

A collection of vintage tools is arranged on a dark, textured workbench. At the top is a long wooden level with a bubble level in the center and the word "DEFIANCE" printed on the left side. Below it are a square and a hammer. In the center, a white rectangular box contains the text "PREACHING TOOLS". Below the box is a red book or folder. At the bottom are two large wooden vices, a pair of pliers, and a drill bit.

PREACHING TOOLS

PREACHING TOOLS

AN ANNOTATED SURVEY OF COMMENTARIES AND
PREACHING RESOURCES FOR EVERY BOOK OF THE BIBLE

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*Preaching Tools: An Annotated Survey of Commentaries and Preaching Resources
for Every Book of the Bible*

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PSALMS²

EXEGETICAL COMMENTARIES

Allen, Leslie. *Psalms 101–150*. Revised ed. WBC. Thomas Nelson, 2002.

Allen's revision of this volume has improved it for contemporary use. One of the best exegetical commentaries.

Craigie, P. C. *Psalms 1–50*. Revised ed. WBC. Thomas Nelson, 2004.

Best of the modern commentaries on the Psalms on language and Old Testament background, according to Longman. The revised edition incorporates the latest scholarship.

Futato, Mark. *Interpreting the Psalms: An Exegetical Handbook* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2007).

This work in the Handbook for Old Testament Exegesis Series is very valuable to the preacher. Chapter titles include: "Appreciating Poetry," "Viewing the Whole," "Preparing for Interpretation," "Interpreting the Categories," "Proclaiming the Psalms," and "Practicing the Principles."

Goldingay, J. *Psalms*. 3 vols. BCOTWP. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007, 2008.

Strong on theology. Longman considers it the best commentary for meaning in original setting.

Perowne, J. J. Stewart. *The Book of Psalms*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976 reprint [1876].

Excellent 19th-century commentary from an Anglican Reformed tradition that is strong on exegesis and exposition. This book went through five editions in less than 10 years. It has stood the test of time and is considered a classic in the Evangelical tradition.

Tate, M. *Psalms 51–100*. WBC. Thomas Nelson, 1990.

Exegetically strong.

EXPOSITIONAL COMMENTARIES

Alexander, J. A. *The Psalms Translated and Explained*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975 reprint [1894].

Weds scholarship with evangelical warmth.

2 For annotated bibliographical material on all aspects of Psalms studies prior to 1997, consult Peter Enns, *Poetry and Wisdom* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1997), 123–147.

Broyles, Craig. *Psalms*. NIBCOT. Hendrickson, 1999.

Clarke, Adam G. *Analytical Studies in the Psalms*. 3rd ed. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1979.

Outlines, notes and exegetical comments based on the Hebrew text. Each Psalm receives a manageable treatment. Wiersbe said of it: "I only wish I had known about this book earlier in my ministry." Written by one who spent the better part of four years in a Japanese prison camp and house arrest from 1942–1945. The outlines are always alliterated, but there is much help for the expository preacher in this volume.

Kidner, D. *Psalms*. 2 vols. TOTC. InterVarsity, 1973, 1975.

Theological and practical. Brief but very helpful for pastors from the former Warden of Tyndale House in Cambridge.

Grogan, G. *Psalms*. THOTC. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008.

Strong on theological analysis.

Leupold, H. G. *Exposition of the Psalms*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1969.

This is one of the best expositional commentaries on Psalms for use by preachers from the pen of a very capable Lutheran amillennialist. Highly recommended. Lengthy, too—more than 1,000 pages!

Maclaren, Alexander. *The Psalms*. The Expositor's Bible. 3 vols. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1893.

Barber calls this "a masterful treatment." Expositional and devotional. Preachers should consult these volumes when preaching on any Psalm.

Murphy, James. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Psalms*. Minneapolis: Klock & Klock, 1977 [1876].

See under Exodus.

Phillips, John. *Exploring the Psalms*. 5 vols. Neptune, NJ: Loizeaux Brothers, 1985–88.

Excellent material for preachers. Loaded with outlines, all of which are alliterated, and some of which seem overly forced. Preachers will find excellent illustrations here, some of which were drawn from Phillips' long acquaintance with the writings of F. W. Boreham, and good application. This volume is also devotional in nature and does not necessarily deal with every verse.

Plumer, W. S. *Psalms: A Critical and Expository Commentary with Doctrinal and Practical Remarks*. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1975 reprint [1867].

Plumer was a Southern Presbyterian preacher and writer who taught at Columbia Theological Seminary in South Carolina the last 13 years of his life. Massive volume of more than 1,200 pages, but the title says it all. The Reformed perspective is strong in the doctrinal section, but the exposition and practical sections will provide much thought for sermons.

