

Ps. 1:6 *"For the Lord knows the way of the righteous,
But the way of the wicked will perish."*

4. Symbolic Parallelism—One line expresses the main thought, the other clarifies it with a figure

Ps. 42:1 *"As the deer pants for the water brooks,
So my soul pants for Thee, O God."*

5. Climactic Parallelism—The second line repeats the first, except for the last word or phrase. Emphasis is placed on the final line

Ps. 29:1 *"Ascribe to the Lord, O sons of the mighty,
Ascribe to the Lord glory and strength.
Ascribe to the Lord the glory due His name."*

FORMS

While each psalm is distinct and reflects its own logical development, there do appear to be some common patterns that can assist in understanding the author's thought.

The forms are loosely applied and each psalm has its own individual character which takes priority over the form.

In spite of the variations found, the forms help us to understand the message of the individual psalms.

INDIVIDUAL LAMENT PSALMS are a plea to God for help in the midst of a difficult or dangerous situation.

The basic elements of this pattern include:

- Direct appeal to God
- Description of the problem
- Confession of trust in God
- Specific petition
- Concluding declaration of praise to God
or vow to praise Him when the answer is received.

Among this type of psalm, the following may be included:

3-7, 12-13, 17, 22, 25-28, 31, 35, 38-40, 42-43, 51, 54-59, 61, 63-64, 69-71, 86, 88, 94, 102, 108-09, 120, 130, 137, 140-43 (Total=46)

NATIONAL LAMENT PSALMS follow essentially the same pattern.

The only consistent difference is that they address a national problem, rather than an individual one.

The elements are the same as the individual lament psalms.

It includes the following psalms:

44, 60, 67, 74, 79, 80, 83, 85, 90, 123 (Total=10)

INDIVIDUAL DECLARATIVE PRAISE PSALMS (Thanksgiving or Acknowledgment Psalms) acknowledge God's help in a time of need.

These psalms include the following elements:

- Declaration of the individual's determination to praise God
- Summary statement
- Report on the help received
- Reconfirmation of the vow to praise Him

- Declaration of praise
or instruction based on his experience.

The following psalms develop according to this form:
9, 18, 30, 32, 34, 40-41, 66, 106, 116, 118, 138 (Total=12)

NATIONAL DECLARATIVE PRAISE PSALMS (Thanksgiving or Acknowledgment Psalms) are essentially the same, but acknowledge God's activity in favor of the nation.

These include: 68, 77, 124, 129 (Total=4)

DESCRIPTIVE PRAISE PSALMS (Worship Psalms) praise Him, not for some specific act which He has done for the worshiper, but rather *for His Person or work*.

These normally:

- Begin with a call to praise the Lord,
- Then state the cause for praise.
- The conclusion may be a call to praise, expression of praise, exhortation or petition.

Among these psalms are: 8, 16, 19, 29, 33, 36, 65, 100, 103-105, 107, 111, 113, 117, 135-36, 139, 145-50 (Total=24)

ENTHRONEMENT PSALMS refer to Yahweh's rule over the universe.

These have sometimes been misunderstood as references to an annual enthronement festival for Yahweh, similar to pagan customs.

These psalms are often characterized by the presence of the phrase "Yahweh reigns".

The form is basically the same as the descriptive praise psalms.

Psalms included: 11, 24, 29, 47, 75, 82, 93, 96-99 (Total=11)

ROYAL PSALMS are similar to enthronement psalms in that they point to God's sovereignty and right to rule over His people.

The specific distinctive of the royal psalm is that God's earthly king, either the contemporary king or Messiah, is in view.

They draw attention to specific aspects of the reign of God's king, such as his crowning, his fighting, or the basis of his right to rule, the Davidic covenant.

This type is found in the following psalms: 2, 18, 20-21, 45, 72, 89, 101, 110, 132, 144 (Total=11)

"SONGS OF ZION" praise Jerusalem, the habitation of God.

Some of this type, those known as "songs of ascent" or "pilgrimage psalms," were apparently sung by those on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem at the time of the annual feasts.

These include: 42-43, 46, 48, 76, 84, 87, 120-34 (Total=22)

DIDACTIC PSALMS (Instructional Psalms) are designed to instruct the reader.

While many psalms have an educational purpose, they are predominantly of another type. These psalms have the specific purpose of instruction.

