

The Outward Man and the Inward Man

Chapter 1

Audio Lesson: Old Testament # 46



Objective: To understand the purpose of the Bible's five poetry books and how they fit with the rest of Scripture.



*May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight,
O LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer.*

—Psalm 19:14

God's Word includes five poetry books, also known as "wisdom books" or "the writings": Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon. In these books, God speaks to the hearts of His people when they are suffering (Job), worshiping (Psalms), coping with the decisions of daily life in marriage, parenting, friendships, money, and business (Proverbs), doubting (Ecclesiastes), and expressing the intimacies of marriage (Song of Solomon). As we read these five books, we should feel the finger of God pressing on our heart. His desire is for us to be changed from the inside out, and biblical poetry deals with the heart perhaps more than any other part of Scripture.



1. True or false? The poetry books are also called "wisdom" books.
2. True or false? Poetry is the language of the heart.
3. True or false? Most people do not enjoy reading the poetry books of the Bible because they are not very interesting.

4. True or false? The people who wrote the poetry books never wrestled with doubt.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

5. The messages contained in the poetry books address people _____.
(choose all that apply)

- a. When they have no problems.
- b. Who have all the answers they need.
- c. When they are doubting.
- d. When they are suffering.
- e. Who want to conquer kingdoms.
- f. When they are worshipping.
- g. When they are being intimate in marriage.

6. How long has suffering been experienced by God's people?

- a. Never
- b. Only since the time of Jesus
- c. Occasionally during times of our disobedience
- d. Always

7. Which of the following are books of poetry? (choose all that apply)

- a. Psalms
- b. Numbers
- c. Job
- d. Joshua
- e. Esther
- f. Song of Songs
- g. Ecclesiastes
- h. Ruth
- i. Proverbs

8. Which of the following was used as a hymn book for Israel's worship?

- a. Song of Songs
- b. Leviticus
- c. Psalms
- d. Ezra

9. Who wrote most of the Proverbs?

- a. David
- b. Moses
- c. Saul
- d. Solomon

10. How is the book of Ecclesiastes best described?
 - a. As a warning to us from experience
 - b. As a collection of songs
 - c. As rulebook for leaders
 - d. As a history of kings

11. When the Bible speaks of our heart, what does it mean?
 - a. The organ that pumps blood
 - b. The physical center of our being
 - c. The inward, spiritual person
 - d. The outward, physical person

12. Which part of us is made in the image of God?
 - a. Our body
 - b. Our heart, or, in other words, our spirit
 - c. Our face
 - d. Nothing

13. What is the role of the outward person, or body?
 - a. To show people what God looks like
 - b. To teach us through the pain we suffer
 - c. To control our spirit
 - d. To express our inner spirit

14. How can our heart change?
 - a. Only God can change our heart.
 - b. We can change if we have a strong will and try hard enough.
 - c. If we develop new habits, our heart will change.
 - d. It does not matter because it does not need to change.

15. How does God use the poetry books to help change us?
 - a. They give us practical steps on how to change.
 - b. If we memorize them, our minds will change.
 - c. They are devotional in nature and address the needs of the heart.
 - d. They have all the rules we need to know.



Have you ever experienced God changing your heart? In what ways? What deep
 f your heart do you want Him to help you with? What change do you want
 make in your heart?



Thank God that He cares about not only your behavior, but also about the needs of your inner person. Ask God to speak to your heart during this study of the Poetry Books of the Bible. Ask Him to change your heart however He wants to.

study



Going Deeper

1. Since the poetry books are the language of the hearts of God's people, what do these five books, and the fact that God mentions the heart 1,000 times in the Bible, tell us about the way God values the heart? (Consider 1 Samuel 16:7) _____

2. Specifically, what part of a human being is being addressed when the Bible refers to the heart?

3. How does the book of Job tell us our hearts should respond to suffering? (Consider Job 35: 1-7) _____

4. Consider Jeremiah 17:9, 10. In light of these verses, how do the great prayers of David in Psalms 139: 23, 24 and 51:10 show us what to do about our hearts? _____

5. According to the book of Ecclesiastes, in what three ways did Solomon look for the meaning of life, and why did he decide that the meaning of life could not be found in those three places?

6. Explain three ways the Song of Solomon allegorically pictures our relationship to the risen, living Christ. _____

7. How could Solomon have so much amazing wisdom, as demonstrated in the book of Proverbs, and still be one of the greatest failures who ever lived? _____
