

Part II

3.2.1 Psalms 91 and 90

That there are strong connections between Psalms 90 and 91 or between the three Psalms 90-92 has been noticed by many scholars. For example, regarding Psalms 90-92 as a group and interpreting them in a certain sequence, Kirkpatrick (1903) has noted that Psalm 90 is the plea of Israel in exile, to which Psalm 91 delivers “the voice of faith assuring Israel that it will be safe in the midst of the calamities which are about to fall upon Babylon” (1903:553). Contrary to this, Psalm 92 consists of thanksgiving for deliverance.

Though there is no agreement among scholars on the dates of origin of the three psalms, Kirkpatrick’s attempt (1903:553) to look at the psalms in terms of certain concatenations has been supported by many scholars in one way or another.¹ When read together as a single text, it becomes clear that they carry certain messages. Here our concern is with the relationship between Psalms 90 and 91. The relationship between Psalms 90 and 92 will be treated subsequently.

Lexical links

Psalms 90 and 91 have 12 lexemes in common.² Most of the

¹Rogerson & Mckay (1977:204); Reindl (1980:350-356); Wilson (1985a:215f); Zenger (1991a:212-214, 1991b:238-239, 1994b:156-157); Howard (1993b:110-112); Krüger (1994:213-214); Sheppard (1992:151).

²אלף (90:4; 91:7); אמר (90:4; 91:2); ידע (90:11, 12; 91:14); יום (90:4, 9, 10, 12, 14, 15; 91:16); ירא (90:11; 91:5); לָלֶזֶק (90:4; 91:5); מע ון (90:1; 91:9); עוף (90:10; 91:5); בָּעֵינַיָּךְ (90:4; 91:8); ראח (90:15, 16; 91:8); רעה (90:15; 91:10); שָׁבַע (90:14; 91:16).

words listed are incidental, not contributing to links between the psalms. However, the word **מַעוֹן** “refuge” or “dwelling place” is a significant link.³ The word as a noun form referring to Yahweh occurs only five times (Pss 26:8; 68:6; 71:3; 90:1; 91:9) in the Psalter, but any adjacent psalm in Books III-IV does not contain it, except for Psalms 90:1 and 91:9. Psalm 90 begins with a confession that Yahweh is a refuge, while Psalm 91:9, which functions as a nexus verse concluding vv. 1-8 (see the analysis of the psalm), also refers to him as a refuge. Thus, structurally the word occurs in an important place in each of the psalms.⁴

Less significant than the word **מַעוֹן** but still important, is the word **שָׂבַע** “satisfy.” It occurs seven times (90:14; 91:16; 103:5; 104:13, 16, 28; 105:40) in Book IV. Psalm 104 takes the subjects of the verb **שָׂבַע** as earth or trees or the things living in the sea, and a direct relationship with Psalms 90 or 91 taking Yahweh as a subject is not drawn. By contrast, in Psalm 105:40 its occurrence is related to Yahweh’s providing his people with food in the wilderness, which has nothing to do with Psalms 90 and 91. On the other hand, since Psalm 103 forms certain ties with Psalms 90 and 91, the discussion of the word will be noted below. Now, the relationship between Psalms 90 and 91 with regard to the word **שָׂבַע** is drawn by the contrast between them. In Psalm 90:14 the psalmist prays to God to have mercy on his

³ The words **מַעוֹן** “dwelling place” and **מַעוֹן** “refuge” are interchangeable in the Hebrew Bible. See the analysis of Psalm 90. The word **מַעוֹן** is not found in Book III-IV in the Psalter.

⁴ Psalm 90:1 states that Yahweh was our “refuge” or “dwelling place” in the past, but Psalm 91:9-10b respond to the former by saying that if you make the Most High your dwelling - even the Lord, who is my refuge - then no harm will befall you.

servants and to “satisfy” them with his love in the morning, and Psalm 91:16 responds to that with God’s oracle by saying, “I will satisfy him with long days.”⁵ In Psalm 90 the psalmist laments the transient life of human beings, but Psalm 91 promises a long life (“long days”). Though the word occurs in several places in Book IV, only Psalms 90 and 91 have the same theme with regard to its use (see also Psalm 103).

In addition, the word אֶלֶף “thousand” occurs only three times in Book IV, once in Psalm 105:8 and once in each of Psalms 90:4 and 91:9, while the word עָנַף “fly” is found four times (Pss 18:11; 55:7; 90:10 and 91:5) in the Psalter, but no any adjacent psalms in the Psalter or any psalm in Books III-IV have it, except Psalms 90 and 91.

Thematic links

Stronger links between the psalms are found in thematic aspects. In Psalm 90 the psalmist describes Yahweh as “a refuge” (v. 1) whom he has trusted and he supplicates the restoration of God’s mercy for his servants. In response, Psalm 91 demonstrates throughout the psalm that Yahweh is a refuge answering with the promise of salvation for those seeking refuge in him (vv. 14-16). At the beginning of the psalm Yahweh is portrayed as “the shadow of the Almighty” in which “the pious believer ... has sought shelter and protection...” (Luke 1972:192), and as Hugger (1971:58-59) notes, the word מְנוּחָה “refuge” in Psalm 91 is a key-word by which the whole psalm can be properly understood. The word “refuge” (vv. 2, 4, 9) used three times in the psalm, occurs

⁵ Koenen (1995:56-58) illustrates that the end of Psalm 91 and the beginning of Psalm 92 reflect Psalm 90:13-17. He notes that Psalm 91 provides the promise of salvation to the plea of Psalm 90.

only in this psalm throughout the Psalter, and gives the strong assurance that the prayer of Moses in Psalm 90 will be answered (Sheppard 1992:150-151). Psalm 90 confesses that Yahweh is a refuge and asks him to have mercy on his people, while Psalm 91 provides the assurance of protection through the metaphors of refuge like “shelter,” “shadow,” “pinions” and “wings,” etc., (vv. 1-13) and through a divine oracle (vv. 14-16). With regard to this, Psalm 91 uses various metaphors, but the metaphors found in the expressions “the terror of the night” and “the pestilence in darkness” in vv. 5-6 may be linked to the idea of Psalm 90:5. According to Booij (1987:393-396), the word שָׁנָה “sleep” in Psalm 90:5 is not just “every night’s sleep,” but “sleep” with the connotation of “death,” or else a sleep which makes man vulnerable (cf. Tsevat 1985:115-117). In fact, Psalm 76:6-7 and Nahum 3:18 describe the death of enemies as “sleep,” and שָׁנָה is also used in Job 14:12 and Jeremiah 51:39 and 57 in the sense of death. If this is the case, the metaphors of Psalm 91:5-6 noted above, which can refer to some plague or attacks reminiscent of death, may be echoed in the idea of Psalm 90:5 (see “a watch in the night” in v. 4). Psalm 91:5ff answer Psalm 90:5 by speaking of the sureness of Yahweh’s protection for his people.

Other thematic links should be noted. In Psalm 90 the psalmist states that Yahweh’s servants have experienced affliction as well as evil for many years (v.15) and in Psalm 90:15 he prays to God to save him from such experiences. From the perspective of the conjunction between Psalms 89 and 90, this experience echoes Psalm 89 where it is said that the hands of David’s enemies have defeated him (89:43-47, 51-52), but Psalm 91 promises salvation by speaking of the destruction of the wicked (v. 7-8) and the protection of the righteous (v. 14).

In Psalm 90 Moses is described as the one who prays for the community of faith, as the title indicates, while the body of the psalm displays ties with Moses, as noted above. The connection with Moses is also evident in Psalm 91. As Snaith (1934:55-58) and Briggs & Briggs (1969:279) have already noted, the psalm displays strong links with the Song of Moses in Deut 32 (see also Tate 1990:452).⁶ If this is the case, Psalms 90 and 91 have Moses-dimensions which may lead us to see a further link between them. In addition, both are concerned with Yahweh's people, the servants in Psalm 90 and the faithful in Psalm 91.

Structural links

The structural links between the psalms are weak, but some points should be noted. Psalm 90 ends with the plea for God's mercy on his servants, while Psalm 91 as a hymn closes with a divine promise. The juxtaposition of the lament with the hymn carrying the promise of salvation leads us to look at a sensible consequence between them: Psalm 91 answers the questions posed by Psalm 90 by saying that Yahweh is a sure refuge and he will answer a person seeking help and protection (v. 14ff). When these two psalms are read together in canonical context, they bear a definite message. Psalm 90 poses theological problems, but in response the latter gives concrete examples of Yahweh's protection and securing of his people, taken from nature

⁶ Sheppard (1992:150-151) argues that in Psalm 90 Moses acts as an intercessor for his people in the same way as he did in Exod 32, while Psalm 91 reflects his intercession as follows: "First, the psalm calls to mind Moses' original invocation, 'My refuge and my fortress; my God in whom I trust' (91:2); second, the psalm reassures Israel that 'under his [God's] wings you [Israel] will find refuge' (v.4); and last, God's answer confirms the truth that Israel's refuge is in God, 'Because you took the Lord - my refuge, the Most High - as your haven' (v.9)."

and everyday life, thus reacting theologically to the problems of Psalm 90.

3.2.2.1 Psalms 92 and 90

The links between Psalms 90 and 92 are not as strong as those between Psalms 89 and 92, but certain links between them do exist.⁷ They have 15 words in common.⁸ Most of these are incidental, but some of them contribute to links in significant ways.

Lexical links

The exclusive lexical links between these psalms are very weak. Only one word can be listed: צָרַח “flourish” (90:6; 92:8). It occurs three times in Book IV (90:6; 92:8 and 103:15) and all the psalms containing the word form certain links with one another: Psalm 90 displays ties with Psalm 92 as well as with Psalm 103. In Psalms 90 and 92 the word is used in referring to the flourishing of grass. In the former, grass is compared to the ephemeral life of human beings, but in the latter it is used to describe the destiny of the wicked.

A striking link is found between corresponding words of Psalms 90:14-17 and 92:3-5. The following comparison of words shows the

⁷ Numerous scholars like Kirkpatrick (1903:553); Reindl (1980:350-356); Zenger (1991a:212-213, 1991b:238-239, 1994b:156-157); Howard (1993b:112); Krüger (1994:213); and Koenen (1995:56-58) have noted the close links between Psalms 90 and 92.

⁸ אֹרֶן (90:10; 92:8, 10); אִישׁ (90:1; 92:7); בִּבְקָר (90:5, 6, 14; 92:3); הָיָה (90:1, 5, 17; 92:15); חֲסִידְךָ (90:14; 92:3); יָד (90:17; 92:5); יָדַע (90:11, 12; 92:7); לִילֵהָ (90:4; 92:3); עֹלָם (90:2; 92:8); עֵין (90:4; 92:12); מַעֲשֵׂהָ (90:17; 92:5, 6); פָּעַל (90:16; 92:5, 8, 10); צָרַח (90:6; 92:8); רִגַן (90:14; 92:5); שֹׁמֵחַ (90:14, 15; 92:5).

close link between them (cf. Reindl 1980:353):

Ps 90:14-17	Ps 92:3-5
בְּבֹקֶר חַסְדֶּךָ (v. 14)	בְּבֹקֶר חַסְדֶּךָ (v. 3)
רִנָּן (v.14)	-----
שִׂמְחָה (vv. 14, 15)	שִׂמְחָה (v. 5a)
פְּעֻלָּתְךָ (v. 16)	פְּעֻלָּתְךָ (v. 5a)
מַעֲשֵׂה יְדֵינֵנוּ (v. 17)	בְּמַעֲשֵׂי יְדֵיךָ (v. 5b)
-----	רִנָּן (v. 5b)

The arrangement of these words in the two psalms as shown above is so similar that it seems difficult to deny that close links exist between them. In content Psalm 90:14a corresponds to Psalm 92:3a. The plea in the former, “satisfy us with your love in the morning,” is answered in the latter by the expression, “it is good to declare your love in the morning.” While in Psalm 90 the psalmist prays for the restoration of God’s love, Psalm 92 thanks Yahweh for his love in worship. Moreover, in Psalm 90:16 the psalmist asks that God’s work (פעל) appears to his servants, while Psalm 92:4a responds to it by saying that God made the psalmist glad by his work (פעל). A further link is also confirmed. The closing supplication of Psalm 90:17b, “establish the work (מעשה) of our hands (יד)” also corresponds to the expression in 92:4b-5a, “I sing for joy at the works (מעשה) of your hands (יד). How great are your works (מעשה), O Lord.”

