

Let Us Sing Songs of Praise

Let us, and come: God is inviting us. He is the host. God is grace. He always takes the first step toward us. We receive mercy by his invitation! Is this Psalm acting as an invitation to the reader and the assembly in Israel to respond to Yahweh?

What images does "Rock" evoke? Where is this term used elsewhere in Scripture?

1 Oh come, let us sing to the Lord;
let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!

2 Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving;
let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!

Synonymous Parallelism

Taken together these four lines say the same thing four times for emphasis. Reflecting on the differences in all four brings out wisdom and application.

3 For the Lord is a great God,
and a great King above all gods.

Yahweh is El Shaddai- God Almighty. He is not one among many gods. How does verse 4 build on verse 3? How do both support verses 1-2?

4 In his hand are the depths of the earth;
the heights of the mountains are his also.

5 The sea is his, for he made it,
and his hands formed the dry land.

Synonymous Parallelism

Taken together these four directions poetically depict all of creation. There is not an inch of existence which is outside of God's reign!

What does this repetition achieve in verse 3?

Words like "for", therefore, and, so, etc. are bridging words. We should never isolate verses from ones that come before or after them. How does "For" work in this verse?

Why does the Psalmist use the word "hand"? What are the possibilities in this metaphor? What are the limitations?

Synthetic
Parallelism second line builds on first

6 Oh come, let us worship and bow down;
let us kneel before the Lord, our Maker!

How is this 2nd Invitation different than 1st in verse 1? How does the second strengthen, contrast, or develop verse 1's call?

7 For he is our God,
and we are the people of his pasture,
and the sheep of his hand.

Emblematic
Parallelism

What are the possibilities that are opened up with the sheep/shepherd metaphor? What are the limitations?

Notice singular and plural in Scripture. When the author switches between the two pay attention. It is intentional. In English "you" can be single or plural. Most of the time in Hebrew or Greek, the author is not writing to an individual but is meant to be written to a group. How does that change how you read the Bible?!

Verse 7 is all one thought. Each verse interacts with the other two. How does us, letting the lines interact with each other in a unit increase our reflection? What wisdom do you gain from dwelling on verse 7? How about in connection with verse 6? Look at the bridging word- For.

Where elsewhere in the Bible does an author use "Today"?
Is there any significance to today particularly?

Today, if you hear his voice,

8 do not harden your hearts, as at Meribah,

as on the day at Massah in the wilderness,

9 when your fathers put me to the test

and put me to the proof, though they had seen my work.

10 For forty years I loathed that generation

and said, "They are a people who go astray in their heart,

and they have not known my ways."

11 Therefore I swore in my wrath,

"They shall not enter my rest."

Formal Parallelism the
2nd+3rd line complete the 1st

Synonymous
Parallelism

Synthetic
Parallelism

Synthetic
Parallelism

Synonymous
Parallelism

Formal
Parallelism

Whenever poetry references a historical or fictional narrative, it is good to go back and look at how the poet portrays that event. Is she biased toward it? Does he embellish parts? This helps get inside of the intention of the poet and why they bothered to include it in their poem.

Go look at the link on types of parallelism. How does knowing the types change our interpretations of each line? How does it help us see that the meaning only comes by the interaction of the 2, 3, or 4 lines?

What does repeating "heart" do to develop thought here? How does "heart" in verse 10 give application to "heart" in verse 8?

Hyperbole or not, that is the question! How do we know when a poet is exaggerating for emphasis and when he/she is expecting us to take them at face value? What does the rest of the Bible say about if God can "loathe" people or not? Maybe check other English translations to see how other scholars have translated that phrase. Biblehub.com is very handy at showing what the word means in the Hebrew or Greek.

Familiarity breeds contempt! When we see an idiom or metaphor that we are familiar with, we tend to skip it over in our mind. We don't let it do its powerful work of forced associations. Don't let yourself off the hook, slow down and meditate on how common metaphors like heart can impact the interpretation.