patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, etc.). Since there is no mention in Job of the Mosaic Law, nor does it make any reference to the events of the Exodus, it would seem possible that Job lived prior to the time of Moses - probably somewhere in the last half of Genesis.

WHY MAKE SUCH A SPECULATION?

A. The length of Job's life span. Job 42:16-17

After this lived Job an hundred and forty years, and saw his sons, and his sons' sons, even four generations. [17] So Job died, being old and full of days. Life spans such as this were not unusual in the days of the patriarchs.

B. Job acted as the high priest in his family - obviously before the Levites.

C. One of the main characters in the drama was ELIPHAZ who descended from Esau's eldest son: Genesis 36:10

These are the names of Esau's sons; **Eliphaz** the son of Adah the wife of Esau, Reuel the son of Bashemath the wife of Esau.

THE CHALLENGE TO GOD CONCERNING JOB:

Job 1:6-12

Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them. [7] And the Lord said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it. [8] And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? [9] Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought? [10] Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land. [11] But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face. [12] And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the Lord.

THE BOOK OF JOB REVEALS A MAN WHO WAS VERY CONSCIOUS OF GOD BUT WHO COULD FIND NOTHING WRONG WITH HIMSELF, ONE WHO WAS VERY EGOTISTICAL ABOUT HIS OWN RIGHTEOUSNESS AND MAINTAINED IT IN THE FACE OF THOSE WHO WERE AROUND HIM. HE WANTED TO STAND IN GOD'S PRESENCE AND DEFEND HIS OWN CHARACTER. IT WAS THEN HE LEARNED HE NEEDED INSTEAD TO REPENT.

THE DRAMA

There is a pop song titled, "What a difference a day makes!" How true that was in the

case of Job.

1. Job was among the greatest and best-loved men of his day. All at once, he was crushed with a number of overwhelming calamities.

\$ His vast herds of camels were stolen and his attending servants killed by a band of robbers.

\$ About the same time his herds of oxen were stolen and the servants killed by yet another band of thieves.

\$ Then his 7,000 sheep and all those herdsmen were killed in a violent storm.

\$ His family of ten children were all killed by a cyclone.

\$ Then Job himself was afflicted by the most painful disease known in the ancient world when his body was covered with boils - indicating he had Elephantiasis - Elephant's Disease.

2. Job's troubles became of topic of conversation. The book contains some of the things that Job and his friends and God said.

3. THE SUBJECT OF THE BOOK CONCERNS THE PROBLEM OF HUMAN SUFFERING.

Why did Job suffer? Why didn't God do something about it? How could a loving God let such a thing happen?

4. Job himself just wanted to die. He had had enough.

5. His comforters seemed to believe that all suffering is because the sufferer had sinned.

Many buy into that false argument today: i.e. if you have problems, therefore you must be a sinner.

Job's friends told him he had better repent of his sins. Well, Job had not committed sins - as we think of them - but was sold on his belief that he was so good that nothing could ever happen to him of negative dimension.

6. But Job will overcome in this struggle and his testimony is brilliant:

Job 19:25-27

For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: [26] And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: [27] Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me.

THE PSALMS

1. There are 150 of these precious Psalms.

73 of the Psalms were written by King David...12 by Asaph....and others are pretty much anonymous.

King David was a warrior of unprecedented bravery, a military genius and a brilliant statesman who led his nation to its pinnacle of power. He was also a poet and a musician and, with all his heart, a lover of God. David's creation of the Psalms was in reality a far grander accomplishment than his creation of the Kingdom. The book of Psalms is one of the most noble monuments of the ages. In the Psalms the real character of David is portrayed. And in these 150 chapters we see a pretty fair picture of the Israelite people - their struggles, their sins, their sorrows, their aspirations, their joys, their failures and their victories

2. The title "Psalms" in the Hebrew means *precious* or *Book of Praises*.
3. Christ (the Messiah) is prominent throughout. The King and the Kingdom are the theme songs of the Psalms. The key word is HALLELUJAH - which means PRAISE THE LORD.

J. Vernon McGee: "The Psalms record deep devotion, intense feeling, exalted emotion, and dark dejection. They play upon the keyboard of the human soul with all the stops pulled out. Very candidly, I feel overwhelmed when I come to this marvelous book. It is located in the very center of God's Word. Psalm 119 is in the very center of the Word of God. This book has blessed the hearts of multitudes down through the ages.

4. The Book of Psalms is not arranged in a haphazard sort of way. It is interesting to note that one psalm will state a principle and then there will follow several psalms that will be explanatory. Psalms 1-8 are a case in point.

5. Over one hundred years ago, one of Christianity's greatest preachers, Charles Haddon Spurgeon, preached a lengthy series on the Psalms. I have all those sermons in three volumes. Spurgeon wrote, "The book of Psalms instructs us in the use of wings as well as words. It sets us both mounting and singing. Psalms has been called the epitome and anatomy of the soul. It has been designated as the garden of the Scriptures. Out of 219 quotations of the Old Testament in the New Testament, 116 of them are from the Psalms. You will see 150 spiritual songs which undoubtedly at one time were all set to music. This is a book which ought to make our hearts sing.