Thematic links

Thematically the two psalms exhibit links, though these are not strong. In both Yahweh’s eternity is perceived (90:2; 92:9) and the concern for Yahweh’s people also appears in both. In Psalm 90:13-17 the psalmist prays for mercy on God’s people, but in 92:13ff the

righteous, who represent his servants, are described as dwelling in the house of Yahweh. Moreover, the metaphor describing the transient life of human beings in Psalm 90:5-6, “like grass that grows up in the morning and that withers in the evening” is replaced in Psalm 92:16 by the metaphor describing the life of the righteous with “they shall bear fruit in old age, they will stay fresh and green” (Zenger 1991a:213; 1994b:157). On the other hand, Psalm 90:15 indicates that Yahweh’s servants have been afflicted and have experienced evil (הַעֲרָ) for many years, but Psalm 92 informs us that all workers of evil (אֲרָ) will be destroyed. In addition, wisdom vocabulary is seen in both psalms. Psalm 90 contains wisdom vocabulary like “consider” (v. 11), “fear” (v. 11), “teach” (v. 12) and “a heart of wisdom” (v. 12), while Psalm 92 uses words like ‘dull man” (v. 7), “know” (v. 7), “the stupid” (v. 7), “understand” (v. 8), “the wicked” (v. 9) and “the righteous” (v. 13).

Structural links

There are structural aspects worth noting. Psalm 90 is a lament containing a prayer, but Psalm 92 is a song of thanksgiving. On the other hand, Psalm 90 ends with a plea that Yahweh re-establish the works of his servants, while Psalm 92 closes by mentioning the prosperity of the righteous in future (cf. Kraus 1989:229-230). Thus, from a canonical perspective, Psalm 92 responds to Psalm 90. For example, the petition of Psalm 90:16, “let your work be manifest to your children and your glorious power to their children,” is answered in Psalm 92.

3.2.2.2 Psalms 92 and 91

The connections between Psalm 91 and 92 are not as strong as those between Psalms 90 and 91 or between Psalms 90 and 92. The psalms have 8 words in common,⁹ but there are few words suggestive of strong ties. However, as adjacent psalms they exhibit certain ties which suggest that they should be read from a perspective of concatenation.

Lexical links

Lexically the word עֶלְיוֹן functions as a significant link between them. It only occurs once, in Psalm 97:9 within the corpus of Psalms 90-106, except for Psalms 91 and 92. In Psalm 91 it appears twice, namely, v. 1 and v. 9, along with the title “Yahweh” (vv. 2, 9). The psalm begins with the titles עֶלְיוֹן (v. 1) and יְהוָה (v. 2) and concludes the first section, vv. 1-9, with the same titles. Both titles “Most High” and “YHWH” are placed at important positions in the psalm. Conspicuously enough, Psalm 92 also begins with the same titles “Most High” and “Yahweh.”

Other lexical links, which are also combined with thematic links, are found in Psalm 91:8 and 92:12. First of all, these verses repeat the word נִבְט “see.” It is often used in parallel with the word רָאָה “see” (Pss 22:18; 37:34; 54:9b; 59:11; 112:8; cf. 52:8) and its meaning is similar to that of the latter (Tate 1990:463). Psalm 91:8 contains these two words in close association. Moreover, these verses have the word עַיִן “eye” in common, and the word רְשָׁעִים “the wicked” in Psalm 91:8 corresponds to רָעַע “evil” in Psalm 92:12. Furthermore, both these

⁹ אֱלֹהִים (91:2, 9; 92:2, 5, 6, 9, 10, 17, 16); יָדַע (91:14; 92:7); לַיְלָה (91:5; 92:3); נִבְט (91:8; 92:12); עַיִן (91:8; 92:12); עֶלְיוֹן (91:1, 9; 92:2); רָעַע (91:10; 92:12); שָׁם (91:14; 92:2).

verses deal with the reward of the wicked: in the former the faithful sees with his eyes the recompense of the wicked who have fallen down beside him (v. 7), while in the latter the faithful who is exalted high (v. 11) also sees with his eyes his enemies rising against him.

Thematic links

The thematic links between the two psalms are also to be noted. Both deal with the righteous and the wicked, contrasting the former to the latter. In Psalm 91 the righteous, who are protected by God, are described in contrast to the destiny of the wicked who will be destroyed. Similarly in Psalm 92 the wicked, who will perish for ever (vv. 8-10), are described in contrast to the faithful who shall dwell in the house of Yahweh (vv. 13-14). On the other hand, the designation of Yahweh as צור “rock” in Psalm 92:16 is echoed by words like “refuge” (vv. 1, 4, 9), “fortress” (v. 2) and “deliver” (v. 14) in Psalm 91. Since the word צור is often used along with the above three terms in the Hebrew Bible (Pss 18:3; 31:3; 71:3; 62:7; cf. 27:5), the reference to Yahweh as “rock” in Psalm 92 may reflect the message of the previous psalm. Thus, both psalms describe Yahweh as a refuge or the rock of salvation. In addition, both psalms are used in liturgical worship.

Structural links

Structurally they do not have many elements in common, but a few points should be noted: Psalm 91 starts with the titles עֲלֵי יְיָ and יְהוָה, and Psalm 92 uses the same titles at the beginning. Psalm 91 is a hymn, used in a liturgical situation, while Psalm 92 is a psalm of thanksgiving, also used in worship service. The juxtaposition of the hymnic psalm with the thanksgiving psalm seems natural. The last

section of Psalm 91, the divine oracle from Yahweh's mouth, proclaims his protection and salvation for those seeking help from him, but the beginning of Psalm 92 seems to answer for it with the praise of thanksgiving. However, in Psalm 92 the presence of the title, "A Psalm, a song for the Sabbath day" seems to indicate the demarcation between Psalms 91 and 92.

3.2.3 Psalms 93 and 92

Though Psalms 92 and 93 do not have strong lexical links, they are tied to each other in significant ways. They have only six words in common,¹⁰ but one of the reasons for this may be the relatively short length of Psalm 93 itself, containing only five verses.

Lexical links

One significant link is found in the word מָרוֹם "high" in Psalms 92:9 and 93:4.¹¹ It occurs elsewhere in Book IV in Psalm 102:20, but nowhere else in adjacent psalms. Both psalms 92 and 93 use it in mentioning Yahweh's exalted position. In other words, the statement in Psalm 92 that Yahweh is greater than the enemies corresponds to that in Psalm 93 that "Yahweh is much mightier than the sounds of the waters and the waves of the sea." A further important point is found in the position within each psalm of the verses containing this word. In Psalm 92:9, the particular verse forms a monostich and is positioned in

¹⁰ אָמֵן (92:3; 93:5); בֵּית (92:14; 93:5); יְהוָה (92:9; 93:3, 4); מֵאֹד (92:6; 93:5); עַל וְלֵם (92:9; 93:2); גִּבֹּר וָם (92:9; 93:4; cf. 92:11).

¹¹ Tate (1990) and Howard (1993b:113) also note the occurrence of the word in these psalms as a significant link.

the centre of the psalm in order to emphasize its contents. As already noted in the analysis of Psalm 92, vv. 8c and 10b-c emphasize the perishing of the wicked, while v. 9 effectively stresses Yahweh's high position which can cause the ultimate destruction of the wicked. Thus, the word מָרוֹם occurs in an important verse reflecting Yahweh's ultimate victory. The word מָרוֹם is also used in a similar way in Psalm 93:4. As noted in the analysis of Psalm 93, the reference to waters and the sea in vv. 3-4 symbolizes the forces of chaos which may be entities in history and v. 4 strongly emphasizes Yahweh's high position through the repetition of the comparative preposition מִן "than" which contrasts Yahweh's power to the forces of chaos (Prinsloo 1993a:255-256).¹² With regard to this, the use of the word מָרוֹם in v. 4 emphasizes Yahweh's total control over the chaotic forces. Thus, the verses containing the word under discussion are positioned in similar important places in each of the two psalms which deal with the contrast between Yahweh and his enemies (or chaotic forces) and both also deal with the same theme (i.e. the exaltation of Yahweh which causes the destruction of the enemies). This can hardly be accidental.

Thematic links

There are thematic links which may be noted. Psalm 92:3 declares the faithfulness (אֱמֵן) of Yahweh by which the wicked are judged, while Psalm 93:5 sets forth the sureness (אֱמֵן) of Yahweh's decree (עֲרֵת) by which Yahweh's judgement over the chaotic forces will

¹² Briggs & Briggs (1969:302-303) aptly summarize the thought of the verse as follows: "The poet's conception is, that however magnificent the sea may be in a storm, Yahweh is much more magnificent as He reigns on high, above its tumult and raging, with the implication that He will eventually still it and reduce it to order."

be exercised. On the other hand, in Psalm 92:12 the rising of the wicked against the psalmist may also be echoed in the expression “the lifting up of the floods” in Psalm 93:3, which stands against Yahweh’s power. In the former the wicked stands against the psalmist, while in the latter the force of chaos is opposed to Yahweh’s power. However, they are all enemies of Yahweh in the final analysis.

As Mettinger (1988:122) notes, the word עָלֵינוּ יְיָ “Most High” in Psalm 92:2 may be an “epithet for kingship” and thus, the beginning of the psalm refers to the theme of Yahweh’s kingship which is further developed in Psalm 93 and the following psalms, 96-99.

On the other hand, emphatic anadiploses are used in both psalms. In Psalm 92:10 the word “enemies” is repeated for the sake of emphasis, and the phrases “he is robed” in Psalm 93:1 and “lift up” in v. 3 are also repeated for the same purpose. Moreover, the phrase הָיָה, אֵלֵינוּ in 92:9b is paralleled to הָיָה אֵלֵינוּ in Psalm 93:2b, and in both psalms tricolons are very often used (92:8, 10, 12; 93:1, 3, 4, 5). Both psalms depict Yahweh as Creator who established the world (92:5-6; 93:1c), while Yahweh’s house (בֵּית) is also mentioned as a secure place for the righteous in both (92:14; 93:5).¹³

Structural links

Structural links are very weak, yet some remarks may be made. Psalm 92 is a thanksgiving psalm. It contrasts the righteous to the wicked, emphasizing their destruction. The problem the psalmist was

¹³ Tate (1990:476-477) notes as a further link the connection of the divine enthronement theme in Psalm 93 with the Sabbath theme in Psalm 92, based on the Jewish tradition that Psalm 93 was recited on Friday (the Enthronement), while Psalm 92 was read on Saturday (the Sabbath).

struggling with seems to have been the prosperity of the wicked and the suffering of the righteous. Psalm 93 likewise responds to the questions posed by Psalm 92 by introducing the theme of Yahweh's kingship which may lead us to see how all problems are overcome in Yahweh the king.

3.2.4.1 Psalms 94 and 92

The close links between Psalms 92 and 94 have already been pointed out by many exegetes like Wilson (1985a:216-17), Howard (1993b:120-21), Tate (1990:488-89) and Koenen (1995:60). In fact, the psalms are connected in significant ways.

