

17 and the women neighbors gave him a name, saying, "A son is born to Naomi!" They named him Obed; he was the father of Jesse, father of David.

18 This is the line of Perez: Perez begot Hezron,

19 Hezron begot Ram, Ram begot Amminadab,

20 Amminadab begot Nahshon, Nahshon begot Salmon,

21 Salmon begot Boaz, Boaz begot Obed,

22 Obed begot Jesse, and Jesse begot David.

Critical Reading

1. **Respond:** Do you think Ruth behaved heroically? Why or why not?
2. (a) **Recall:** What happens to Naomi's family during the time they live in Moab? (b) **Infer:** How do these events affect Naomi's attitude toward life?
3. (a) **Recall:** What decisions do Orpah and Ruth make about traveling to Judah with Naomi? (b) **Analyze Cause and Effect:** What motivates Ruth's decision?
4. (a) **Recall:** What reason does Boaz give for welcoming Ruth? (b) **Analyze Cause and Effect:** How might Boaz have learned about Ruth?
5. (a) **Recall:** In what way does Ruth respond to Naomi's instructions in Ruth 3:1-4? (b) **Infer:** What does Ruth's response reveal about her?
6. (a) **Recall:** What does Boaz do when he finds Ruth in his tent? (b) **Assess:** Is Boaz an honorable man? Why or why not?
7. (a) **Recall:** What status does Ruth achieve in Ruth 4:10-15? (b) **Connect:** How has her status changed from what it was in Ruth 1:5? (c) **Infer:** In what way does Naomi's action in Ruth 4:16 suggest that her attitude toward life has changed?
8. **Analyze:** What is significant about Ruth's relationship to David, one of Israel's greatest kings?
9. **Interpret:** In what way is God, who does not appear directly in the story, present throughout the story?
10. **Evaluate:** Does this story teach an effective lesson against prejudice? Why or why not?



The Psalms

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Background The ancient Hebrew instrument that may have accompanied the Psalms was called a kinnor. It had from three to twelve strings, which a musician could pluck with his or her fingers or with a thin piece of metal or bone.

The "lyre" to which Psalm 137 refers is probably a kinnor. The bitterness in this Psalm, expressed as an unwillingness to play the lyre, arises from the time when the Jews were held captive in Babylon (597-538 B.C.).

PSALM 8

1 O LORD, our Lord, How majestic is Your name throughout the earth, You who have covered the heavens with Your splendor!

2 From the mouths of infants and sucklings
You have founded strength on account of Your foes, to put an end to enemy and avenger.

3 When I behold Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and stars that You set in place,

4 what is man that You have been mindful of him, mortal man that You have taken note of him,

5 that You have made him little less than divine, and adorned him with glory and majesty;

6 You have made him master over Your handiwork, laying the world at his feet,

7 sheep and oxen, all of them, and wild beasts, too;

8 the birds of the heavens, the fish of the sea, whatever travels the paths of the seas.

9 O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is Your name throughout the earth!

Vocabulary Builder

avenger (ə venj' ər) *n.* one who takes revenge

Reading Strategy

Using Context Clues
Based on context clues in Psalm 8, what is the meaning of the word *handiwork*? Explain.

Reading Check

According to Psalm 8, what power has God granted to humans?

PSALM 19

- 1 The heavens declare the glory of God, the sky proclaims His handiwork.
- 2 Day to day makes utterance, night to night speaks out.
- 3 There is no utterance, there are no words, whose sound goes unheard.
- 4 Their voice carries throughout the earth, their words to the end of the world. He placed in them a tent for the sun,
- 5 who is like a groom coming forth from the chamber, like a hero, eager to run his course.
- 6 His rising-place is at one end of heaven, and his circuit reaches the other; nothing escapes his heat.
- 7 The teaching of the LORD is perfect, renewing life; the decrees of the LORD are enduring, making the simple wise;
- 8 The precepts of the LORD are just, rejoicing the heart; the instruction of the LORD is lucid, making the eyes light up.
- 9 The fear of the LORD is pure, abiding forever; the judgments of the LORD are true, righteous altogether,
- 10 more desirable than gold, than much fine gold;
- 11 sweeter than honey, than drippings of the comb. Your servant pays them heed; in obeying them there is much reward.
- 12 Who can be aware of errors? Clear me of unperceived guilt,
- 13 and from willful sins keep Your servant; let them not dominate me; then shall I be blameless and clear of grave offense.
- 14 May the words of my mouth and the prayer of my heart be acceptable to You, O LORD, my rock and my redeemer.

* * *

PSALM 23

- 1 The LORD is my shepherd; I lack nothing.
- 2 He makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads me to water in places of repose;
- 3 He renews my life; He guides me in right paths as befits His name.
- 4 Though I walk through a valley of deepest darkness; I fear no harm, for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff—they comfort me.
- 5 You spread a table for me in full view of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; my drink is abundant.
- 6 Only goodness and steadfast love shall pursue me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD for many long years.

