

LESSON 7

PSALMS 71; 72

PSALM 71: “REMEMBER ME WHEN I AM OLD”

This writer looks backward and forward—reaching back in his vision to youth and then leaping forward to old age. From his youth, he has lived with trust in God. As he looks ahead to his final years, he wants to finish his journey with a living faith in God and arrive at the end surrounded by His gracious care.

The words of this psalm, as a lament, echo several other psalms. Verses 1 through 3 are similar to (or maybe even drawn from) Psalm 31:1–3; verse 6 is similar to Psalm 22:10; and verse 12 is similar to Psalm 22:11. While this psalm may lack originality, it has a distinctive character of its own.

The author, the date of composition, and the circumstance of the writing remain unknown to us. Only this psalm and Psalm 43 are without a title in Book II. Perhaps David wrote this psalm toward the end of his life, maybe when Adonijah was seeking to assume the throne shortly before his death. Even if this proposal is without a solid base, that vulnerable time in David’s life provides an illustrative background for the psalm.

The writer has enjoyed a life of walking with God in faith and commitment. From the summit of his years, he makes several requests of God which express the unique concerns of all people who are facing the sunset of life.

1. What does it mean to make God our refuge?
2. How does the psalmist describe his dependence on God?
3. How can we praise God at all times?
4. Which verses show David taking his refuge in God?
5. What brings joy to this psalmist?

**PSALM 72:
THE REIGN OF THE IDEAL KING**

What are the characteristics of an ideal leader? Charisma? Intelligence? Business acumen? Spirituality? A congenial personality? This psalm says, "Listen to what the Holy Spirit says about it."

The prayer that makes up this royal psalm was for God's wisdom and attributes to abide with the king. The hopes of the nation, to a large degree, resided in the king. In truth and practice, he was to be God's representative. The position of potentate was given to him so that he might be God's earthly leader of the people. Embedded within these petitions on his behalf are the matchless qualities of the ideal king.

6. Based on this psalm, what qualities should a leader have?
7. Why should we pray for our leaders?
8. How should we pray for our leaders?
9. Why would Book II end with this psalm?