

KEYS FOR INTERPRETING HEBREW POETRY

GUIDELINES FOR INTERPRETING THE PSALMS

- Interpret according to the **ENTIRE** psalm since it was given as a complete thought unit.
- Consider the **OCCASION** for which the psalm was penned.
- Consider each psalm as its own literary context, but recognize what portion of the 4 x 8 system it likely conforms to.
- Determine the psalm's major sections and find the main point of each as well as the major point of the whole psalm.
- Contemplate the typological and or prophetic messianic implications of Davidic psalms.

PARALLELISM IN HEBREW POETRY

- God used "rhyme of thought," (parallelism) in Hebrew poetry knowing that rhyme and meter are lost in translation, but not thought parallelism

Synonymous Parallelism; The second line repeats the first line in very similar or even nearly identical terms

Psalm 24:1

Psalm 19.2

Antithetic Parallelism; The second line contrasts the idea of the first line

Psalm 1:6

Psalm 37.9

Synthetic Parallelism; The second line completes or expands the idea of the first

Psalm 2:6

Psalm 19:7

Climactic Parallelism; A word or statement is built upon until a climax is reached on the subject

Psalm 29:1

Psalm 103:1

Emblematic Parallelism; A figure of speech (usually a simile or metaphor) in one line is used to illustrate the truth of another line.

Psalm 42:1

Proverbs. 25:25