Lexical links

The psalms have 20 words in common,¹⁴ and some of them have significant links. The word בָּעֵר “dull” or “stupid” in 94:8 occurs only seven times in the Hebrew Bible and only once in the Psalter,¹⁵ while the word בָּעַר “dull” in 92:6, derived from the former word, appears five times in the Hebrew Bible and three times in the Psalter.¹⁶ Four psalms in the Psalter have the root בער “dull,” but it is found only in Psalms 92:7 and 94:8 in the whole of Books IV-V. The word כָּסִיל

¹⁴ און (92:8; 94:4, 16, 23); און (92:12; 94:9); אל (92:14; 94:22, 23); בין (92:7; 94:7, 8); בער (92:7; 94:8); יהוה (92:5, 16; 94:3, 7, 11, 12, 14, 17, 18); מחשבה (92:6; 94:11); חסד (92:3; 94:18); ידע (92:7; 94:11); ישר (92:16; 94:15); כָּסִיל (92:7; 94:8); נבט (92:12; 94:9); עין (92:12; 94:9); פֶּעַל (92:5, 8, 10; 94:4, 16); צדק (92:13; 94:15, 21); צור (92:16; 94:22); קום (92:12; 94:16); רע (92:12; 94:13, 16, 23); רשע (92:8; 94:3a, 3b, 13); שמוע (92:12; 94:9).

¹⁵ Isa 19:11; Jer 10:8, 14, 21; 51:17; Ez 21:36; Ps 94:8.

¹⁶ Prov 12:1; 30:2; Pss 49:11; 73:22; 92:7.

“stupid” (92:7; 94:8) also functions as a significant link. It appears only three times (49:11; 92:7; 94:8) in the Psalter, but it is not found elsewhere in Books III-V, excepting Psalms 92 and 94. However, more noticeably, the verses of both psalms containing the two words noted above, Psalms 92:7 and 94:8, are connected by the repetition of the three words, בער, כסיל and בין (“understand”),¹⁷ as the following shows: “The dull man (בער) cannot know, the stupid (כסיל) cannot understand (בין) this.” (92:7) // “Understand (בין), O you dull ones (בער) among the people! You stupid ones (כסיל), when will you become wise? (94:8). Both Psalms 92:7 and 94:8 containing the three words surprisingly mark the beginning of the wisdom section (92:7-8; 94:8-15) within each of the psalms.¹⁸

The word מחשבה “thought” (92:6; 94:11) can also be added as an important link. It occurs only six times (33:10, 11; 56:6; 92:6; 94:11; 140:6) in five psalms in the Psalter, but only in Psalms 92:6 and 94:11 in Books III-IV. With regard to the use of the word in Psalm 94:11, Yahweh’s knowing the thoughts of men is contrasted to the dull man’s not knowing *this* (i.e., your [God’s] thoughts in v. 6b) in Psalm 92:6-7.¹⁹ On the other hand, the phrase פְעֲלֵי אֱוֹן “all workers of evil” occurs in Psalms 92:8, 10 and 94:4, 16, but only Psalm 101:8 in the rest of Book IV has this phrase. Since Psalm 101 forms strong ties with Psalm

¹⁷ Howard (1993b:121) also regards the occurrences of these three words in both psalms as a significant link.

¹⁸ Psalm 92:13-15 also reflect wisdom vocabulary. See Whybray (1996:54-55).

¹⁹ Verses 5-7 of Psalm 92 are closely related to one another (see analysis of the psalm). In v. 7 the pronoun זֶה “this” functions as a double-duty serving v. 7a and 7b (Tate 1990:461). It is likely that the pronoun refers back to v. 6 (Kinder 1975:335; Weiser 1979:614). In this case it mentions the depth of God’s thoughts in v. 6b as well as the greatness of his works in v. 6a.

94 (see below), its occurrence in the former detracts from the link between Psalms 92 and 94 regarding the occurrence of the word. In both Psalms 92 and 94 the workers of evil are similarly described as the objects to be judged by Yahweh.

Further links should also be stated. Both psalms contain the word צור “rock” (92:16; 94:22), which is found twice (Pss 95:1; 105:41) in other psalms in Book IV, as noted above.²⁰ Its occurrence at the end of each psalm seems to form an inclusio, surrounding Psalm 93. In both Yahweh is described as a rock which his people can trust. In addition, Psalms 92:16 and 94:15 have the word ישר “upright,” which is also found once in Psalm 97:11 in Book IV, and the word שחל “plant” in 92:14 also forms a synonym with the word נטע “plant” in 94:9 (Sohn 1991:82-82).

Thematic links

Thematically the psalms are also closely related. In both of them Yahweh is described as a creator (92:5-6; 94:9) and also as a sovereign ruling over man. The concern for Yahweh’s people is perceived in both (92:11; 94:14), but he is described as standing up against the wicked (92:7-12; 94:1-3, 7-11). In contrast to this, the righteous shall dwell in the house of Yahweh (92:13-14) and justice shall be granted to them (94:15).

The image of the wicked’s boasting and arrogance described in Psalm 94:4ff echoes that of the flourishing of the wicked in Psalm

²⁰ The importance of the word in Psalms 95 and 105 has already been noted in the discussion of Psalms 94 and 89. Zenger (1994b:165) notes that the confession of trust in Yahweh in Psalm 94:22 refers back to Psalm 92:16 and at the same time opens the way to Psalm 95 where v. 1 starts with the praise to Yahweh as the rock of salvation.

92:7-8. In the latter they sprout like grass, but are described as going to perish (v 10). Similarly in the former they exult (v. 3) and speak arrogant words (vv. 3ff), but are doomed by Yahweh's judgement (v. 23).

Structural links

The psalms display certain structural similarities. Both deal with the contrast of the wicked to the righteous. As noted, both have wisdom vocabulary (92:7-8, 13-15; 94:8-15) and in both an emphatic anadiplosis is found, that is, the word "enemies" in Psalm 92:10 and the phrases "how long" in Psalm 94:3 and "wipe out" in v. 23. The use of anadiplosis in both is intended to emphasize the destruction of the wicked. Moreover, as the word יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ "Most High," denoting Yahweh's kingship at the beginning of Psalm 92, anticipates his kingship, so Psalm 94 begins with the perspective of the kingship.

3.2.4.2 Psalms 94 and 93²¹

Though Psalms 93 and 94 differ in genre, they have important lexical and thematic links. In fact, many exegetes have noticed the close links between Psalms 93 and 94 in one way or in another.²² They

²¹ Howard's dissertation (1986) is entirely devoted to the study of Psalms 93-100. His thorough analysis of Psalms 93 and 94 in the perspective of concatenation is commendable. For a detailed analysis, see Howard (1986:145-150, 201-202, 1993b:114-120). However, some points which Howard missed will be added in the process of our discussion.

²² Howard (1986:145-150, 201-202; 1993b:114-120); Tate (1990:477-478, 488-490); Koenen (1993:61-62); Gosse (1994:303-306; 1997:72-74); Whybray (1996:77).

have 8 lexemes in common,²³ and some of these constitute important links.

Lexical links

As Howard (1986:145-150; 1993b:114-120) notes, the use of the words **מַאֲרָם** “majesty” in Psalm 93:1 and **מִתְנַשֵּׂא** “proud” in 94:2 should be regarded as a significant link. Both words are derived from the same root **נָשָׂא** “rise up,” which as noted above, occurs rarely in the Psalter, even in the Old Testament²⁴ (see the discussion of Psalms 89 and 94). Of all the psalms in Books I-IV in the Psalter, Psalm 93 has the word **מַאֲרָם**, and also Psalms 17:10 and 89:10, the latter of which forms a close link with Psalm 93, as noted, while only Psalm 94 contains the word **מִתְנַשֵּׂא**. Moreover, the verses in which these two words are found, form a contrast in content. Howard (1986:148) has suitably noted this: “Not only does YHWH’s proud majesty²⁵ of Ps. 93:1 contrasts strongly with the raging waters of Ps. 93:3, within the psalm, but it also affords a vivid contrast to the proud, arrogant people of Ps. 94:2, between psalms.” In fact, Psalm 94’s appeal to Yahweh’s intervention to judge the earth (vv. 1-2) may be responded to by the theme of Yahweh-kingship, found in the reference to a warrior-king in Psalm 93:1, for the theme contains the hope of a perfect practice of justice, which

²³ **מַאֲרָם** (93:1; 94:2); **מִתְנַשֵּׂא** (93:3; 94:5); **יָהוָה** (93:1x2, 3, 4, 5; 94:1, 3, 5, 11, 14, 17, 22, 23); **וָאֵם** (93:4; 94:13); **כִּסֵּא** (93:2; 94:20); **מִוֶט** (93:1; 94:18); **נִשְׂא** (93:3x2; 94:2); **רָב** (93:4; 94:19).

²⁴ The cognate terms related to these are **נָשָׂא** (Pss 10:2; 31:19, 24; 36:12; 46:4; 68:35; 73:6); **נָשָׂא** (Pss 47:5; 59:12); **נָשָׂא** (123:4), but they do not occur in Book IV.

²⁵ Howard (1986:40) translates the **מַאֲרָם** into “proud majesty,” which seems acceptable.

Psalm 94 lacks.

The occurrences of the words יָדָהּ “pounding” in Psalm 93:3 and נָדָהּ “crush” in Psalm 94:5 also form a significant link. These cognate roots rarely occur in the Psalter. The term יָדָהּ is found only once in Psalm 93:3 in the Old Testament, while נָדָהּ occurs four times in the Psalter (Pss 72:4; 89:11; 94:5; 143:3), but it occurs only once in Book IV.²⁶ Thus, the occurrence of these unusual words in the adjacent psalms does not seem incidental. Moreover, both terms are used in a similar way, since the wicked’s “crushing” Yahweh’s people in Psalm 94:5f are reminiscent of the “pounding” waves of waters which stand up against Yahweh in Psalm 93:3. Thus, as in the former the wicked are opposed to Yahweh, so in the latter the pounding waves of the waters stand in opposition to Yahweh’s power (Howard 1986:149; 1993b:115-117; Koenen 1993:62-63; Tate 1990:488f). It is likely that the forces of chaos in Psalm 93 become historicized in Psalm 94 (Sarna 1962:155-168).

The links between the psalms are still further reinforced by the occurrence of the word נָשָׂא “lift up” (93:3; 94:2). In Psalm 93:3 it is used in referring to the rising up of the floods which symbolize the present threat of the chaotic forces, while in Psalm 94:2 its use is associated with Yahweh’s rising against the enemies. Thus, in Psalm 93 the rising of the waters against Yahweh is contrasted to that of Yahweh against the enemies in Psalm 94.

²⁶ The cognate terms found in the Psalter are יָדָהּ (34:19; 90:3); נָדָהּ (10:10; 38:8; 44:20; 51:10, 19), but they do not have any occurrence in Book IV, except for Psalm 90:3. Psalm 90 constitutes strong links with Psalm 89 where נָדָהּ is found. Interestingly enough, Psalm 89 has both terms נָשָׂא (89:10) and נָדָהּ (89:11) related to our present discussions. We have concluded above that Psalm 89 is strongly linked to Psalms 93 and 94.

On the other hand, the links between Psalms 93 and 94 are supported by Isaiah 59:15b-20 which contain the same words and motifs as the psalms, as Gosse (1994:303-306) has argued. First of all, the term גָּאוֹת noted above occurs only in the psalms and in the Book of Isaiah in the whole of the Old Testament, and the lack of its occurrence in other texts of the Old Testament underlines the links between the Book of Isaiah and the psalms with regard to this term. As noted by Gosse the verb לָבַשׁ in Psalm 93:1, with Yahweh as a subject, is found in Psalms 93:1 and 104:1 (see the links between Psalms 93 [92-94] and 104) and Isaiah 59:17 in the Old Testament, and in Psalm 93 and Isaiah 59:17 it is repeated twice respectively. On the other hand, the root נָקַם “vengeance” in Isaiah 59:17 also occurs in Psalm 94:1 in the form of נָקַמְתָּ לֹה, while the term גָּמוּל “recompense” in Psalm 94:2 is repeated twice in Isaiah 59:18b-c (cf. v. 18a, גָּמַל לֹה). In addition, Gosse suggests that in Psalm 94:2 the expression שָׁפַט הָאָרֶץ “Rise up, O Judge of the Earth” corresponds to בָּעֵינָיו כִּי־אֵין מִשְׁפָּט “God looked and was displeased that there was no justice” in Isaiah 59:15b linked with Isaiah 59:16ff. In conclusion, Isaiah 59:15ff contain several unusual words which are also found in Psalms 93 and 94.