Literary Analysis

Parallelism Is the type of parallelism that occurs in Psalm 19:5 the completion of an idea or a repetition with variation? Explain.

Vocabulary Builder

precepts (prē' sept's) *n.*
rules of conduct

lucid (loo' sid) *adj.* clear;
apparent

Reading Strategy

Using Context Clues
Based on the context clues in Psalm 19:11, which of the several meanings of *comb* did the author intend? Why?

Vocabulary Builder

steadfast (sted' fast) *adj.*
firm; not changing

Reading Check

In Psalm 23, what are two actions that the Lord performs as a shepherd?



▲ **Critical Viewing** This illustration shows David composing psalms. What qualities of the psalms do the details in the image suggest? **[Interpret]**

David Composing the Psalms, from the Paris Psalter, 10th century. Photo Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris

PSALM 137

1 By the rivers Babylon, there we sat, sat and wept, as we thought of Zion.

2 There on the poplars we hung up our lyres,

3 for our captors asked us there for songs, our tormentors, for amusement, "Sing us one of the songs of Zion."

4 How can we sing a song of the LORD on alien soil?

5 If I forget you, O Jerusalem, let my right hand wither;

6 let my tongue stick to my palate if I cease to think of you, if I do not keep Jerusalem in memory even at my happiest hour.

7 Remember, O LORD, against the Edomites¹ the day of Jerusalem's fall; how they cried, "Strip her, strip her to her very foundations!"

8 Fair Babylon, you predator, a blessing on him who repays you in kind what you have inflicted on us;

9 a blessing on him who seizes your babies and dashes them against the rocks!

1. **Edomites** (ē' dem itz) the people of Edom, an ancient kingdom in southwest Asia, south of the Dead Sea and east of the Jordan River.

Critical Reading

1. **Respond:** Which of these psalms might you find most comforting in a time of crisis? Why?
2. (a) **Recall:** What does Psalm 8: 6–7 say about "mortal man"? (b) **Interpret:** According to Psalm 8, what role do human beings play in the universe?
3. (a) **Recall:** According to Psalm 19, what do the heavens declare and the sky proclaim? (b) **Interpret:** What achievement of God do verses 2–6 celebrate? (c) **Generalize:** What aspect of God do verses 7–14 praise?
4. (a) **Recall:** To what does the first line of Psalm 23 compare God? (b) **Infer:** Given this comparison, to what can the believer be compared? Explain. (c) **Analyze:** What do these comparisons convey about the relationship between God and human beings?
5. (a) **Connect:** In what way are verses 5–9 of Psalm 137 an answer to the command in verse 3? (b) **Analyze:** What is ironic or unexpected about this answer? (c) **Interpret:** In what way are verses 5–9 also an answer to the question in verse 4?
6. **Apply:** Why do you think songs or poetry—like Psalm 137—are especially valuable to people in exile or captivity? Explain.

Apply the Skills

from the Bible: Book of Ruth • Psalms 8, 19, 23, and 137

Literary Analysis

Parallelism

1. In a chart like the one shown, identify an example of each type of **parallelism** from the Book of Ruth or the Book of Psalms. Then, explain your choice.

Type of Parallelism	Example	Explanation
repetition with variation		
completion of an idea		
elaboration of an idea		

2. Is the effect of the parallelism in Psalm 19:1–4 mainly to repeat ideas with variation, to complete ideas, or to elaborate on them? Explain.
3. Psalms were composed to be sung. How might parallelism make it easier to perform them aloud?

Comparing Literary Works

4. Review the parallelism in Ruth 4:9–12. In what ways does this parallelism emphasize the **theme** of making an outsider part of the community?
5. (a) What theme do you think the speaker expresses in Psalm 8? (b) Which words or phrases support this theme?

Reading Strategy

Using Context Clues

6. (a) Using the **context clues** in Ruth 1:11–13, what does *lot* seem to mean? (b) Based on clues in this passage, what do you think *debar* means?
7. What word in these Psalms was unfamiliar to you? Explain how context clues helped you determine its meaning.
8. Which context clues in Psalm 137 might help readers define the meaning of the word *palate*? Explain.

Extend Understanding

9. **Music Link:** Which of these Psalms do you think would work best set to music? Explain.

QuickReview

Using **parallelism**, biblical authors state an idea in the first half of a verse and then, using a similar grammatical structure, repeat, complete, negate, or otherwise elaborate on it in the second half.

A **theme** is a central idea that a literary work reveals or explores.

When you **use context clues**, you check the passage surrounding an unfamiliar word for clues to its meaning.

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