

A Catalogue of All Proper Personal Names in the
New Latin Psalter

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Introduction

The psalms are a collection of ancient Hebrew hymns. The majority of the psalms were originally written to commemorate Jewish victories and historical events, or they were written as personal prayers imploring God's mercy and protection. Gradually, however, the use of the psalms became restricted to the liturgical worship of the Jewish temples. The psalms themselves are both poetry and prayer. They are poetical in their use of nature to reflect the attributes of God. They are prayerful in that each psalm is a slightly different expression of man's dependence on God.

Since the psalms are prayers to God amid all the changing circumstances of man's life, it is only natural that the psalmist should mention or comment (up) on other people. These "other people" who are mentioned by the psalmist can have little or no meaning for the reader, or they can give the reader a greater insight into the psalms. If the reader has some knowledge as to whom the psalmist is referring, he will naturally have a better understanding of the psalm. With these thoughts in mind then, I have drawn up a catalogue of all the proper personal names as they occur in the new Latin Psalter. All names with the exception of King David receive the following attention.

Each name is listed alphabetically with its accompanying genitive form, if there is such. Then follows a brief identification of the person mentioned. Over and above the listing and identification of the names, I have also tried to show how each name has its place in the psalm. I have endeavored to do this by 1) simply presenting the name with at least one Latin phrase in which it occurs; 2) making a short commentary on the use of the name in this psalm.

These are my objectives in presenting this thesis. It is my hope that anyone referring to this work will more readily grasp the significance of proper personal names in the psalms, and thereby gain a greater appreciation of the psalms themselves.

Aaron, meaning "sublime." Eldest brother and spokesman for Moses. Appointed first High Priest of the Jews.

Ps.76, 21: "... , per manum Moysis et Aaron. ... , by the hand of Moses and Aaron." Aaron as leader.

Ps.98,6: "Moyses et Aaron sunt inter sacerdotes ejus,..." Moses and Aaron are among his priests,..." Aaron referred to in his official capacity as priest.

Ps.104,26: "... , Aaron, quem elegerat. ... , Aaron, whom he had chosen." Aaron as deliverer of his people.

Ps.105,16: "Et inviderunt Moysi in castris, Aaron, sancto Domini. And they envied Moses in the camp, and Aaron, the holy one of the Lord." The Jews had disputed the claims of Aaron as high priest, although he had been appointed to that position by God Himself.

Ps.113,10-12: "Domus Aaron confidit in Domino: The house of Aaron trusts in the Lord; ... , benedicet domui Aaron. ... , he will bless the house of Aaron." "House of Aaron" refers to the whole company of priests, the first of which was Aaron.

Pss.117,3; 132,2; 134,19 also make mention of Aaron.

Abimelech, or Achimelech, meaning "brother of the king." High priest who gave David and his men the loaves of proposition to eat when they had no other food.

Ps.51,2: "David intravit in domum Abimelech. David entered the house of Abimelech." Refers to the incident mentioned above.

Abiron, means "high-father." Family chief of the tribe of Ruben. Revolted against Moses and Aaron. He and his companions were swallowed up by the earth.

Ps.105,17: "... , et operuit catervam Abiron. ... , and it covered the clan of Abiron." Shows the severity of God in dealing with those who openly reject the authority of His ministers.

Abraham, was the founder of the Jewish nation. He is the father by generation, of the chosen people. The name means "father of a people."

Ps.46,10: "... cum populo Dei Abraham., with the people of the God of Abraham." Abraham referred to as servant of the one true God, and father of God's children.

Ps.104,6: "Semen Abraham, servi eius, ... Seed of Abraham, his servant, ... Abraham as father of the chosen and God's servant.

Ibid.,9: "Foederis quod iniiit cum Abraham, ... Of the treaty which he entered into with Abraham, ..." Abraham considered as head of the chosen people.

Ps.104,42 also makes mention of Abraham.

Absalom, means "father is peace." Third son of David. Rebelled against his father, but killed by one of David's generals.

Ps.3,1: "... cum fugit a filio suo Absalom., when he fled from Absalom his son." Absalom sought his own father's life.

Amalec, grandson of Esau and father of fierce nomadic tribe dwelling south of Palestine. The Amalecites were first to attack the Israelites after the Red Sea passage.

Ps.82,8: "Gebal et Ammon et Amalec, ... Gebal and Ammon and Amalec, ..." Amalec mentioned here as representing his whole tribe, a deadly enemy of Israel.