Two kinds are most often found:

Torah Psalms are teachings based on the exposition of the law.

Wisdom Psalms, like Proverbs, demonstrate the two alternative ways of life:

the folly of the man who bases everything on the present and rejects God,

the wisdom of the man who sees life from God's perspective and seeks to follow Him.

Included among these psalms are: 1, 10, 14, 15, 23, 37, 49, 50, 52, 53, 62, 73, 81, 91, 92, 95, 112, 114, 115, 119 (*Total=20*)

The following psalms provide some examples of the instructional psalms, with their focus on the value of pursuing wisdom:

PSALM 1 THE FORMULA FOR SUCCESS

The formula for contentment resides in avoiding the lifestyle of those who have not followed God, and placing God's Word at the center of one's life.

People who follow God's ways will be stable, alive, and prosperous. In the end God will watch over them.

People who reject His ways will be unstable, useless, and lacking in confidence before God. In the end they will be destroyed.

PREREQUISITES FOR SUCCESS 1-2

Negative Prerequisites 1

1. Don't WALK according to the COUNSEL of the wicked.
2. Don't STAND in the PATHWAY of sinners.
3. Don't SIT in the SEAT of complainers.

Positive Prerequisites 2

1. Delight in God's Word
2. Meditate on God's Word

RESULTS OF TWO ALTERNATIVE LIFESTYLES 3-6

Immediate Results 3-5

For those who live God's way 3

1. Fruitful and Faithful
2. Alive
3. Prosperous

For those who live man's way 4-5

1. Unstable
2. Useless

3. Insecure

Final Results 6

God's protection for those who live His way

God's judgment for those who live man's way

Which lifestyle do you prefer to follow?

What changes will that choice demand of your life this week?

PSALM 10

The psalmist addresses the question of why the wicked succeed while the just suffer.

In the presence of evil men who believe that God is unaware of their deeds, we are reminded that God does know.

The psalmist calls on God to judge the evil one and to help the afflicted.

APPEAL TO GOD 1

DESCRIPTION OF THE WICKED 2-11

(An ugly picture of sinful people oppressing others)

His arrogance 2-7

(Picture of fierce beast stalking a weaker victim)

His attack 8-10

His attitude 11

(A practical atheist)

PETITION OF THE VICTIM 12-18

Call for divine help 12-15

Confidence of divine help 16-18

What about us? Do we care? What will we do about it?

PSALM 62

David expresses his confidence in God.

He contrasts the security of the godly with the temporary nature of wealth, to demonstrate the importance of trusting God.

EXPRESSION OF CONFIDENCE IN GOD 1-2

DESCRIPTION OF ATTACKS BY THE WICKED 3-4

INSTRUCTION TO TRUST GOD 5-8

FOOLISHNESS OF TRUSTING WEALTH 9-10

CONCLUSION: TRUST GOD 11-12

PSALM 119

The psalmist uses an acrostic formula,
based on the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet,
in eight verse segments (each verse is one line and starts with the same letter),
to demonstrate that God's law, . . .
is more valuable to him than any treasure he might possess and
reveals to him everything he really needs to know.

1.	Aleph:	Blessed for blameless ways	1-8
2.	Beth:	A pure way for a young man	9-16
3.	Gimel:	Delightful statutes for God's servant	17-24
4.	Daleth:	A call for refreshing	25-32
5.	He:	Taught to follow God's decrees	33-40
6.	Waw:	Appeal to God's unfailing love	41-48
7.	Zayin:	God's Word remembered	49-56
8.	Heth:	God is my portion	57-64
9.	Teth:	Precious treasure for God's servant	65-72
10.	Yodh:	Aware of God's presence	73-80
11.	Kaph:	Longing for God's deliverance	81-88
12.	Lamedh:	God's Word firmly established	89-96
13.	Mem:	Love for God's law	97-104
14.	Nun:	A light for my path	105-112
15.	Samekh:	Consistent confidence in God's Word	113-120
16.	Ayin:	Obedience to the right and just	121-128
17.	Pe:	God's words give light	129-136
18.	Tsadhe:	God's laws are right	137-144
19.	Qoph:	My hope in God's Word	145-152
20.	Resh:	A call for deliverance	153-160
21.	Shin:	Persecuted without cause	161-168
22.	Taw:	A call for understanding	169-176