Whether Psalms 93 and 94 depend on Isaiah 59 or vice versa, is not certain, but the comparison of Isaiah 59 with the psalms provides more supporting evidence that these psalms form close ties.

3.2.5 Psalms 95 and 94²⁷

²⁷ The close links between Psalms 94 and 95 have already been pointed out by several exegetes like Auffret (1984:69-72), Howard (1986:159-162, 206-207), Hossfeld (1994:40) and Koenen (1995:66-67). For a detailed analysis, see Howard (1986:159-162,

The two psalms being juxtaposed differ from each other in genre. Psalm 94 is a lament mixed with a prayer and wisdom elements, and Psalm 95 is a hymn with an oracle element. Despite this difference, however, they are linked to each other in perspective of concatenation. As a lament psalm appealing to Yahweh for his intervention in the situation of injustice, Psalm 94 anticipates his judging all the workers of evil and the granting of due reward to the righteous. The following Psalm 95, functioning as an introduction to Psalms 96-99, introduces the theme of Yahweh-kingship contained in the psalms which hold the motif of judgement on the world.

Lexical links

Psalms 94 and 95 have 14 words in common.²⁸ One of the significant lexical links is the word צוֹר, “rock,” occurring at the end of Psalm 94 (v. 22) and the beginning of Psalm 95 (v. 1). In both cases it is used to refer to Yahweh as the rock of salvation. The phrase צוֹר מִקְדָּשִׁי “the rock of my refuge” in Psalm 94:22 may be synonymous with the one in Psalm 95:1, צוֹר יְשׁוּעֵנוּ “the rock of our salvation” in that the word “refuge” is often used together with the word “salvation” (Ps 7:2; 18:3). The word צוֹר occurs four times in Book IV, in Psalms 92:16, 94:22, 95:1 and 105:41, but Psalm 92 forms the close links with Psalm 94, as noted, and Psalm 95 also displays links with Psalm 105 (see below). Its position at the end of Psalm 94

206).

²⁸ אל (94:1x2, 22, 23; 95:3x3, 7); אמר (94:4, 7, 18; 95:10); ארץ (94:2; 95:4); הם (94:11; 95:10x2); יהוה (94:1, 3, 5, 11, 12, 14, 17, 18, 22, 23; 95:1, 3, 6); ידע (94:11; 95:10); יִרְמֶה (94:13; 95:7, 8); יצר (94:9, 20; 95:5); לב / לבב (94:15; 95:8, 10); עם (94:5, 8, 14; 95:7, 10); פעל (94:4, 16; 95:9); צור (94:22; 95:1); ראה (94:7; 95:9); שמע (94:9; 95:7).

and the beginning of Psalm 95 serves to link Psalm 94 with Psalm 95.

Other links, which can be regarded as important, should also be noted. The people who rebel against Yahweh are described as the “dull-hearted ones among the people” in Psalm 94:8, while Psalm 95:10 depicts them as “a people who err in heart.” The expression, “all the upright in heart” in Psalm 94:15, is also contrasted to “a people who err in heart” in Psalm 95:10. In addition, the description of Yahweh as a judge in Psalm 94 (vv. 1-2, cf. vv. 10, 23) is strongly echoed in the reference to Yahweh as a king in Psalm 95:3. In fact, the judging function of Yahweh is closely related to his kingship (Peels 1995:211). The placement of Psalm 94, being surrounded by Psalms 93 and 96-99, where Yahweh’s kingship is dealt with, seems to reflect the combination of Yahweh’s judgeship and his kingship.²⁹

3.2.6 Psalms 95-99

Noting that Psalm 95's closest ties are with Psalm 100, Howard (1986) points out that these two psalms form an *inclusio* around Psalms 96-99 displaying close ties to each other (p.207). He compares each of Psalms 96-99 to each other in terms of lexical, thematic, and structural aspects, and highlights the relationship between them. For example, Psalms 96 and 97 have 22 words in common, and some of them function as significant links. He notes that the term אֱלִילִים “worthless idols” is found only in Psalms 96:5 and 97:7 in the Psalter. He also

²⁹ Koenen (1995:66-67) argues that the reference to the stubborn desert generation in Psalm 95:8-11 should be seen as illustrating Yahweh’s stand against the forces of chaos in Psalm 93 and the sinners in Psalm 94. Psalm 95 took an example from the history of the past speaking of Yahweh’s judgement, illustrating that he will destroy everyone who revolts against him.

classifies the words שמים “heavens” (96:5; 97:6), כבוד “glory” (96:3, 7, 8; 97:6), שמח “rejoice” (96:11; 97:1, 8) and חרל “tremble” (96:9; 97:4) as significant links between the psalms. Despite many lexical links unique only to Psalms 96 and 97, however, Howard classifies Psalms 96 and 98 as having “more common vocabulary and closer structural affinities” (p.179) than Psalms 96 and 97. As for the links between the former two psalms, he points out that they have 25 words in common, including particles, and notes a number of identical words and phrases as well as thematic and structural affinities. He argues still further that Psalm 97's closest connections are with Psalm 99 (p.190), pointing out that there are 19 words and particles shared by them. The number is “more than 99 shares with any other psalm, and more than 97 shares with any but Psalm 96 ...” (p.190). In conclusion, he notes the general A:B::A'B' pattern between Psalms 96-99 and summarises the function of Psalms 93-99 as follows (p.217):

... Psalm 96 functions well as an all-inclusive introduction, and it is echoed by Psalm 98. Psalm 99 brings the kingship of YHWH section to a close, echoing Psalm 97. Psalms 95 and 100 bracket this section, with Psalm 95 uniquely suited to its present location as a bridge between Psalms 93-94 and the following psalms, and Psalm 100 well suited as a climax to the section. The section is introduced by Psalm 93, the earliest psalm. Psalm 94, while disjunctive in many ways, also displays significant ties with its context.

Howard's thorough examination of the structure of Psalms 93-100 reveal that Psalms 96-99 form a literary unit and they should be read as a coherent group. Despite some merits of his study of Psalms 95-100, however, there are some points that may be added. First of all, Howard classifies Psalm 95 as an introduction to the following psalms, but does not illustrate its function with regard to them, though he

points out certain connections of the segments of the psalm with those of other psalms. For example, he mentions that the hymnic character of Psalm 95:1-6 is very similar to that of Psalm 96 (p.169), and that Psalm 99:6-8 deal with Yahweh's relationship to the covenant people, as do Psalm 95:6-7c and 7c-11 (p.173), but he fails to elucidate how each segment of Psalm 95 is related to some parts of other psalms in the group of Psalms 96-99. If Psalm 95 serves as an introduction to the following psalms, this function should be illustrated.

On the other hand, Howard mainly focuses on lexical, thematic, and structural aspects in searching for the links between the psalms, and on the basis of such analyses he draws a final conclusion: the closest connections Psalm 96 has, are with Psalm 98, while Psalm 97's closest connections are with Psalm 99. Howard's conclusion seems to suggest to us to read Psalm 96 along with Psalm 98, and Psalm 97 with Psalm 99. However, as we shall see below, a closer scrutiny seems to lead us to see a division between Psalms 96-97 and 98-99 in terms of contents, though Howard's conclusion is also persuasive. As he recognizes, Psalms 96-97 are different from Psalms 98-99 with respect to contents, though there are many similarities between them. The former two psalms are more universalistic,³⁰ while the latter are more focused on Israel and Yahweh's relationship to her. From the perspective of the contents of each psalm, Psalms 96 and 97 should be read together, as should Psalms 98 and 99.³¹ This suggestion leads us to assume that the paired psalms 96-97 and 98-99 may be placed in parallel with two different perspectives (see below). In fact, since

³⁰ Botha (1998:36, n.9) correctly points out that Psalm 96 "has strong universalistic overtones."

³¹ In fact, Tate (1990:508-509) divides Psalms 96-99 into two parts: 96-97 and 98-99.

Psalm 98 holds a title which is designated as “A Psalm” (מְזֹמֵר), it seems more natural to understand the presence of the title in Psalm 98:1 as an indication of ‘a new start’ in the group of Psalms 96-99, though it does not mean that this psalm must be separated from the rest of the group. In fact, since Psalm 98 is closely linked with the theme of Yahweh-kingship found in the other psalms in the group, it does not seem possible to divorce it from them.

In this part our main purpose is to show how the segments of Psalm 95 are related to other psalms in the group of Psalms 96-99, and to suggest that Psalm 95:1-5 should be related to Psalms 96 and 97, while vv. 6-11 should also be linked with Psalms 98 and 99. Along with this it will be illustrated that the two pairs of Psalms 96-97 and 98-99 may be understood as being parallel to each other with different perspectives of message, though we do not totally deny Howard’s conclusions given above.³²

3.2.6.1 Psalm 95:1-5 and Psalms 96-97

There is consensus among scholars that Psalm 95 comprises two parts, namely an imperative hymnic part (vv. 1-5 and 6-7b) and a warning part (vv. 7c-11) (Hossfeld 1994:30). The hymnic part can again be divided into two sections (vv. 1-5 and 6-7b). As noted, each of the hymnic sections has a call to worship and the reason for the call.

Verses 1-5 are the first hymnic part of the psalm. After the call to worship (vv. 1-2) vv. 3-5 speak of the reason for the call: Yahweh

³² In this section dealing with Psalms 95-100 we do not concentrate on detailed analyses in the manner as has been done in the previous sections. We will highlight only important aspects for our discussion.

is greater than all gods and his sovereignty is over the world. Verse 3 is very similar to Psalm 96:4. Both start with כִּי “because” and in both the word גָּדוֹל “great” is used to describe Yahweh. Moreover, both present Yahweh as “a great God” אֱלֹהֵי גָדוֹל // וְיְהוָה גָּדוֹל and the phrase מְלֶכֶךְ גָּדוֹל “a great king” in Psalm 95:3 is similar to מְאֹד מְהֻלָּל “greatly to be praised” (Howard 1986:170). In addition, both verses end with the identical phrase עַל-כָּל-אֱלֹהִים “above all gods,” which is found only in three psalms (95:3, 96:4 and 97:7 and 9) among the group of Psalms 96-99. This observation leads us to see the close relatedness of Psalms 95:3 and 96:4.

The relationship of Psalm 95:1-5 to Psalms 96-97 is confirmed by further examples. Psalm 95:3 refers to gods (אֱלֹהִים) and vv. 4-5 refer to the earth and the sea. Verse 3 refers to Yahweh’s sovereignty over the heavens, while his sovereignty over the earth and the sea is confirmed in vv. 4-5. The active sphere of the gods is the heavens, but Yahweh’s sovereignty is over all the gods in the heavens (Hossfeld 1994:34). The statement of Psalm 95:3 about the sovereignty of Yahweh over the gods is continued further in Psalms 96-97. First of all, the reference to “all gods” is found only in Psalms 95:3, 96:4-5 and 97:7-9 among the group of Psalms 96-99. Moreover, the term שָׁמַיִם “heavens,” which is the active sphere of all gods in Psalm 95, is also found only in Psalms 96:5 and 97:6 among the group. Psalm 96 depicts Yahweh as one who created the heavens (v. 5), and in vv. 96:11 the heavens exult Yahweh’s theophanic coming to judge the earth. In fact, the latter contains the threefold combination of heaven-earth-sea, which echoes the entire sphere of Yahweh’s sovereignty described in Psalm 95:3-5. However, Psalm 98, which Howard classified as Psalm 96’s closest companion, does not contain any statement on the creation of the

heavens and on their rejoicing in the coming of Yahweh.

