

The Poetry of the Psalms: Some Basic Features

1. Parallelism

- ***2:1** Why do the nations rage
and the peoples plot in vain?
- ***Ps.1:1** 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.

***Note how the parallel lines correspond:**

*Synonymous

- ***3:1** O LORD, how many are my foes!
Many are rising against me

*Antithetical

- ***1:6** The LORD knows the way of the righteous,
but the way of the wicked will perish.

*Synthetic

- ***1:2** his delight is in the law of the LORD,
and on his law he meditates day and night.
- ***2:11** Serve the LORD with fear
rejoice with trembling.
- ***2:1** Why do the nations rage
and the peoples plot in vain?
- ***2:5** Then he will speak to them in his anger,
and terrify them in his fury, saying,
- ***3:7** Arise, O LORD!
Save me, O my God!
For you strike all my enemies on the cheek;
You break the teeth of the wicked.
- ***119:63** I am a companion of all who fear you,
of those who keep your precepts
- ***96:3** Declare his glory among the nations,
his marvelous works among all the peoples!
- ***96:9** Worship the LORD in the splendor of holiness;
tremble before him, all the earth!

2. Brevity / Terseness

- ***1:4** Not so the wicked
- ***4:6** Who will show us some good?
- ***62:3-4** How long will all of you attack a man
to batter him,
like a leaning wall, a tottering fence?
They only plan to thrust him down from his high position.
They take pleasure in falsehood.
They bless with their mouths,
but inwardly they curse

3. Imagery & Figures of Speech

- ***18:2** The LORD is my rock & my fortress & my deliverer,
my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge,
my shield, & the horn of my salvation, my stronghold
- ***18:46** blessed be my rock
- ***78:65-66** Then the Lord awoke as from sleep,
like a strong man shouting because of wine.
And he put his adversaries to rout;
he put them to everlasting shame.
- ***84:9** Behold our shield, O God;
look on the face of your anointed!
- ***89:18** For our shield belongs to the LORD,
our king to the Holy One of Israel.
- ***121:3** He will not let your foot be moved
- ***121:6** The sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night.
- ***91:4** He will cover you with his pinions,
and under his wings you will find refuge;
his faithfulness is a shield and buckler.
- ***73:23** Nevertheless, I am continually with you;
you hold my right hand.
- ***46:4** There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,
the holy habitation of the Most High.
- ***37:6** He will bring forth your righteousness as the light,
and your justice as the noonday.
- ***56:8** You have kept count of my tossings;
put my tears in your bottle.
Are they not in your book?

Psalm 133

A Song of Ascents. Of David.

- 1 Behold, how good and pleasant it is
when brothers dwell in unity!
- 2 It is like the precious oil on the head,
running down on the beard,
on the beard of Aaron,
running down on the collar of his robes!
- 3 It is like the dew of Hermon,
which falls on the mountains of Zion!
For there the LORD has commanded the blessing,
life forevermore.