



The book of Psalms

DESCRIPTION SHEET

Author

The book of Psalms is very special in the biblical canon for several reasons. First, it is the longest text in Scripture. Second, this text is itself a Bible in miniature. Indeed, several authors contributed to the writing of this text such as David, the sons of Asaph, the sons of Korah, Moses, Solomon and Ethan. But David is the most prolific author of this text. 73 Psalms are attributed to him. Some even tend to attribute to David the Psalms that are not named, about 50. On the other hand, it is important to note that, except for David, Moses and Solomon, the Psalms were written by priests and Levites.

Date of writing

As for the date of writing of this text, we cannot give a fixed date, knowing that Moses, hundreds of years before David, is one of the authors featured in this huge work. However, it seems to be unanimous to say that this text that we have at our disposal was written over a period of a thousand years.

Central theme and target audience

The word Psalm means “poem sung with musical instruments”. These songs deal with a wide variety of subjects such as creation, war, worship, sin, God, judgment and God’s justice. Also called the prayer book of the second temple, this text was used in the synagogues as songs and prayers. In fact, the Psalms are classified by category. There are Psalms of praise, supplication, thanksgiving, prophetic Psalms and imprecatory Psalms. The main purpose of this text is to introduce the life of faith inspired by the laws of the Lord, the prophetic writings.

The intended audience is obviously Israel. However, this book has a universal prophetic character that concerns all believers. Jesus and the New Testament writers often referred to the prophetic Psalms.

Outline of the book

1. Book I: Psalms 1 – 41
2. Book II: Psalms 42 – 72
3. Book III: Psalms 73 – 89
4. Book IV: Psalms 90 – 106
5. Book V: Psalms 107 – 150