



Psalms

Psalms of Poetry

Interpreting the Text:

1. How does it affect our reading of the psalms, or any biblical text, to read them as poetry? Does the translation we are reading change how we are able to hear the poetry?
2. What are the major differences between the aesthetics of the psalm poetry and the conventions we expect of modern poetry? Are there any important similarities?
3. How can the poetic structure of the psalms (e.g. parallelism, acrostics) help us to understand them differently?
4. How does setting these texts to music affect how we can engage with them?

Applying the Text:

1. The psalms do not claim to be divine revelation; they claim human authorship. Does this affect your relationship to the Book of Psalms? Why or why not?
2. Is it important that the psalms be aesthetically pleasing? How are our own aesthetic sensibilities shaped by biblical poetry, and how do we import our own preferences into the biblical text?
3. Do you find the instructive psalms more powerful (or useful), or do you prefer the emotive psalms like Psalm 23? Why or why not?
4. How has this study of the Psalms affected how you read, hear, recite, and think about them?