

Transformed By Praise

Week 4 Study Questions (pp. 27-38)

Group Questions

Discussion starter: Have you ever written a poem? What was the most difficult aspect of writing it? What was your favorite aspect of writing it?

1. What two goals does the author have for you after reading this chapter? How are these goals related?
2. In terms of poetry, what is *form*? What is *meaning*? How are they interrelated?
3. What is the author's brief definition of Hebrew poetry? How does this distinguish from Hebrew prose?
4. Describe the basic parts of a Hebrew poem:
 - a. Colon
 - b. Line
 - c. Strophe
 - d. Stanza
5. Why is identifying these basic parts helpful in understanding a particular psalm? How does your English Bible translation assist the reading in identifying these basic parts?
6. Distinguishing between strophes and stanzas requires more effort than merely recognizing the format of the typesetting. What steps would you take to group various strophes into stanzas?
7. The essence of parallelism in Hebrew poetry is correspondence. What does this mean, and how does it manifest itself in Hebrew poetry? What kind of correspondence is available in English Bible translations?

8. Describe the older understanding of parallelism. How is this understanding helpful? How is it unhelpful?

9. Describe the newer understanding of parallelism. How does the newer improve upon the older understanding? How is it unhelpful?

10. Read the following verses and describe *how* the difference in the second colon adds to your understanding of the line.
 - a. Psalm 29:1

 - b. Psalm 29:4

 - c. Psalm 29:5

 - d. Psalm 29:10

 - e. Psalm 150:1

Digging Deeper

Genesis 1-2 (prose) and Psalm 104 (poetry) are complimentary accounts of creation. Read these chapters and note the close parallels between them. Map each line in Psalm 104 to its corresponding verse(s) in Genesis 1-2. Think about how the psalmist is interpreting the Genesis creation account and re-expressing God's acts of creation in poetic form. Describe how each strophe adds to your understanding of a particular aspect of God and his creation.

Application

On page 38, the author demonstrates one method of doing a Bible Study on the theme of "fear the Lord" by comparing Psalm 128:1 and 112:1. Using a concordance or other Bible reference tool, find several other verses in the Psalms that speak of fearing God. Make a list of what you learned it means to "fear the Lord." Share with someone what you learned and how it has affected your life.