Ammon, means "son of my people." The son of Lot. His descendants bitter enemies of the Israelites.

Ps.82,8: "Gebal et Ammon et Amalec, ... Gebal and Ammon and Amalec, ..." Mentioned here because his descendants had attacked the Israelites, though defeated by Saul.

Asaph, Asaphi, a well known musician of David's time.

Ps.82,1: "Canticum. Psalmus. Asaphi. Accanticle. A psalm of Asaph." The psalm is attributed to Asaph.

Pss.49 & 72 also mention Asaph in their titles.

Beelphegor, means "lord of Phogor." The name of an idol

worshipped by the Moabites. At one time the Israelites also turned to this god.

Ps.105,28: "Et adhaeserunt Beelphegor, ... And they cleaved to Beelphegor, ..." Used here to show the degree of Israel's unfaithfulness --- to worship a pagan idol.

Benjamin, means "son of the right hand." Youngest son of Jacob by Rachel. His mother died after giving him birth.

Ps.67,28: "Ibi est Benjamin, minimus natu, ... There is Benjamin, the youngest, ..." Benjamin mentioned here as leading his tribe in the triumphal procession into the temple.

Ps.79,3: "..., affulge coram Ephraim et Benjamin et Manasse. ..., shine forth before Ephraim, and Benjamin, and Manasses." This psalm written as a plea for protection of Israel's northern tribes, one of which was the tribe of Benjamin.

Bethsabee, means "daughter of an oath." Wife of Urias, whose death David brought about; David afterwards married Bethsabee.

Ps.50,2: "..., postquam cum Bethsabee peccavit. ..., after he had sinned with Bethsabee." Bethsabee mentioned here with regard to incident related in 2 Kings 11.

Canaan, or Chanaan, meaning "low, flat." The son of Cham and grandson of Noe.

Ps.104,11: "Dicens: Tibi dabo terram Chanaan ... Saying: I will give you the land of Chanaan ..." Chanaan, as used in the psalms, always refers to land of Chanaan; i.e., the Promised Land.

Pss.105,38; 134,11 also contain this name.

Cedar, or Kedar, meaning "tanned." The second son of Ismael, and the grandson of Abraham by Agar. He headed a nomadic tribe in Arabia.

Ps.119,5: "..., habito in tentoriis Cedar! ..., that I dwell in the tents of Cedar!" Cedar's tribe mentioned here as type of barbarians the Israelites had to contend with on way to Jerusalem.

Cham, or Ham, meaning "hot." The youngest son of Noe. Cursed by his father. His name is used to signify Egypt.

Ps.77,51: "... , primos partus eorum in tabernaculis Cham. ... , their first offspring in the tents of Cham." A reference to Cham as ancestor of Egyptians.

Ps.104,23: "... , et Jacob hospes fuit in terra Cham. ... , and Jacob was a sojourner in the land of Cham." Cham again referred to as chief ancestor of the Egyptians.

Ps.105,22: "Mirabilia in terra Cham, ... Wonders in the land of Cham, ..." As shown above, this is simply a poetical way of denoting Egypt.

Chus, or Chusi, meaning "dark colored." A Benjaminite courier of King Saul. Very hostile towards David.

Ps.7,1: "Lamentatio Davidis, quam cantavit Domino propter Chus Benjaminitam. A lamentation of David, which he sang to the Lord because of the words of Chus the Benjaminite." Chus simply mentioned in title to give background for psalm.

Core, meaning "baldness" in Hebrew, was a descendant of Levi. "Sons of Core" were descendants of Core who were appointed by David to direct liturgical music. (1 Par.6:33-37).

Pss.41; 43; 44; 45; 46; 47; 48; 83; 84; 86; 87; contain the term "filliorum Core --- of the sons of Core," in their titles.

Dathan, was destroyed when along with Core and Abiron he challenged the position of Moses.

Ps.105,17: "Aperta est terra et degluttivit Dathan, ... The earth opened and swallowed up Dathan, ..." Dathan is cited as an example of the fate of those who conspire against God's ministers.

David, Davidis, meaning "beloved." Anointed by Samuel as second king of Israel. Had a great many sorrows and misfortunes throughout his life. Christ is descended from David. Eighty-five of the psalms are attributed to David in the Vulgate psalter and seventy-three in the Hebrew text.

Doeg, the chief of Saul's herdsmen. An informer for Saul and a sworn enemy of David.

