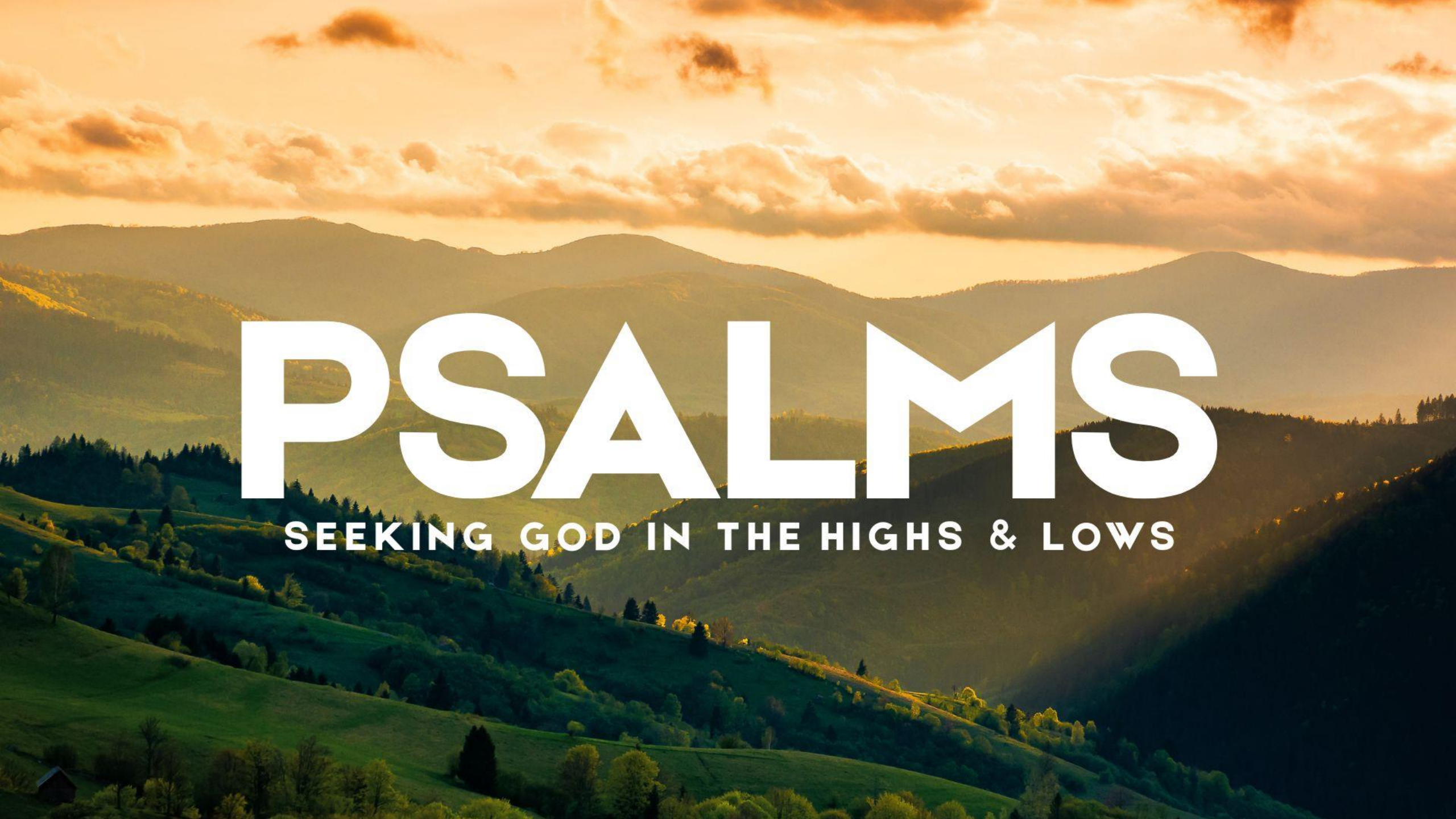




PSALMS

SEEKING GOD IN THE HIGHS & LOWS

Why Study the Psalms?

1. They reveal the character of God
2. They teach us how to pray
3. They teach us how to worship
4. They help us process full scope of human emotions
5. They remind us about God's faithfulness
6. They point us to Jesus
7. They inspire us to live with faith & wisdom

Protestant English Bibles

ORGANIZATION OF OLD TESTAMENT



Wisdom Literature

“The wisdom books express the human quest for knowledge and understanding within the framework of God’s revelation. The fact that there is mystery in God’s ways compels us to trust his goodness.”