Ross, Allen P. *A Commentary on the Psalms: Volume 1 (1–41)*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2011.

This volume is indispensable when preaching through the Psalms. Excellent exposition plus 150 pages' worth of readable introductory background material, including bibliography.

Ross, Allen. *A Commentary on the Psalms: 42-89*.

See above.

Ross, Allen. *A Commentary on the Psalms: 90-150*.

See above.

Spurgeon, Charles. *A Treasury of David*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2005

Originally a seven-volume set published in 1889 [Spurgeon died in 1892], now available in three volumes. This work will remain a classic on Psalms. Drawing from more than 1,000 authors and sources from every era of Church history and written over a lifetime of ministry, these excellent expositions come with a devotional flavor, coupled with practical application. Spurgeon mainly milks the Puritan tradition on the book but makes his own butter. Chock full of great quotations and illustrations, not to mention other helps for preachers. No preacher who plans to preach on the Psalms can afford to be without this volume. I have consulted it many times since I acquired it as a 16-year-old young preacher from a retired pastor. The great church historian Philip Schaff said of it: "The most important and practical work of the ages on the Psalter. ... It is full of the force of the genius of this celebrated preacher." It can also be found in an abridged volume, but I recommend using the abridgment for devotional reading and stick with the unabridged edition for sermon preparation.³

³ Spurgeon devotes 22 pages to the Psalms in his famous *Commenting and Commentaries*. Every preacher should read every word of those 22 pages to see what Spurgeon says. Originally published in 1876, it demonstrates Spurgeon's breadth of reading and knowledge of commentaries.

Stott, John. *Selected Psalms and Canticles*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1988 [originally published in 1971].

Excellent expositions by one of the most well-known of British evangelicals. Covers Psalms 1, 8, 15, 16, 19, 22–24, 27, 29, 32, 34, 40, 42–43, 46, 51, 67, 73, 84, 90–91, 95, 98, 100, 103, 104, 121–123, 125, 127, 130–131, 133, 139, 145, 150.

Van Gemenen, W. *Psalms*. REBC 5. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008.

Probably a must for the expository preacher. Longman gives it 5 stars.

Wilson, Gerald. *Psalms*. vol. 1. NIVAC. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002.

This one is also a must for expository preaching with focused application.

DEVOTIONAL COMMENTARIES

Armerding, Carl. *Psalms in a Minor Key*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1973.

Helpful devotional work on selected Psalms, including many lesser-known Psalms.

Cox, Samuel. *An Exposition of the Songs of Degree*. Minneapolis: Klock & Klock, 1982.

Covering Psalms 120–134, these expositions are well worth your time and investment. Spurgeon called Cox “a great expositor.”

Dickson, David. *Psalms*. 2 vols. in 1. Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth, 1990.

Dickson was a 17th-century Scottish Covenanter whose work on the Psalms is definitely worth looking at. Childs calls this work “warm, vigorous, bold, and devotional.” Spurgeon said it was “invaluable to the preacher.”

Lockyer, Herbert Sr. *Psalms: A Devotional Commentary*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1993.

Called the crowning work of Lockyer’s life (he died at the age of 97 and wrote more than 50 books, including the famous “All” series), this volume is a “feast of information and inspiration.” Don’t miss it!

Olsen, Erling. *Meditations in the Book of Psalms*. New York: Loizeaux Brothers, 1941.

I have used this work in preparing to preach on selected Psalms. Devotional in nature, the author devotes approximately 4–6 pages per Psalm. Lots of practical help for the preacher.

Scroggie, W. Graham. *The Psalms*. 4 vols. Westwood, NJ: Revell, 1965.

Excellent synthetic study of each of the Psalms from the man who taught the great expository preacher and teacher of preachers, Stephen Olford. First rate preaching helps!

SERMONS

Chappell, Clovis. *Sermons from the Psalms*. Nashville: Cokesbury, 1931.

Textual sermons from the famous Methodist preacher known for his books of sermons on Bible characters.

Donne, John. *Sermons on the Psalms and the Gospels*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967.

Donne on the Psalms is worth reading if for nothing else to feed your own soul.

Hubbard, David. *Psalms for All Seasons*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971.

Covers Psalms 1, 2, 7, 8, 9, 14, 16, 23, 32, 40, 45, 49, 51.

Jowett, J. H. *Springs in the Desert*. New York: George H. Doran, 1924.

Series of sermons on individual texts in Psalms. Good example of textual preaching. Excellent devotional material.

