

A Study of the Wisdom Literature

(OT Survey Lesson 238—Psalms 71-72)

Introduction: Both of these psalms are truly beautiful in distinct ways. The first psalm expresses the beautiful spirit of an old man, experienced in life, blessed by God, and determined to end his life faithfully serving him. The second expresses the beautiful sentiment of a subject of a king, who prays that God will enable his lord to be the ideal king and his reign one of blessing for all who live under his leadership.

Lesson aim: To show how God may bless those who devote themselves to him.

A prayer of an old man for deliverance—Psalm 71:1-24

Since there is no psalm text note indicating its author, one must rely upon the internal evidence of the psalm itself for an author and a time of composition. Perhaps David wrote this near the end of his life. However, OT scholar Delitzsch offers several reasons to consider the author Jeremiah. Perhaps he is correct.

1. What did the psalmist ask God to do in view of his dependence upon him for safety? (v. 1) What did he urge God to do for him when he was in danger? (v. 2)
2. From whom did he seek rescue? (v. 4) For how long had his old man trusted in the Lord? (v. 5-6)
3. His ability to reach old age in spite of many threats and dangers caused him to become what to others? (v. 7) Consequently, what did he do? (v. 8)
4. Now the psalmist pleads with God not to do what? (v. 9) Why? (v. 10-11)
5. What does the psalmist plead fervently for God to do? (v. 12-13) What did he pledge to do in return? (v. 14-16)
6. For how long had the psalmist been taught by the Lord? (v. 17) What did he want to declare to his generation? (v. 18) Why? (v. 19)

7. Had this old man encountered many problems along life's way? (v. 20)
Yet what hope did he have? (v. 20) What did he ask God to do for him?
(v. 21)
8. What did he pledge to do when God delivered him? (v. 22-24)

A psalm of blessing upon the king of Israel—Psalm 72:1-20

This beautiful song written by Solomon expresses the ideal rule of the king of Israel. Perhaps Solomon wrote it as an express the prayers he hoped all his people would utter in his behalf and as a standard for his own conduct as king. Unfortunately, Solomon lost his way. The hope of the realization of the ideals of this son can center only in the Messiah, Jesus Christ, who fulfills them in perfection.

1. What does the psalmist pray that God will do for the king and for his son? (v. 1) This will enable him to do what? (v. 2)
2. What did the psalmist hope the king would do for the afflicted, the needy, and those who oppress them? (v. 4)
3. The psalmist prays that the king's administration will cause people to do what? (v. 5) For how long?
4. To what does the psalmist liken the blessings of the king? (v. 6)
5. What does the psalmist wish will be granted "during his days" (v. 7)
6. To what extent did the psalmist pray that the king would rule? (v. 8) And over whom? (v. 9) From where did he wish that kings should come and pay homage to him? (v. 10-11)
7. The king will be loved because of what works? (v. 12-14) Consequently his people will do what for him? (v. 15)
8. What did the psalmist pray that God would do for the land of the king? (v. 16) And how did he hope the name of the king would be regarded? (v. 17)
9. The king's prosperity depends upon whom? (v. 18) What does the psalmist say about Him? (v. 19)