Like Psalm 96, Psalm 97 describes Yahweh's activity in the heavenly sphere. He appears in divine theophany (vv. 97:2ff) in the heavens, where gods dwell, and the heavens as the heralds for Yahweh's theophanic coming proclaim his righteousness and glory to all people (v. 6). Just as in Psalm 96 the coming of Yahweh causes the judgement of the earth (vv. 11ff), so Yahweh's theophanic appearance brings about shame and judgement on all gods and their worshippers (v. 7). However, Psalm 99, forming the closest connection with Psalm 97 according to Howard, contains neither any reference to the gods nor the motif of judgement on them and on their worshippers. Moreover, in Psalm 97 Yahweh's coming to judge the earth (v. 5) is mentioned, but Psalm 99 says nothing about Yahweh's coming to judge the world. Furthermore, the term דִּלְיָ֑יִם "worthless idols" (96:5; 97:7) is never found elsewhere in the Psalter, except for Psalms 96 and 97, but Psalm 95:3, which is not related to Psalms 98 and 99, contains the reference to the gods (v. 3) which also implies "worthless idols."

Another aspect, found in Psalms 95:1-5 and 96-97, is the universal scope of Yahweh's reign. Psalm 95:3-5 refer to all dimensions of Yahweh's creation of the heavens, earth, and sea (see analysis of Psalm 95), but everything is under the control of his hands. The reference to Yahweh's creation in association with foreign gods in v. 3 implies that the target of the message may be directed not against Israel, but against foreign nations. In fact, Psalm 95:3-5 refer to the creator of the world, while vv. 6-7a refer to the creator of Israel (Kraus 1989:247; Enns 1993:255-269; Hossfeld 1994:35; cf. Weiser 1979:625, notes "the Creator and Lord of the covenant" in vv. 6-7a). It is of course not easy, albeit not impossible, to define what the exact

intention of the messages in Psalm 95:3-5 is, but since the second and third segments of the psalm, vv. 6-7b and vv. 7c-11, are focused on Israel herself rather than on the foreign nations (see below), it is evidenced that vv. 3-5 may bear the messages against the foreign nations. This assumption that the verses may refer to the foreign nations is further confirmed by the contents of Psalms 96 and 97, which, as we have argued, are related to Psalm 95:1-5. First of all, the expression “worthless idols” occurring in Psalms 96:5 and 97:7 is found 18 times in the whole of the Hebrew Bible,³³ but most of them refer to the gods of foreign nations or are used in association with them (e.g. 1 Chr 16:26; Pss 96:5; 97:7; Isa 2:8, 18, 20; 10:10, 11; 19:1, 3; 31:7; Eze 30:13; Hab 2:18). Moreover, in Psalm 96 the messages are to be proclaimed *among* the nations (vv. 3, 10) and *among* all the peoples (v. 3), which obviously denote the foreign nations, and in v. 7 the “families of the peoples” (מִשְׁפְּחוֹת עַמִּים), which also denote the nations rather than Israel herself, are urged to praise Yahweh.³⁴ Similarly in Psalm 97:1 the call to rejoice before Yahweh is addressed to the whole universe which is focused on the nations. The phrase רַבִּים רְבִיִּים “many coast lands” in v. 1 parallel with אֶרֶץ “the earth” denotes the remotest areas and nations of the world (Anderson 1972:687; Rogerson & McKay 1977:224; Tate 1993:516) indicating the scope of Yahweh’s universal reign. The phrases אֲדֹנָי קֹל-הָאָרֶץ “the Lord of all the earth” in v. 5 and כָּל-הָעַמִּים “all the peoples” in v. 6

³³ Lev 19:4; 26:1; 1 Chr 16:26; Job 13:4; Pss 96:5; 97:7; Isa 2:8, 18, 20; 10:10, 11; 19:1, 3; 31:7; Jer 14:14; Eze 30:13; Hab 2:18; Zec 11:17.

³⁴ Though all the nations and the people are called to worship Yahweh, the implied readers of Psalm 96 “are the members of the religious community in Jerusalem, not the nations” (Botha 1998:32).

also seem to refer to Yahweh's universal sovereignty over the nations which recalls the creator of the world in Psalm 95:4-5. Furthermore, v. 9 describes Yahweh as the lord of the heavenly realm which is also reminiscent of Psalm 95:3. In addition, in Psalm 97 the theophany itself does not have "the purpose of an encounter of God with Israel" (Kraus 1989:260), but it lies in judging foreign deities and their worshippers.³⁵ Thus, the rejoicing of Zion and the daughters of Judah is due to the judgement on the gods and their worshippers by the divine theophany (v. 8). The rejoicing of the righteous in vv. 10-12 also reflects Yahweh's judgement on the gods and their worshippers. These considerations provide further support for our argument that the messages of Psalm 97 may be directed against the foreign nations.

We have thus far seen that Psalm 95:1-5 may serve as an introduction to Psalms 96 and 97 in terms of the principle of concatenation. Though the length of the verses is not enough to cover all the ideas and words occurring in Psalms 96 and 97, the fact that the verses contain many themes or words identical with those of the two psalms likewise seems to suggest that Psalms 95:1-5 may be linked with Psalms 96 and 97.

3.2.6.2 Psalms 95:6-11 and 98-99

We have noted above that the second segment of Psalm 95, vv. 6-7b, may be related directly to Psalms 98-99 and that the messages of

³⁵ Brueggemann (1995:118) claims that the praise of Psalm 96 is "a determined assault on the idols." Kraus (1989:260) notes that the thought reflected in Psalm 97:7-9 "is undoubtedly of foreign deities that were portrayed and worshipped in amulets and little figurines."

all of them are directed to Israel.³⁶ Psalm 95:6-7b comprises very short verses by contrast with the first segment of the psalm, vv. 1-5, but it is clear that vv. 6-7b deal with the relationship of Yahweh with his people. The term עֹשֵׂנוּךְ “our Maker” in v. 6 can be understood as referring to the making of Israel into God’s people (Anderson 1972:697; cf. Kraus 1989:247; Enns 1993:258)³⁷ and it can be deduced that here the psalmist refers to the formation of the people of Israel as an act of creation.³⁸

In v. 7a-b the sentence belonging to the covenant formula “he is our God, we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand” (see Jer 31:33; Ps 100:3), indicates the covenant relationship between Yahweh and Israel. Within this relationship Yahweh is portrayed as shepherd of Israel (Pss 80:2; 28:9; Isa 40:11; 63:14) with the shepherding terms מִרְעִית “pasture” and צֹאן “sheep.” With regard to the shepherding imagery, it has often been asserted that there is a close connection between Yahweh as shepherd and the Exodus theme which means deliverance.³⁹ In fact, since there are numerous biblical passages

³⁶ Zenger (1994b:159-160) argues that Psalms 95 and 99 deal with the meaning of Yahweh-kingship, especially, for Israel. He points out the link between the psalms, but fails to illustrate how each segment of Psalm 95 is related to other psalms in the group of Psalms 96-99.

³⁷ This concept is very common in the Old Testament (Exod 32:10; Deut 9:14; 32:15; Isa 43:15; 44:2; 46:4; 51:13; Hos 8:14; Pss 100:3; 149:2).

³⁸ Enns (1993:255-80) argues that Psalm 95:1-5 deal with God’s cosmic creation, while vv. 6-7a speak of another creation, the Exodus. He is correct when he says that “our maker” can be understood as referring to “Israel’s creation as a people when they came out of Egypt”(258).

³⁹ Freedman (1980:275-302, esp., 284) lists Psalm 95:7-11 as one of the psalms (Pss 23; 77:20; 78:52:-53; 97:7-11; 100) which contain the close link between Yahweh as shepherd of his people and the Exodus theme. Enns (1993:261-264) also emphasizes that the shepherding language of Psalm 95:7a is closely associated with the Exodus

in the Old Testament suggesting the close association of the shepherd motif with the Exodus theme (e.g. Exod 15:13, 17; Num 27:15-17; Pss 23; 74:1-2; 77:20; 78:52-53; 100:3; Isa 44:24-28), it seems likely that Psalm 95:7 speaks of such an association. This suggestion leads us to see the natural connection between Psalm 95:7a-b and the following verses, 7c-11, which also contain the Exodus tradition.

Though there are, except for the phrase אֱלֹהֵינוּ “our God,” few occurrences of words unique only to Psalm 95:6-7b and Psalms 98 and 99,⁴⁰ the fact that the former is referring to the other two psalms is evident. First of all, the phrase “our God” (see also “our Maker” in 95:6) in 95:7a denoting the covenant relationship between Yahweh and his people, as noted above, occurs only in Psalms 95:7a, 98:3 and 99 (vv. 5, 8, 9x2) among the group of Psalms 96-99. What seems more important to us, however, is that as in Psalm 95, in Psalms 98 and 99 the term occurs in association with covenant terminology or in the description of the covenant relationship between Yahweh and his people. Psalm 98:3 containing the term has the phrase בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל “house of Israel” (see Jer 31:33) which recalls Yahweh’s covenant promise to his people, and it also has the terms חֶסֶד “love” and אֱמוּנָה “faithfulness” (see also the verb זָכַר “remember” in v. 3)⁴¹ which also denote

theme.

⁴⁰ The common words between Psalms 95:6-7b and 98-99 are as follows: אֱלֹהֵינוּ (95:7; 98:3); בּוֹא (95:6; 98:9); יְהוָה (95:6; 98:1x2, 4, 5, 6, 9); עֲשֵׂה (95:6; 98:1); עַם (95:7; 98:9); אֱלֹהֵינוּ (95:7; 99:5, 8, 9x2); יְהוָה (95:6; 99:1, 5, 6, 8, 9x2); עֲשֵׂה (95:6; 99:4); שָׁחָה (95:6; 99:5, 9).

⁴¹ Childs (1962:41) notes that “the object of God’s memory in the psalms is never a single individual, but always the covenant people.” He summarizes Yahweh’s remembering his people as follows: “God’s remembering always implies his movement toward the object of his memory” (34).

Yahweh's covenant commitment (Kraus 1989:264). Likewise Psalm 99 also contains many words from covenant terminology or concept(s), which can be understood as analogous to the phrase אלהינו "our God." The phrase "our God" occurs four times in the psalm (vv. 5, 8, 9x2), and it is thus distributed throughout the whole of the psalm to indicate the covenant relationship between Yahweh and his people. In fact, Kraus (1989:271) claims that ... "Psalm 99 does not deal with Yahweh's coming to the nations, but with the meeting with Israel which takes place in the covenant and the justice of God." Verse 7 has the covenant terms עדה "testimony" and חק "statute," while v. 8, where the phrase "our God" occurs, describes Yahweh's covenant deeds. In addition, the reference to Moses with the description of the wilderness experience in vv. 6-8 also reminds one of the original covenant mediator, Moses. Thus, the covenant relationship between Yahweh and his people in Psalm 95:7a-b implied by the analogies of the term "our God" and by the covenant formula "we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand" is strongly echoed in Psalm 98:3 and 99:6-8. Interestingly enough, however, by contrast with Psalms 98 and 99, Psalms 96 and 97 do not contain the explicit content(s) including the covenant promise or the covenant terms reminiscent of the promise.

