

“PRAYERFUL RESPONSES”

The Book of Psalms

Who wrote The Book of Psalms?

The Book of Psalms was written by a variety of people – kings, peasants and musicians – the “psalmists.” Almost half of the Psalms (73) have traditionally been attributed to David. One-third of the Psalms have no identified author.

How did The Book of Psalms get its name and/or what does that name mean?

The English name "Psalms" comes from the Greek title of the Septuagint, "*Psalmoi*", which means "songs of praise."

When did these events take place?

The Psalms date from as early as the time of Moses (who is credited with writing Psalm 90) through the time of Ezra and Nehemiah. Guilds of temple singers active around 450 B.C. are probably responsible for the composition and/or compiling of many of the Psalms.

For more about The Book of Psalms:

See page 547 in the [Fireside Catholic Youth Bible](#).

Think about the occasions in your life when people consider it appropriate to sing. Have you ever heard anyone recite the National Anthem or even a school Alma Mater? The day you turn another year older isn't complete unless someone sings "Happy Birthday." When you think about it, the celebration of almost every major event, anniversary or holiday in your life will be made a little more special by a song appropriate only for that day.

That's why The Book of Psalms holds such a special place in religious tradition. Here are 150 "religious songs" that were written to enhance the history and to celebrate the occasions and special events in the lives of the Hebrew people. Through these beautiful poetic verses, praise, thanksgiving and even lamentation are given to God in the most elevated form of human expression - in song. By using song, the psalmists imitated a practice that has flourished in every culture throughout the history of mankind.

But the Psalms are not just music, they are in fact powerful prayers. And because these prayers are so perfect in expressing ourselves to God, we hear them all the time. If you are looking for inspiration or when you feel a need to be a little closer to God, The Book of Psalms can help you get there.

Interesting Fact: The Psalms were written to speak to God rather than about Him. These prayerful responses to life's circumstances often call for accompaniment by musical instruments.

Bonus Point: Except for a few words, Psalm 17 and what other Psalm are nearly identical?