(Goldsworthy, According to Plan, p. 176)

Wisdom Literature

- Poetry takes up approximately 1/3 of the Bible
- Different than English poetry (not about rhyming)
- Compact statements using imagery to convey thoughts, emotions, & experiences.
- Uses a variety of structures:
 - Chiasms
 - Acrostics
 - Parallelism

Parallelism

- Highly structured primarily with 2 parallel lines, sometimes adding a 3rd or 4th to convey an idea.
- Parallelism is the most important feature of Hebrew poetry.
- Parallelism is when two or more lines closely correspond with each other to make a point.

Parallelism: Illustrated

As a **father** shows compassion to his
children,
so the **LORD** shows compassion to those
who fear him.

(Psalm 103:13 ESV)

Types of Parallelism

- Synonymous ~ *Lines essentially repeat the same idea or concept*
- Antithetical ~ *Lines convey contrasting ideas or concepts*
- Synthetic ~ *Subsequent line(s) completes incomplete thought in the first line*

Examples: Synonymous Parallelism

Proverbs 19:5:

A false witness will not go unpunished,
and he who breathes out lies will not escape.

Psalms 19:1

The heavens declare the glory of God;
the skies proclaim the work of his hands.

Examples: Antithetical Parallelism

Proverbs 10:1:

A wise son makes a glad father,
but a foolish son is a sorrow to his mother.

Psalms 1:6

For the LORD watches over the way of the
righteous,
but the way of the wicked leads to destruction.

Examples: Synthetic Parallelism

Psalms 2:6

I have installed my king
on Zion, my holy mountain.

Ecclesiastes 11:1

Ship your grain across the sea;
after many days you may receive a return

Psalms: Background

- Author ~ Multiple authors
 - David = 73
 - Solomon = 2
 - Asaph = 12
 - Sons of Korah = 11
 - Heman = 1
 - Ethan = 1
 - Moses = 1
 - Unknown = 49
- Date(s) ~ 1400 – 430 B.C.
- Key term ~ A key word in Psalms is *Praise* (211x)

Psalms: Theme

“There is no book like the Psalms to meet the need of the heart when it is discouraged and defeated, or when it is elated and encouraged. This book is absolutely without peer in expressing these emotional feelings.”

(Ray Stedman)

Unique Features

- Largest book in the Bible
- Most quoted OT book in the NT
- Most quoted OT book by Jesus
- Psalm 110:1 is the most quoted OT verse in the NT
- Psalm 119 is the longest chapter of the Bible
- Psalm 117 is the shortest chapter of the Bible
- Psalms 120-134 (Songs of Ascent) sang by Jews on way to Jerusalem for annual feasts

Psalms: Overview

	Book 1	Book 2	Book 3	Book 4	Book 5
Chapters	1-41	42-72	73-89	90-106	107-150
Parallel	Genesis	Exodus	Leviticus	Numbers	Deuteronomy
Focus	Messiah	Desire	Israel	King	Praise
Theme	Man	Deliverance	Worship	Wandering	Law & Land

Psalms: Flow

- **Begins** with a picture of **life as it should be**, i.e., with a picture of life in an ideal world (Psalm 1)
 - *A life that exhibits a complete contrast between good and evil, where good always wins and evil always loses*
- **Concludes** with a picture of **life as it will be**, i.e., with a picture of life in heaven (Psalm 150)
 - *A life that expresses pure praise to God*

Psalms: Flow

“Sandwiched (between the images of life as it should be and life as it will be) is a picture of life as it is, i.e., a picture of the realities of life where there is pain and suffering, where good does not always triumph, where evil (at times) seems to overwhelm... and how a believer must live to be successful in a less-than-ideal world.”

B. Davis, Class Notes: Genesis- Song of Solomon

Type of Psalm	Description
Royal	Focus on the king as the son of David
Imprecatory	Calls for God's judgment against God's enemies
Penitential	Confesses sorrow for sin and appeals to God for grace
Messianic	Describes some aspect of the Messiah's person or ministry
Hymns	Song of praise and thanksgiving to God
Wisdom	General observations on life
Lament	Laments one's conditions

Example: Royal Psalm

...The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD and against his Anointed, saying, "Let us burst their bonds apart and cast away their cords from us." He who sits in the heavens laughs; the Lord holds them in derision. Then he will speak to them in his wrath, and terrify them in his fury, saying, "As for me, I have set my King on Zion, my holy hill." (Psalm 2:1–6 ESV)

Example: Imprecatory Psalm

Pour out your indignation upon them, and let your burning anger overtake them. May their camp be a desolation; let no one dwell in their tents.

(Psalm 69:24–25 ESV)

Example: Penitential Psalm

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin!

(Psalm 51:1–2 ESV)

Example: Messianic Psalm

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, from the words of my groaning? O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer, and by night, but I find no rest.

(Psalm 22:1–2 ESV)

Example: Hymn (Praise) Psalm

Praise the LORD! Praise God in his sanctuary;
praise him in his mighty heavens! Praise him
for his mighty deeds; praise him according to
his excellent greatness!