Another consideration that may be noted, is the exodus motif. We have noted above that the term עשנו "our Maker" in Psalm 95:6 can be understood as a reference to the creation connected with the Exodus theme and that in v. 7a-b the metaphor of flock is also closely connected with the Exodus theme. This motif can also be found in Psalms 98 and 99. As noted in the analysis of Psalm 98, we have already seen that the phrases in vv. 1-3, "his [Yahweh's] right hand," "wonderful works" and "sight of the nations" reflect Yahweh's saving

events which are reminiscent of the Exodus event, which Isaiah describes as Yahweh's coming in the future. On the other hand, Psalm 99 does not at first glance seem to contain the Exodus theme, but in v. 3 the reference to Yahweh as לַעֲזָרָה "strong" or "victorious" (Dahood 1968:369; Howard 1986:121), along with the reference to his establishment of justice and righteousness in Jacob, seems to remind one of the Exodus event (as implied in Jacob, Moses and Aaron) in which Yahweh demonstrated his victory (Howard 1986:121). Moreover, the phrase בְּעַמֹּד עָנָן "in the pillar of cloud" in v. 7 is also reminiscent of the wilderness experience associated with the Exodus event.

The last segment of Psalm 95, vv. 7c-11, comprising the oracle from Yahweh's mouth, seems to mark an abrupt change of mood, but as noted in the analysis of the psalm, it forms close links with the previous section, vv. 6-7b. In fact, since the concepts and words found in vv. 6-7b are repeated in vv. 7c-11 and since the division between the end of the second segment (v. 7b) and the beginning of the last segment (v. 7c) seem likely but not natural, the existence of vv. 7c-11 is seen as the natural consequence following the second segment, though we have separated vv. 6-7b from vv. 7c-11. This observation leads us to see that the themes found in the second segment of the psalm are also repeated in the last segment. A good example of this is the exodus theme, found in the second and third segments of the psalm.

Within the group of Psalms 96-99, the closest connections which Psalm 95:7c-11 may have, are with Psalm 99:6-8. First of all, structurally both these sections of the psalms mark an abrupt shift within each of the psalms: the oracle section (vv. 7c-11) within the hymnic sections of Psalm 95 and the wilderness experience within the

theme of Yahweh-kingship in Psalm 99. Second, though there are no lexical correspondences between the segments of both psalms, they correspond in dealing with the same wilderness experiences. Third, it is worth noting that they both refer to the theme of sin and apostasy associated with the behaviour of the fathers in the past (see the analyses of Psalms 95 and 99). Fourth, Psalm 95:7c-11 have no terms explicitly reminiscent of the covenant promise, but the parallel between Psalms 81 and 95⁴² suggests that Psalm 95:7c-11 may also include the reference to Yahweh's covenant laws (cf. Kraus 1989:248), since Psalm 81 is associated with the Decalogue. In this case, Psalm 95:7c-11 form a link with Psalm 99:6-8 where the covenant terms קִיּוֹם "decree" and עֲוֹן "statute" are found. Since Psalms 81 and 99 share the three words "statute," "decree" and "Jacob," Psalm 95:7b-11, linked with Psalms 81 and 99, may also be understood in relation to the covenant laws.⁴³ On the other hand, the rebellions of the past generations in the wilderness in Psalm 95:7c-11⁴⁴ may be recalled in the references to Moses and Aaron as intercessors (cf. Exod 32-33; Jer 15:1) as well as in the reference to Yahweh as a punishing God who judged his

⁴² Both psalms contain a summons to praise (יְהַלֵּל in 81:2 and 95:1; יְהַלְלֵנוּ in 81:2 and 95:1) and an oracle from Yahweh (81:7-17; 95:7c-11). They exhibit similar themes (Booij 1994:148): Yahweh as Israel's God (81:11; 95:6, 7a); Israel as God's nation (81:9, 12, 14; 95:7a); if Israel will hear his voice (81:9, 14; 95:7b); hardness of heart (81:13; 95:8); the testing at Meribah (81:8; 95:8); Yahweh's ways (81:14; 95:10).

⁴³ Weiser (1979) notes that the purpose of the admonition and warning in vv. 7c-11 is "to prepare the cult community for the proclamation of God's commandments as the order of his covenant . . ." (627). See also Kraus (1989:248).

⁴⁴ Davies (1973:195) notes that in Psalm 95 "the abrupt ending is to be interpreted as threatening innuendo... Israel's misbehaviour in the desert met with a condign punishment, and the inference is that similar unbelief in the present will meet a corresponding fate."

people's wrongdoings (v. 8b).⁴⁵ Indeed, the fact that there is no mention of the wilderness experiences in the group of Psalms 96-99, except for Psalms 95:7c-11 and 99:6-8, confirms the connection of Psalms 95:7c-11 with 99:6-8.

We have seen above that Psalm 95:1-5 form links with Psalms 96-97, while vv. 6-11 have ties with Psalms 98-99. These ties of Psalm 95 with Psalms 96-99 are largely established by thematic aspects, though lexical links are also apparent. Of the links between the segments of Psalm 95 and these psalms, the strongest thematic links are observed between Psalms 95:7b-11 and 99:6-8, and they likewise seem to surround Psalms 96-99 by reminding the readers or the listeners of the wilderness theme that reflects the "wilderness of the exile and post-exilic periods" (Tate 1990:530). The links between Psalm 95:1-5 and Psalms 96-97 seem quite strong lexically and thematically, and the links of Psalm 95:6-7b with Psalms 98-99 also seem strong, but they lack lexical correspondence.

The division of Psalm 95 into two parts in searching for links with other psalms seems unusual, but the presence of two hymnic parts and an oracle section in Psalm 95 itself supports the possibility that the psalm, positioned at the beginning of the Yahweh-kingship psalms, can be seen to function as an introduction to each of the two paired psalms: 96-97 and 98-99.

3.2.6.3 Psalms 96-97 and 98-99

⁴⁵ Tate (1990:530) notes that in Psalm 99 the wilderness wanderings and the life of early Israel implied by the names 'Moses' and 'Aaron', especially, and also Samuel, correlate "well with Ps 95, which ends (vv. 8-11) with a sermonic message from Yahweh which admonishes the people to avoid the behaviour at Meribah and Massah in the wilderness, ..."

We have suggested above that Psalms 96-97 should be treated as a unity, while Psalms 98-99 should also be read as a unity.⁴⁶ This division between Psalms 96-97 and 98-99, however, does not mean that there are no certain relationships between any of the psalms in the group. As Howard and other exegetes have demonstrated, all the psalms form definite relationships with one another in one way or another, because they are all linked with the theme of Yahweh-kingship. Though we have argued that Psalm 96 should be linked with Psalm 97 rather than 98, Psalm 96 shows close links in terms of, especially, lexical and structural affinities with Psalm 98. For example, the identical phrase שִׁירָה לַיהוָה שִׁיר תְּהַיֵּאֵר “Sing to Yahweh a new song” occurs exactly at the beginning of both psalms (96:1a; 98:1a), and the ends of the psalms also have many identical expressions. Psalm 96:11-12 also exhibit many similarities with Psalm 98:7-8 in the identical expression “Let the sea roar, and all that fills it” (96:11; 98:7) and in the repetition of the verb רָנַן “sing for joy” (96:12; 98:8). The word פִּלְאָה “wonderful work” also occurs only in these psalms (96:3b; 98:1b) in Book IV, except for Psalms 105 and 106.

However, despite numerous links noted above or not mentioned, certain differences between the psalms are clearly observed. For example, in Psalm 96 all the nations and the peoples are invited to Yahweh’s courts to worship him (96:8-9), but in Psalm 98 all the

⁴⁶ Zenger (1994b:163-164) argues that Psalms 96 and 98 are centred on Psalm 97. Koenen (1995:72-73) also takes the similar view as Zenger. They argue that the position of Psalm 97 between Psalms 96 and 98 is intended to clarify the judgement of God which was announced in these two psalms. However, they fail to see how each segment of Psalm 95 is related to each of Psalms 96-99, though Zenger points out that Psalm 95 is closely linked with Psalm 99.

worshippers are said to have already been in the worshipping place.⁴⁷ In both psalms the reason for the call to praise is also quite different. In Psalm 96 its reason is Yahweh's sovereignty over all the gods of the peoples and his power over the creation of the heavens (v. 3).

However, in Psalm 98 the psalmist praises Yahweh, due to the fact that he has won the victory on behalf of Israel. Moreover, as noted earlier, Psalm 96 has the phrase *כָּל-אֱלֹהִים* "all gods" and also the reference to the creation of the heavens, which are important for establishing a link, but Psalm 98 has none.

On the other hand, Psalm 97 also reveals a close relationship with Psalm 99, as Howard pointed out. Both psalms begin with the phrase *יְהוָה מִלְּךָ* "Yahweh reigns" and end with concern for Yahweh's people. Yahweh's exaltation is described in both (97:9; 99:2) and the terms *עֶנַן* "cloud" and *צִיּוֹן* "Zion" both occur only in each of these psalms (*עֶנַן*: 97:2; 99:7; *צִיּוֹן*: 97:8; 99:2) among Psalms 93-100.⁴⁸

It is true that there are numerous links between Psalms 96 and 98 on the one hand, and Psalms 97 and 99 on the other. However, the reverse is also true, that is to say, the different perspectives observed between the psalms can categorize them into two paralleled parts: Psalms 96-97 and 98-99. This point is more likely, since the former two psalms seem to illustrate Yahweh's work directed against foreign

⁴⁷ Rogerson and McKay (1977:227) point out the following concerning this matter: "Compared with Ps 96:7-13, these verses [98:4-7] lack the specific reference to people coming into God's presence with gifts; but we may assume from verse 6 that the psalm invites worship from those who have already come into the holy place."

⁴⁸ For further connections between Psalms 97 and 99, see Howard (1986:190-193, 212-213). He argues that in both psalms "the most significant lexical links are the theophanic references to YHWH . . . and the identification of YHWH with Zion" (pp.212-213).

nations, while the latter pair are more concerned with the message which should be delivered to Israel. As has been seen above, the fact that Psalm 95 contains two different perspectives which are related to the division between Psalms 96-97 and 98-99, further supports this view. First of all, as far as the division between Psalms 96-97 and 98-99 is concerned, the presence of Psalm 98's title disturbs the flow of thought from Psalms 96-97 to 98-99. Wilson (1985a:178-179; 1985b:410) points out that the presence of the title may indicate the division between psalms. Moreover, the former pair of psalms is similar in length (Tate 1990:508) (96=13 verses, 29 colons; 97=12 verses, 29 colons), to the latter pair (98=9 verses, 24 colons; 99=9 verses, 25 colons). This point also seems to support the division between Psalms 96-97 and 98-99. On the other hand, Watts (1965:341-348) took the core group of the Yahweh Mālak Psalms distinguished by Mowinckel and analysed them according to the motifs in the psalms and to the vocabulary of these motifs. He (1965:343) then identified five characteristic motifs in them as follows:

- A. The characteristic and unique expectation of these Psalms that all the earth, all peoples, or the nations should be present.
- B. References to other gods.
- C. The signs of exaltation and kingship.
- D. The words showing characteristic acts of Yahweh, including creating, making, establishing, sitting, doing wonders, judging, doing righteous acts, and saving.
- E. All the words which indicate the attitude of praise before this heavenly king.

According to Watts, Psalms 96 and 97 contain all five motifs, while Psalms 98 and 99 both include four motifs (A, C, D, E). Though his study is rather rough and mechanical, as he himself recognizes, the classification of Psalms 96-97 as one category and of Psalms 98-99 as another category gives still further support to our argument that Psalms

96-97 should be seen as a unit, while Psalms 98-99 form another unit.

Further support for the division of Psalms 96-97 and 98-99 can be added. When Psalm 96 is classified with Psalm 97, the flow of theme from one psalm to another seems very natural. Psalm 96 describes Yahweh's coming to judge with an universal perspective, emphasizing Yahweh's power over all the gods. In Psalm 97 Yahweh's coming is exulted by all the earth and the coast lands (v. 1), and his movement from heaven to earth causes the judgement of the gods and their worshippers. In Psalm 97:8 the references to "Zion" and "the daughters of Judah" (=Jacob) may be linked with Psalm 99:2-4 where the terms "Zion" and "Jacob" appear, as Howard (1986:192) argued. However, the perspectives of the two psalms are quite different. In the latter Yahweh's movement from the heavens to the earth is not mentioned and he is positioned in a fixed place, Zion. Moreover, in Psalm 97 Zion and the daughters of Judah rejoice, but it is because of the judgement that Yahweh has passed on all the gods and their worshippers. In contrast to this, in Psalm 99 Yahweh's sitting enthroned upon the cherubim (i.e. Zion) causes all the earth and peoples to be fearful and filled with awe. Thus, in the former the rejoicing of Yahweh's people is contrasted to the fear and trembling of the earth and of the peoples therein.