Manton, Thomas. *Psalms 119*. 3 volumes. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1990 reprint [1680].

Collection of 190 sermons on this Psalm! Rosscup complains that these sermons don't get down to the text enough. I agree. Some devotional value here, though.⁴

SPECIAL STUDIES

Belcher, Richard P. *The Messiah and the Psalms: Preaching Christ from all the Psalms*. Fearn, Ross-Shire, Scotland: Mentor, 2006.

The title says it all. Helpful volume for preachers. Watch for Belcher to find a Messianic element in every Psalm, a notion that many will struggle with. Reformed perspective.

⁴ Lots of Puritan preaching was done on the Psalms. Consult Henry Ainsworth, Richard Baxter, David Dickson (see above), John Owen, and Richard Sibbs to name some of the more major figures.

Bridges, Charles. *Psalm 119: An Exposition.* London: Banner of Truth, 1979.

Brookman calls it “outstanding.” Spurgeon said it is “worth its weight in gold.” Bridges is also known for his excellent work on Proverbs.

Davis, John. *The Perfect Shepherd: Studies in the Twenty-Third Psalm.* Grand Rapids: Baker, 1980.

Excellent study by a professor of Old Testament and Archaeology. His background information is top notch and extremely helpful for preachers.

Keller, W. Phillip. *A Shepherd Looks at Psalm 23.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1970.

Contemporary treatment of the Psalm that is very helpful to preachers. Good insight on the shepherd imagery.

Ker, John. *The Psalms in History and Biography.* Edinburgh: Andrew Elliot, 1886.

Fascinating volume on how various people found encouragement from the Psalms. Great illustrative material.

Ketcham, Robert. *I Shall Not Want.* Chicago: Moody, 1953.

Not sermons, but these addresses are “fervent and practical, edifying and enriching,” according to Barber.

Longman, Tremper. *How to Read the Psalms.* Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1988.

Excellent little book for preachers, covering poetry, parallelism, imagery, the different kinds of Psalms, how they were used in Hebrew worship, and their relationship to the rest of the Old Testament.

Maclaren, Alexander. *Life of David as Reflected in His Psalms.* Grand Rapids: Baker, 1955.

Wiersbe calls it “required reading.”

Robinson, Haddon. *Psalm Twenty-Three.* Chicago: Moody, 1968.

Good exposition and application for the expository preacher from the dean of evangelical homiletics.

Thirtle, J. W. *The Titles of the Psalms: Their Nature and Meaning Explained.* Popular Edition. London: Morgan & Scott, 1916.

Handy-dandy reference guide by the man who advertised and arranged the sale of 7,000 of Spurgeon’s 12,000-volume library to William Jewel College in 1905. Very beneficial to the preacher.

Weatherhead, Leslie. *A Shepherd Remembers: Studies in the Twenty-Third Psalm*. New York: Abington, 1938.

Weatherhead was a liberal Protestant, pastor of City Temple in London. This work on Psalm 23 is very good, and preachers will find these 170 pages helpful. Here is a taste of his wordsmith ability: “The great indictment of what has been called ‘the new morality’—a queer phrase because it is not morality, and it is certainly not new—is that it does not work. ... The alleged liberty becomes a crown of lead which ‘makes to swoon the aching head that wears it.’”

Every effective preacher needs tools to craft faithful, text-driven sermons. However, since pastors have limited time each week and there are thousands of potential preaching resources, knowing the best commentaries and books to help in sermon preparation can be a daunting task.

In *Preaching Tools*, David Allen draws from the well of more than 40 years of experience in the pulpit, both as a pastor and preaching professor, to provide the top commentaries and resources for every book of the Bible. Resources are categorized for quick reference, and Allen's annotations provide insight into the books' strengths, weaknesses, and backgrounds.

“What I’ve tried to do in this book is provide an annotated bibliography for preachers of helpful resources, mostly commentaries, for every book of the Bible, in English. Most of the books listed in this bibliography I own in my personal library. These are the works that I have found to be the most helpful in sermon preparation.” – David Allen



David Allen serves as dean of the School of Preaching, distinguished professor of preaching, George W. Truett Chair of Ministry, and director of the Center for Expository Preaching at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. He has led or been a part of more than 400 revivals, Bible conferences, and lecture series, including study tours in the Philippines, Israel, Oxford, and Germany. He is the author of *1–3 John: Fellowship in God’s Family* in Crossway’s *Preaching the Word* series and *Hebrews* in the *New American Commentary* series. He is also co-editor of *Text-Driven Preaching: God’s Word at the Heart of Every Sermon*.