Ps.51,1: "Davidis, postquam Doeg Edomita ad Saul venit ei que narravit dicens:... Of David, after Doeg the Edomite came to Saul and told him saying:..." Doeg here is a type of the evil and deceitful man.

Edom, meaning "red," was name given to Esau, son of Isaac, and land occupied by Edom's descendents. Edomites were enemies of the Jews.

Ps.59,2: "... , et quando Joab reversus devicit Edom in valle salis: ... , and when Joab came back and conquered Edom in the valley of salt:" Edom used here as Edomite nation.

Ibid.,10: "...; super Edom ponam calceamentum meum,... ...; upon Edom I shall cast my sandal,..." As such will be treated the enemies of Israel; reduced to the status of slaves.

Ibid.,11: "Quis deducet me usque in Edom? Who will lead me even into Edom?" Shows that Israel recognized the strength of Edom --- and the strength of God.

Eman, or Heman, meaning "faithful." The chief chanter of the sons of Core.

Ps.87,1: "Ad cantandum. Heman Ezrahitae. For singing. Of Heman the Ezrahite." Eman mentioned here as author of the psalm.

Ephraim, or Ephrem, means "double fruitfulness." Second son of Joseph the patriarch. The name also applied to the tribe of Ephraim, dwelling to the north of Jerusalem.

Ps.59,9: "... , et Ephraim galea capitis mei,... ... , and Ephraim my headpiece,..." Ephraim was largest and fiercest tribe. Main support of the army.

Ps.79,3: "... , affulge coram Ephraim et Benjamin et Manasse. ... , shine forth before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasses." At this time, it seems the northern tribes, including Ephraim, are being threatened.

Idithun, or Iduthun, meaning "he who praises." The name of one

of the Levite families to which David entrusted the temple music.

Ps.38,1: "Idithun." The name only is mentioned here, implying that this is the name of the choir master.

Pss.61,1; 76,1: "Secundum Idithun. According to Idithun." Here is implied the body of singers named after Idithun, or possibly, his descendants.

Isaac, meaning "he laughs." Son of Abraham and Sara. Isaac was the heir and transmitter of the promises which God made to Abraham and his descendants.

Ps.104,9: "... , et juris jurandi quod dedit Isaac, , and of the oath which he made to Isaac, ..." Isaac mentioned here as sharing in the fruits of the oath which God made to his father.

Ismaelita, Ismaelitae, or Ismahelita, a descendant of Ismael, son of Abraham by Agar, the Egyptian. The Ismaelites were traditional enemies of the Jews. Modern Arabs are descended from Ismael.

Ps.82,7: "Tentoria Edom et Ismaelitae, ... The tents of Edom and Ismaelite, ..." Name of Ismaelite used here as representing his whole tribe, along with other traditional enemies of Israel.

Israel, meaning "he who struggles with God." Another name for Jacob, and the people descended from Jacob.

Ps.21,4: "Tu autem in sanctuario habitas, laus Israel. You however dwell in the holy place, the praise of Israel." Israel used here to represent all the descendants of Jacob.

Ps.113,12: "... , benedicet domui Israel ... , ... , he will bless the house of Israel ... ," Israel is used here again to refer to the children of Jacob.

Pss.13,7; 24,22: also contain the name Israel.

Jabin, meaning "intelligent." King of Azor in northern Palestine. Oppressed the Israelites for twenty years with his army.

Ps.82,10: "Fac illis sicut Madian, sicut Sisarae, sicut Jabin ad torrentem Cison,... Do to them as to Madian, as to Sisara, as to Jabin at the torrent Cison,..." Jabin mentioned here among the defeated foes of the Israelites. He was defeated on the plains of Esdrelon, c. 1285 B.C..

Jacob, meaning "supplanter." Second son of Isaac and Rebecca, brother of Esau. Wrestled all night with an angel of God, and received name of Israel.

Ps.23,6: "..., quaerentium faciem Dei Jacob. ..., of them that seek the face of the God of Jacob." Jacob referred to here as father and leader of his people.

Pss.104,6; 113,1; 21,24; 13,7: contain the name of Jacob, signifying the chosen people.

Joab, meaning "Yahweh is father." A nephew of David and a most faithful general of his army.

Ps.59,2: "..., et quando Joab reversus devicit Edom in valle salis: ..., and when Joab having returned defeated Edom in the valley of salt:" Joab mentioned here in connection with the background of this psalm. Cf. 2Kings 13ff; 1 Par.18, 12ff.