When Psalm 98 is read along with Psalm 99, the natural flow of theme is also observed. As noted, Psalm 98:1-3 deal with the relationship between Yahweh and his people. This observation is also echoed in Psalm 99:4ff where the close relationship between Yahweh and his people are dealt with. Moreover, in Psalm 98:6ff the description of the worshippers as being already present in the place of worship may also be correlated with Yahweh's sitting enthroned on the cherubim

in Psalm 99:1, namely a fixed place.

When all features noted above are taken into consideration, it ought to be confirmation that Psalm 96 should be joined to Psalm 97, while Psalm 98 should be joined to Psalm 99.

3.2.6.3.1 Psalms 96 and 97⁴⁹

Significant ties between Psalms 96 and 97 have already been pointed out in several places. Here our purpose is to point out the significant links between the psalms for the purpose of our discussion.

The phrase יהוה מלך “Yahweh reigns” belongs to one of the significant themes in classifying Psalms 96-99 (or 47 and 93) as Yahweh-kingship psalms. In Psalm 96:10, the phrase functions within the psalm itself as a bridge linking that which precedes and which follows (see analysis of the psalm). Thus, it serves as a core verse within the psalm itself. Psalm 97 begins with the same phrase, thus picking up the main theme of Psalm 96 and continuing the thought flowing from the previous psalm. This marks a natural link between Psalms 96 and 97. Moreover, the phrase “let the earth rejoice” in 96:11a, positioned at the end of the psalm, is identical with the one in Psalm 97:1a, and the end of Psalm 96 (vv. 11-13) and the beginning of Psalm 97 (v. 1) are concerned with the call to Yahweh’s praise. Thus, Psalms 96-97, being juxtaposed, display close links by repetition of words and ideas at the end of Psalm 96 and the beginning of Psalm 97.

Some significant key-words linking Psalm 96 with 97 have

⁴⁹ For more detailed links between Psalms 96 and 97, see Howard (1986:176-179, 209).

already been pointed out: אֱלִילִים “worthless idols” (96:5; 97:7); שָׁמַיִם “heavens” (96:5, 11; 97:6); גִּיל “glory” (96:3, 7, 8; 97:6); גִּיל “rejoice” (96:11; 97:1, 8); חוּל “tremble” (96:9; 97:4). Of the words listed, the word ‘worthless idols’ occurs only in these psalms in the Psalter, as noted, while the occurrence of the word “rejoice” is not found elsewhere in Book IV. The word “tremble” occurs three times in Book IV, once in Psalm 90:2 and twice in Psalms 96 and 97, while the words “heavens” and “glory” occur only in these two psalms among Psalms 90-101. These lists indicate that the key-words function as significant links unique to Psalms 96 and 97.

3.2.6.3.2 Psalms 98 and 99⁵⁰

Though the presence of the title in Psalm 98 indicates a “new start” for a new song, as noted, the psalm displays certain links with Psalm 97. The end of Psalm 97 and the beginning of Psalm 98 are both concerned with Yahweh’s people and three terms at the end of the former are repeated at the beginning of the latter: קָדֹשׁ “holy” (97:12; 98:1); זָכַר “remember” (97:12; 98:3); חֶסֶד “love” (97:10; 98:3). The repetition of these roots, along with a similar concern, at the end of Psalm 97 and at the beginning of Psalm 98, confirms the concatenation between them, like the concatenation between Psalm 96 and 97.

The connections between Psalms 98 and 99 are mainly observed in thematic aspects. As noted, both psalms deal with Yahweh’s relationship with his covenant people. Psalm 98:1-2 describe what Yahweh has done on behalf of his people and v. 3 explains the reason

⁵⁰ See Howard (1986:194-195, 212) for the detailed links between Psalms 98 and 99.

for it, namely Yahweh's love and faithfulness toward his people which caused him to act on behalf of them. Similar features are also found in Psalm 99. The relationship of Yahweh with his people is confirmed by terms like "our God," "Jacob" and "Moses," which are reminiscent of the covenant relationship. Like the lexical links between the end of Psalm 97 and the beginning of Psalm 98, similar features are also observed at the end of Psalm 98 and at the beginning of Psalm 99: ארץ "earth" (98:9; 99:1); עמים "people" (98:9; 99:1, 2). In addition, the three roots found at the end of Psalm 98, שפט "judge," צדק "righteousness," and מִישַׁר "equity" are repeated in Psalm 99:4, which in turn has a close link with Psalm 99:1. Of the roots listed, the word מִישַׁר occurs only three times in Book IV, once in Psalm 96:10 and once in Psalms 98 and 99 respectively, thus serving as a significant link.

We have so far suggested that Psalms 96-97 are parallel to Psalms 98-99. When the former two psalms are compared with the latter pair in parallel, certain words, themes and structures correspond to each other between Psalms 96 and 98 on the one hand, and between 97 and 99 on the other. The following rough comparison displays certain features between Psalms 96-99.

Psalm 96	Psalm 98
1. Call to praise Yahweh (v. 1)	1. Call to praise Yahweh (v. 1)
יִשְׁע ("salvation," v.2b)	פְּלֵא ("marvelous works," v.1)
גוֹי ("nation," v.3)	יִשְׁע ("salvation," v.1, 2)
פְּלֵא ("marvelous work," v.3)	גוֹי ("nation," v.2)
2. Reason for praise	2. Reason for praise
Yahweh is greater than all gods	he remembers his love and

<p>(v.4ff)</p> <p>3. Imperative (vv. 7-10)</p> <p>4. Yahweh reigns (v. 10)</p> <p>יהוה מלך</p> <p>5. Yahweh's coming to judge the earth, world and people in righteousness and truth (96:13).</p>	<p>faithfulness (v.3)</p> <p>3. Imperative (vv. 4ff)</p> <p>4. Yahweh the king (v. 6)</p> <p>המלך יהוה</p> <p>5. Yahweh's coming to judge the earth, world and people In righteousness and equity (98:9)</p>
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<p>Psalm 97</p> <p>1. Yahweh reigns (יהוה מלך, v.1).</p> <p>ארץ ("earth," v.1)</p> <p>עמים ("people," v.6)</p> <p>2. Divine theophany (vv.2ff)</p> <p>Zion (v.8)</p> <p>3. Yahweh's exaltation over all the earth and all gods (v.9)</p> <p>4. Yahweh's concern for his people</p> <p>אהב ("love," v.10)</p> <p>ישר ("the upright," v.11)</p> <p>צדק ("the righteous," vv.11, 12)</p> <p>זכר קדשו</p> <p>("his holy name," v.12)</p>	<p>Psalm 99</p> <p>1. Yahweh reigns (יהוה מלך, v.1)</p> <p>ארץ ("earth," v.1)</p> <p>עמים ("people," v.2)</p> <p>2. Divine theophany (v.1)</p> <p>Zion (v.2)</p> <p>3. Yahweh's exaltation over all the peoples (v.2)</p> <p>4. Yahweh's concern for his people</p> <p>אהב ("love," v.4)</p> <p>ישר ("uprightness," v.4)</p> <p>צדק ("righteousness," v.4)</p> <p>קדוש הוא</p> <p>("he is holy," v.5)</p>
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As shown in the above scheme, Psalm 96 forms a contrast with Psalm 98, and Psalm 97 with Psalm 99. The arrangement of words and themes in the psalms is very similar. However, Psalm 99 has an extra

section, vv. 6-8, which is not found in any other psalm in the group of Psalms 96-99. As noted above, the close links of Psalm 99:6-8 with Psalm 95:7c-11 seem to serve as an *inclusio* of sorts surrounding Psalms 96-99. The sections in Psalms 95:7c-11 and Psalm 99:6-8 deal equally with the matters of sin and disobedience in the past (i.e. the wilderness theme) and likewise seem to explain the dilemma of the present worshippers, that is to say, sins having caused the suffering of the believing community in the exilic or post-exilic period.

3.2.6.4 Psalms 100 and 95-99

Psalm 100, positioned at the end of the string of Yahweh-kingship Psalms 96-99, serves as a conclusion to them. Many words and themes in Psalm 100 are also found in Psalms 96-99. The close links of Psalm 100 with Psalm 95 likewise support an *inclusio* around Psalms 96-99,⁵¹ as Howard (1986:174-176) illustrated.

Significant links between Psalm 100 and each of Psalms 95-99 are highlighted. Psalms 96 and 100 have the identical phrase, *שְׁמוֹ בְּרַכּוּ* “Bless his name” (96:2; 100:4c) and the word *חֲצֵר* “court” (96:8; 100:4). The former phrase is found only in these psalms in Book IV, while the latter word occurs three times in Book IV, namely once in Psalm 92:14 and once in Psalms 96:8 and 100:4 respectively. Liturgical terminology is abundant in both and both are concerned with the praise of Yahweh.

⁵¹ Zenger (1994b:165-170) points out that Psalm 100 functions as a conclusion to the Yahweh-kingship Psalms 93-99. In contrast to this, Koenen (1995:77-81) emphasizes close links between Psalms 90 and 100 and argues that Psalm 101 serves as a conclusion to Psalms 90-100.

The lexical links between Psalms 97 and 100 are general; there are no unique terms in these psalms. However, both are of a hymnic nature and share general hymnic themes. The word שמח “rejoice,” repeated four times in Psalm 97 (vv. 1, 8, 11, 12), also occurs in Psalm 100:2, and the vocabulary of praise, תודה “thanks” is also found in both (97:12; 100:4). The ends of both psalms are concerned with the praise of Yahweh’s name (97:12; 100:4c), and his love for his people is expressed at the ends of the psalms.

The links between Psalms 98 and 100 are quite strong. The expression “Shout for joy to Yahweh, all the earth,” in Psalm 98:4a is exactly repeated in Psalm 100:1a and the word pair חסד “love” and אמונה “faithfulness” in Psalm 98:3 is also found in Psalm 100:5. As the covenant relationship between Yahweh and his people in Psalm 98 is emphasized, so Psalm 100 also stresses the relationship with him, as shown by the use of the phrases “our God,” “his people,” and “the sheep of his pasture.”

The lexical links between Psalms 99 and 100 are weak, but thematic links seem quite strong. In both the praise of Yahweh’s name is emphasized (99:3; 100:4) and in both Yahweh is a covenant God. In Psalm 99 he is “Our God” (vv. 5, 8, 9x2) and in Psalm 100 he is the one “who made us” (v. 3). On the other hand, the reference to the wilderness experience in Psalm 99:6-8 is strongly echoed in the expression “we are his people and the sheep of his pasture” in Psalm 100:3.

As noted above, Psalm 100 frames Psalms 96-99 together with Psalm 95. The links between both psalms are very strong and both have much in common. The expression “we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand” (אֲנִי־הָעָם מִרְעֵיתוֹ וְצֹאֵן יָדוֹ) in Psalm

95:7b is almost identical with “we are his people and the sheep of his pasture” (אֲנִי־חֶמְדָּתְךָ עֲמֹר רְצֵאן מִרְעִיתֶךָ) in Psalm 100:3. In both Yahweh is described in terms of the close covenant idea between him and his people: the expressions “our Maker” (עֲשֵׂנוּ; 95:6) and “he is our God” (אֱלֹהֵינוּ; 95:7a) in Psalm 95 has a strong echo in the statement in Psalm 100:3, “he is God and it is he that made us” (הוּא אֱלֹהִים הוּא־עָשָׂנוּ).