OUTLINE

I. Genesis Section, Psalms 1-41

Man seen in a state of blessedness, fall and recovery (MAN IN VIEW)

- A. Perfect Man (Last Adam) Psalm 1
- B. Rebellious Man Psalm 2
- C. Perfect Man Rejected Psalm 3
- D. Conflict Between Seed of Woman and Serpent Psalm 4
- E. Perfect Man in Midst of Enemies Psalm 5
- F. Perfect Man in Midst of Chastisement (Bruising Heel) Psalm 6
- G. Perfect Man in Midst of False Witnesses Psalm Psalm 7
- H. Repair of Man Comes through Man (Bruising Head) Psalm 8
- I. Enemy and Antichrist Conflict; Final Deliverance Psalms 9-15
- J. Christ in Midst of His People Sanctifying Them to God Psalms 16-41

II. Exodus Section, Psalms 42-72

Ruin and Redemption (ISRAEL IN VIEW)

- A. Israel's Ruin Psalms 42-49
- B. Israel's Redeemer Psalms 50-60
- C. Israel's Redemption Psalms 61-72

III. Leviticus Section Psalms 73-89

Darkness and dawn (SANCTUARY IN VIEW)

Tabernacle, temple, house, assembly and congregation in almost every psalm.

IV. Numbers Section Psalms 90-106

Peril and protection (EARTH IN VIEW)

V. Deuteronomy Section, Psalms 107-150

Perfection and praise of the Word of God

THE BOOK OF PROVERBS

1. Solomon was the writer of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon.
Proverbs is the book on wisdom.
Ecclesiastes is the book on folly.
Song of Solomon is the book on love.
Solomon was an expert on all three subjects.

2. Solomon was a prolific writer:

1 Kings 4:32

And he spake three thousand proverbs: and his songs were a thousand and five.

(We have only one of his songs of the thousand and five. And relatively few of his proverbs.)

1 Kings 4:33-34

And he spake of trees, from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall: he spake also of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes. [34] And there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth, which had heard of his wisdom.

3. A proverb is a saying that conveys a specific truth in a pointed and pithy way.
Proverbs are short sentences drawn from long experience.

4. The key verse:

Proverbs 1:7

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.

OUTLINE

1. **Wisdom and Folly Contrasted - Chapters 1-9**
2. **Proverbs of Solomon - Chapters 10-24**
Probably edited and set in order by Solomon himself
3. **Proverbs of Solomon - Chapters 25-29**
Edited or set in order by men of Hezekiah

4. Oracle of Agur (unknown sage) - Chapter 30

5. Proverbs of a Mother to Lemuel - Chapter 31

5. Much of my philosophy of ministry has been based on the wisdom found in Proverbs:

Proverbs 11:24-26

There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty. [25] The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself. [26] He that withholdeth corn, the people shall curse him: but blessing shall be upon the head of him that selleth it.

THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES

1. Solomon was the writer.

Remember that in Proverbs we saw the WISDOM of Solomon; but in Ecclesiastes we will see the FOOLISHNESS of Solomon.

Ecclesiastes is the dramatic autobiography of Solomon's life when he was away from God.

2. Man has tried to be happy without God; it is still being tried by millions. This book shows the absurdity of the attempt.

3. The key word is "vanity." It occurs 37 times. "Vanity" here means "empty, purposeless."

OUTLINE

1. **Problem stated: "All is Vanity" Chapter 1:1-3**

2. **Solomon tries other things other than God - Chapters 1:4-12:12**

Solomon experimented with the following:

- A. Science Chapter 1:4-11
- B. Wisdom and Philosophy Chapter 1:12-18
- C. Pleasure Chapter 2:1-11
- D. Materialism Chapter 2:12-26
- E. Fatalism Chapter 3:1-15
- F. Egotism Chapters 3:16 - 4:16
- G. Religion Chapter 5:1-8
- H. Wealth Chapter 5:9-6:12

I. Morality Chapters 7:1 - 12:12

III. Result of Experiment - Chapter 12:13:14

Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. [14] For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.

T H E S O N G O F S O L O M O N

1. There can be little question who authored the book:

Song of Solomon 1:1

The song of songs, which is Solomon's.

Remember that in Proverbs we learned of the WISDOM of Solomon.

In Ecclesiastes we discovered the FOLLY of Solomon.

In Song of Solomon we read of his great LOVE.

2. The love between Solomon and the woman is a glorious picture of our relationship to Jesus Christ. “Oh, what blessed sweet communion - Jesus is a friend of mine!

3. The Song of Solomon declares the glory of WEDDED LOVE.

Today we are seeing a plethora of people living together without marriage. No matter how you try to explain it, it's unbiblical and wrong.

We now have a large percentage of all births that are illegitimate. Society will pay a desperate price for that in the next decade.

4. The Song of Solomon sets forth the love of God for Israel.

The Gospel is a romance – it tells of a prince who left a far country to come to this world in search of a bride. When He found her, he wooed her, won her and then actually gave His life for her. Then He promised to go away for a short time, prepare a marvelous place for her and then return.

O U T L I N E

1. Chapter One - the Bride expresses love for the King...with brief replies from

the King himself and the attending chorus

- 2. Chapter Two - The Bride's delight in the King's love. A soliloquy about the King's embraces**
- 3. Chapter 3:1-5 The Bride's Dream of her lover's disappearance and her joy at finding Him again (a grand prophetic reminder of Christ's coming back for us)**
- 4. Chapter 3:6-11 The Bridal procession....greetings in the palace garden**
- 5. Chapter 4 The King adores His bride and she replies inviting him to her garden of marital delights. (The marriage bed is undefiled)**
- 6. Chapter 5 Another dream of the Lover's disappearance.**
- 7. Chapter 6 The beauty of the bride**
- 8. Chapter 7 The mutual love expressed to each other**
- 9 Chapter 8 The unquenchable love and indissoluble union as told by the Bride**