Joseph, meaning "He(the Lord) shall add." Patriarch, son of Jacob. Sold into slavery by his brothers and taken to Egypt.

Ps.76,16: "Redemisti bracchio tuo populum tuum, filios Jacob et Joseph. With your arm you have redeemed your people, the sons of Jacob and Joseph." Joseph's name used here to point up fact of people's being descendent from him, a chosen one of God.

Ps.79,2: "..., qui ducis, velut gregem, Joseph. ..., you who lead Joseph like a flock." Joseph referred to here as the descendants of Joseph.

Ps.80,6: "Legem statuit hanc in Joseph,... He determined this a law in Joseph,..." Joseph represents the whole chosen people here.

Juda, means "praise" in Hebrew. Fourth son of Jacob and Lia. Name "Jew" taken from his tribe.

Ps.47,12: "Exsultent civitates Juda... Let the cities

of Juda exult ..." Juda taken here as descendants or tribe of Juda.

Ps.59,9: "... , Juda sceptrum meum,... ... , Juda my scepter,..." Juda as political center of Palestine. Furnished leadership in the person of David.

Madian, meaning "contention." Son of Abraham and founder of nomadic Ababian tribe called Madianites. This tribe very hostile to Israelites.

Ps.82,10: "Fac illis sicut Madian,... Do to them as to Madian,..." Madianites slaughtered in battle against Gideon. Cf. Jud.7: lff.

Manasses, Manasse, meaning "who causes to forget." Oldest son of Joseph. One of the twelve tribes named after Manasses.

Ps.59,9: "... , et mea terra Manasse,... ... , and mine the land of Manasses,..." Manasses referred to here as land occupied by tribe of Manasses.

Ps.79,3: "... coram Ephraim et Benjamin et Manasse. ... before Ephraim and Benjamin, and Manasses." Manasses to be taken here as the tribe or descendants of Manasses.

Melchisedech, meaning "king of justice." King and priest of Salem (Jerusalem). First to offer bread and wine as sacrifice.

Ps.109,4: "... Tu es sacerdos in aeternum secundum ordinem Melchisedech. ... You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchisedech." Melchisedech used here as a type(i.e. priest and king) of the Messiah.

Moab, son of Lot and ancestor of Moabites. His tribe dwelt east of Dead Sea. Moabites were warlike and bitter enemies of the Israelites.

Ps.59,10: "Moab pelvis lotionis meae;... Moab is the bowl of my washing;..." God will reduce the land of Moab to a state of servitude.

Ps.82,7: "Tentoria Edom et Ismaelitae, Moab et Agareni,... The tents of Edom and the Ismaelite, Moab and the Agarene,..." Moab mentioned here, along with other chief enemies of Israel.

Moyses, Moysis, was the liberator and lawgiver of the Hebrews. Brother of Aaron. Author of first five books of the Bible.

Ps.89,1: "Precatio. Moysis, viri Dei. A prayer of Moses, the man of God." Title ascribes the psalm to Moses, but his authorship is not certain.

Pss.102,7; 104,26; 105,16: also contain the name of Moses.

Nathan, meaning "given by God." Prophet living at time of David and Solomon. Reproached David for his sins.

Ps.50,2: "..., cum venit ad eum Nathan propheta, ...
..., when Nathan the prophet came to him, ..." Nathan had just convicted David of committing adultery and murder.

Nephtali, or Nephthali, means "struggle." A son of Jacob after whom one of the twelve tribes was named.

Ps.67,28: "..., principes Zabulon, principes Nephtali. ..., the princes of Zabulon, the princes of Nephtali." Nephtali mentioned here because it was one of first tribes taken captive.

Og, king of Basan, mountainous region east of the Sea of Galilee. "Og" probably means giant. His bed measured 13½ feet long.

Ps.134,11: "Sehon, regem Amorrhæorum, et Og, regem Basan, ... Sehon, king of the Amorrites, and Og, king of Basan, ..."

Ps.135,20: "Et Og, regem Basan, quoniam in æternum misericordiæ eius, ... And Og, king of Basan, for His mercy is eternal, ..." Both psalms refer to Og as one of chief obstacles to Israelites' entering Promised Land. Og was finally defeated by Moses.

Oreb, meaning "crow," or "raven." A Midianite prince who was captured and killed by Gideon.

Ps.82,12: "Principes eius similes fac Oreb et Zeb, ... Make their princes like Oreb and Zeb, ..." Oreb mentioned here as example of the fate of one who opposed Israel and Israel's God.