(Psalm 150:1–2 ESV)

Example: Wisdom Psalm

Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night.

(Psalm 1:1–2 ESV)

Example: Lament Psalm

How long, O LORD? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me? How long must I take counsel in my soul and have sorrow in my heart all the day? How long shall my enemy be exalted over me?

(Psalm 13:1–2 ESV)

Type of Psalm	Description
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Personal Reflections

How have the Psalms impacted you personally?

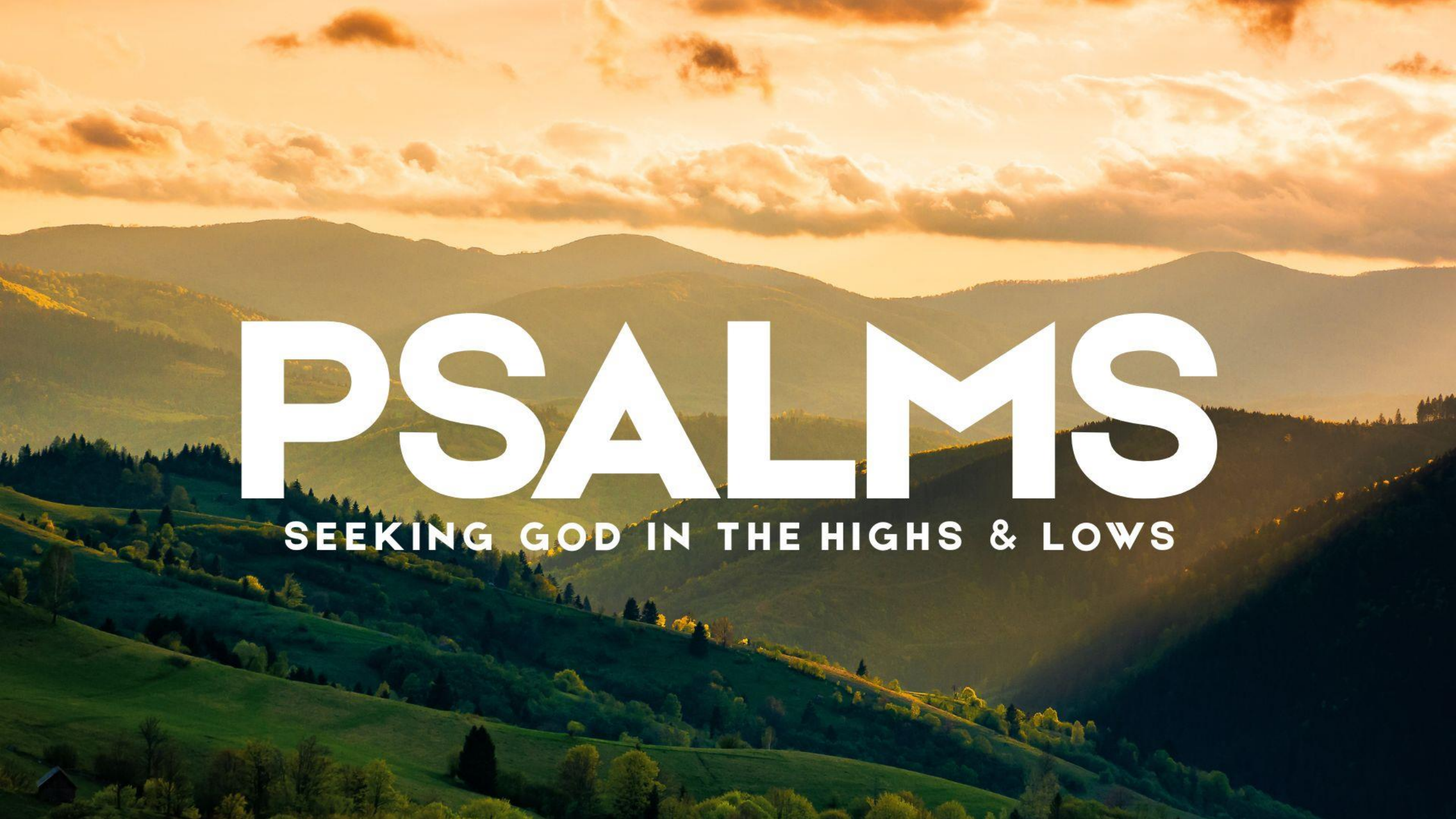
What are you hoping to get out of this class on the Psalms?

Write down your 3 biggest challenges or concerns right now. How might the Psalms help you with these challenges?

Challenge:

Read 1-2 Psalms each day during this class to get through all 150 Psalms.

Bonus: Keep a journal with a 2-3 sentence response to your daily reading



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