Pharao, Pharaonis, meaning "the great house, the palace." A

generic name for all the kings of Egypt.

Ps.134,9: "... , in Pharaonem et in omnes servos eius. ... , upon Pharaoh and upon all his servants."

Ps.135,15: "Et detrusit Pharaonem et exercitum eius in Mare Rubrum,... And he cast Pharaoh and his army into the Red Sea,..." Pharaoh is used here in both psalms to point up God's deliverance of His people from an earthly king, an oppressor.

Phinees, meaning "mouth of shining brass." Grandson of Aaron and third high priest of the Jews.

Ps.105,30: "Sed surrexit Phinees et judicavit,... But Phinees rose up and judged,... Phinees "judged" by slaying an Israelite and a Madianite woman found together. By his conduct, he thus warned the Jews that they must stay away from pagans. God rewarded him by stopping a plague then rampant among the Jews.

Rahab, meaning "proud" or "arrogant." A harlot of Jerico who recieved the spies sent by Josue.

Ps.86,4: "Accensebo Rahab et Babel colentibus me: I will add Rahab and Babel to those worshipping me;" Rahab taken here to mean Egypt.

Ps.88,11: "Tu transfixum conculcasti Rahab,... You trampled upon Rahab, which has been run through,..." Rahab here refers to sea monster and hence to Egypt, because Nile was supposed to flow from subterranean ocean.

Salmana, meaning "shelter denied." Madianite king slain by Gideon.

Ps.82,12: "... , similes Zebec et Salmana omnes duces eorum,... ... , all their leaders like Zebec and Salmana, ... Assyrians boasted that all their leaders were kings. Psalmist prays that they may then be crushed like Madianite king.

Samuel, Samuelis, meaning "heard by God." Prophet and last judge of Israel. Delivered Israelites from Philistines.

Ps.98,6: "... , et Samuel inter eos qui invocabant nomen eius: ... , and Samuel among them that were invoking his

name:" Samuel mentioned here because of his outstanding sanctity.

Saul, Saulis, meaning "asked for." First king of Israel. Very jealous of his successor David, and made many attempts on David's life.

Ps.56,1: "Davidis. Quando a Saul in cavernam fugit. (A psalm) of David. When he fled into a cave from Saul." Saul mentioned to give time and setting for psalm.

Pss.17; 51; 53; 58: are four other Davidic psalms which contain the name of Saul in their titles.

Sehon, meaning "one who sweeps away." King of Amorrhites. He refused Israelites passage through his kingdom and was killed in battle.

Ps.134,11: "Sehon, regem Amorrhaeorum, et Og, regem Basan,... Sehon, king of the Amorrhites, and Og, king of Basan,..."

Ps.135,19: "Sehon, regem Amorrhaeorum,... Sehon, king of the Amorrhites,..." In both psalms, Sehon given as example of how God strikes down the "mighty" who oppose His plan.

Sisara, Sisarae, meaning "battle array." General of the army of Jabin, Canaanite king. Sisara was slain by a woman, Jahel.

Ps.82,10: "Fac illis sicut Madian, sicut Sisarae,... Treat them like Madian, like Sisara,..." Sisara used here to point up God's previous action toward enemies of Israel.

Solomon, Solomonis, son of David and Israel's wisest king.

Ps.71,1: "Solomonis. Of Solomon." This psalm, which pertains to the Messias, was written either by or about Solomon.

Ps.126,1: "Canticum ascensionum. Salomonis. A song of ascents, of Solomon." This psalm ascribed to Solomon. It is truly the product of a wise man.

Zabulon, meaning "dwelling." Last son of Jacob by Lia.
 Founder of the tribe which bore his name.

Ps.67,28: "..., principes Zabulon, principes Nephtali.
 ..., the princes of Zabulon, the princes of Nephtali."
 Zabulon mentioned here because it was one of first two
 tribes taken into captivity.

Zeb, meaning "wolf." A Madianite prince who was captured and
 slain by Gideon.

Ps.82,12: "Principes eius similes fac Oreb et Zeb, ...
 Make their princes like Oreb and Zeb, ..." Zeb mentioned
 here to show how God treats those who defy His chosen
 people.

Zebee, meaning "sacrifice, slaughter." One of the four
 Madianite princes who were captured and slain by Gideon.

Ps.82,12: "..., similes Zebee et Salmana omnes duces
 eorum,, all their leaders like Zebee and Salmana,
 ..." Zebee brings to mind how Israel has triumphed in
 the past.

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