3.2.7 Psalms 101 and 100

Unlike the strong links usually found in the previous adjacent psalms, Psalms 100 and 101 do not display such strong links. These psalms have 7 words in common,⁵² but there are no words unique only to them. Lexical and thematic links are of a general character as are the structural links. Psalm 100 functions as a conclusion to the psalms of Yahweh-kingship, so that Psalm 101 does not belong to that group of the psalms. As far as genre is concerned, the psalm can be classified as a royal psalm, the only anomalous psalm found in Book IV.

Despite the lack of common elements between Psalms 100 and 101, however, there are a few points that may be noted. The word חָסַד “love” occurs at the end of Psalm 100 (v. 5) and at the beginning of Psalm 101 (v. 1), thus serving to link the former with the latter. Psalm 100 sings about Yahweh’s eternal love for his people, while the king in Psalm 101 praises such a love which has been bestowed on him from

⁵² אָמֵן (100:5; 101:6); אֶרֶץ (100:1; 101:6, 8); בּוֹא (100:2; 101:2); יְהוָה (100:1, 2, 3, 5; 101:1, 8); חָסַד (100:5; 101:1); יָדַע (100:3; 101:4); עָשָׂה (100:3; 101:3).

Yahweh.⁵³ A further link is also confirmed in the use of the word אֱמֻנָה “faithful.” In Psalm 100:5 Yahweh’s faithfulness to his people is one of his attributes which encourages his people to praise him, but in Psalm 101 the king decides to take care of the faithful (אֱמֻנָה) people on the earth (v. 6). In addition, the reference to the gates and the courts in Psalm 100:4 which might be those of Zion, is again echoed in the “city of Yahweh” in Psalm 101:8 which is Jerusalem.

Despite the lack of close correspondences between the psalms, the position of Psalm 101 after the psalms of Yahweh-kingship is noteworthy. The theme of Yahweh-kingship is likewise echoed in the royal psalm, 101, where mention is made of the kingship over the earth. In fact, the king’s kingship over the earth has its proper place in the theme of Yahweh-kingship. Since the kingship of Yahweh and that of the king are very close to each other in terms of their function, the position of the royal psalm after the Yahweh-kingship psalms, can be described as a natural consequence. As to the links to the preceding psalms, Psalm 101 picks up the themes relative to the psalms of Yahweh-kingship and makes further statements about them. For example, the root שָׁפַט, “judge,” repeated in Psalms 96:13; 97:2, 8; 98:9; and 99:4, is also taken up at the beginning (מִשְׁפָּט, v. 1) of Psalm 101, and the king’s pledge to judge the wicked (vv. 5ff) also has an echo in the anticipation of Yahweh’s coming to judge mentioned in Psalms 96-99. The reference to the “city of Yahweh” in 101:8 recalls Psalms 97:8 and 99:2 where Zion is mentioned. In addition, the king’s declaration not to follow blameful ways in Psalm 101 (vv. 1-2) may be regarded as a response to the wrongdoings of the people described in Psalms 95:7c-11

⁵³ Love and justice in v. 1 belong to Yahweh’s qualities. See the discussion of Psalms 89 and 101. Cf. Allen (1983:2) and Kraus (1989:278-279).

and 99:6-8 where Yahweh's people are warned against the behaviour of the previous generations which also reflects the sins of the present congregation. In Psalm 101 the king's function as a representative of his people includes the confession of sins. In fact, the king's sudden confession not to follow a guilty life after a series of Yahweh-kingship psalms cannot be properly understood without looking at the contents of the surrounding psalms in the light of a canonical perspective.

3.2.8. Psalms 102 and 101

Like the links between Psalms 100 and Psalm 101, those between Psalms 101 and 102 are lexically, thematically and structurally very weak. They exhibit 9 words in common,⁵⁴ but there is no key-word suggestive of the link between them. However, certain thematic elements which may suggest a link between them can be discerned. The clearest link is found in the reference to places: the city of Yahweh (i.e., Jerusalem) in Psalm 101:8 and Zion in 102, which is also Jerusalem (vv. 14, 17, 22). Another link is the references to human kingship in Psalm 101 and to Yahweh's kingship in Psalm 102:26-29. Though Psalm 102 is an individual lament, it forms certain links with the preceding royal psalm, 101, by including the theme of Yahweh's kingship. In addition, in Psalm 102 the psalmist laments the suffering inflicted by enemies (v. 9) and seems to implicate that Jerusalem might be ruined by the enemies, but the king in Psalm 101 states that he will destroy all the wicked from the land and from the city of Yahweh.

⁵⁴ ארץ (101:6, 8; 102:16, 20, 26); בוא (101:2; 102:2, 14); בדר (101:6; 102:24); יהוה (101:1, 8; 102:1, 2, 13, 16, 17, 19, 20, 22, 23); ישב (101:6, 7; 102:13); כון (101:7; 102:29); לבב (101:2, 4, 5; 102:5); סתר (101:5; 102:3); עשה (101:3, 7; 102:26).

As noted, Psalm 101 does not make strong links either with Psalm 100 or with Psalm 102. The psalm is anomalous and suddenly introduces a new theme by designating its title as “to David” which is not found in the previous psalms, but which is found in the following psalm, 103.

3.2.9 Psalms 103 and 102

Psalms 102 and 103 differ in genre, but the close links between them are visible in many ways. They have 19 words in common⁵⁵ and some of these suggest important links between them.

Lexical links

The word כח, “strength,” occurs only in these two psalms (102:24; 103:20) in Book IV, though its use differs in the two cases. In the former it indicates the weakness of the psalmist, while in the latter it is used to refer to the strength of angels. The word שכח (“forget”), which occurs in three psalms (102:5; 103:2; 106:13, 21) in Book IV, can also be cited as a link, though its meaning in Psalm 102 is different from that in Psalm 103. The word עפר “dust” is used three times in Book IV, namely in Psalms 102:15; 103:14 and 104:29. Regarding its use, Psalm 104:29 employs it to refer to the earth, but

⁵⁵ ארץ (102:16, 20, 26; 103:11); בן (102:21, 29; 103:7, 13, 17x2); יהוה (102:1, 2, 13x2, 16, 17, 19, 20, 22, 23; 103:1, 2, 6, 8, 13, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22x2); דרך (102:24; 103:7); זכר (102:13; 103:14, 18); יום (102:3x2, 4, 9, 12, 24, 25; 103:15); ירא (102:16; 103:11, 13, 17); כהן (102:29; 103:19); כח (102:24; 103:20); מלך (102:16, 23; 103:19); עולם (102:13; 103:9, 17); עפר (102:15; 103:14); מעשה (102:26; 103:22); קדש (102:20; 103:1); רחם (102:14; 103:4, 8, 13x2); שכח (102:5; 103:2); שם (102:16; 22; 103:1); שמים (102:20, 26; 103:11, 19); שמע (102:2, 21; 103:20).

Psalms 102:15 and 103:14 use it metaphorically: in the former it is used to mention the debris of ruined Jerusalem, while in the latter it is used to describe the weakness of human beings. Both psalms use it quite differently, but nevertheless its use is similar in the final analysis, since the expression in Psalm 103:14 containing the word, “he remembers that we are dust” (זָכוֹר כִּי-עָפָר אָנֹכְנוּ) may have an echo in the description of the fate of Zion in Psalm 102:14-15. Indeed, Psalm 103:14 is associated with a context similar to that in Psalm 102:14-15 where Jerusalem was described as having been destroyed. First of all, the word רַחֵם “pity,” which is very rare in Book IV (see below), occurs in Psalms 102:14 and 103:13. These verses precede those containing the word עָפָר. Moreover, the word זָכוֹר “remember” is found in Psalms 102:13 and in 103:15, and in both Yahweh’s people are also mentioned. In addition, in both psalms a similar motive concerning the use of the word עָפָר is found: in Psalm 102 the reason that Yahweh should have pity on Zion, is that his servants still have pity on the dust of the ruined Jerusalem (i.e. the love of Jerusalem), while in Psalm 103 the weakness (i.e. dust) of human beings causes Yahweh to have pity on his people. Thus, in both psalms the word “dust” is used as a motive for Yahweh to act. Thus, Psalm 102:14-15 have many similarities with Psalm 103:13-14 by sharing motifs and words. In the light of these analyses the expression “we are dust” in Psalm 103:15 probably alludes to the fate of Zion dealt with in Psalm 102.

As noted, the word רַחֵם “pity” or “mercy” functions as a significant link. It occurs as a verb form only five times in the Psalter (18:2; 102:14; 103:13a, b; 116:5), twice in Psalm 103 and once in Psalms 18, 102 and 116 respectively, but it is found nowhere else in Book IV, though רַחֲמִים, a noun form of the word רַחֵם, is found in

Psalms 103:4 (cf. also רחם as an adjective form in v. 8) and 106:46 in Book IV. Concerning the use of the word, Psalms 102 and 103 correspond to each other. In the former the psalmist anticipates that Yahweh will have pity on Zion and his servants, but Psalm 103 responds to that by saying that he is merciful (רחם) and gracious to his people (vv. 4 and 8) and that he also pities (רחם) those who fear him (v. 13).

A further significant link is found between Psalms 102:26 and 103:19. These verses display three words in common: ארץ “earth,” מעשה “work” and שמים “heavens,” and are concerned with Yahweh’s creation. In addition, the phrase “the foundation of the earth” in Psalm 102:26 implies Yahweh’s kingship (Ludwig 1973:345-357) and it likewise has an echo in the sentence in Psalm 103:19a “Yahweh has established his throne in the heavens” referring to Yahweh’s kingship.

Thematic links

The psalms exhibit strong thematic links. In both, Yahweh’s sovereignty over peoples (102:23; 103:7), over all the kings of the earth (102:16, 23; cf. 103:19) and over the heavens (102:19; 103:26) is confirmed. Yahweh is described as creator in both (102:26; 103:19), and his reign over the kings of the earth is strongly anticipated to be actualized in the future (102:16, 23), but Psalm 103 confirms that he rules over all dominions (vv. 19, 22). In addition, the concern for Yahweh’s people is emphasized in both (102:18-20; 103:7ff), and the praise of his name is also present in both (102:16, 22; 103:1).

The transitory nature of human life is one of the themes in Psalm 102. The life of the psalmist is compared to the grass which easily withers away (vv. 5 and 12) and the word ימים “days”, which is

used to describe his ephemeral life, occurs seven times in the psalm. The same theme is also found in Psalm 103. The “days” (דַּיִם) of man are “like grass” (v. 15), and his life flourishes like a flower of the field, but it passes away like the wind (v. 16). On the other hand, the contrast of God’s eternity to the transient life of human beings is portrayed in both (102:12-13; 103:15-17), and in Psalm 102 the psalmist laments his suffering because of Yahweh’s indignation and anger (v. 11), but Psalm 103:8 responds to that too by speaking of Yahweh’s being slow to anger and abundant in love.

Other significant thematic links are also to be noted. Psalm 102 anticipates that due reward should be given to the destitute (v. 17), to prisoners and to those who were doomed to die (v. 21), while Psalm 103 answers that by informing us that Yahweh metes out righteousness and justice to all the oppressed (v. 6). On the other hand, the theme associated with the word בְּנֵי “children” is worth noting. Though it occurs in five psalms (90:3, 16; 102:21, 29; 103:7, 13, 17; 105:6; 106:37, 38) in Book IV, the reference to the “children” of Israel as the generation to come is found only in these psalms, except for Psalm 90, which forms the link with Psalms 102 and 103. Moreover, in both psalms Yahweh’s concern for the future generation is clear: in the former the psalmist prays for the security of the children to come (v. 29; cf. 19), while Psalm 103 also anticipates that Yahweh’s righteousness should be granted to the children’s children (v. 17).

Striking thematic links are particularly between Psalm 102 and the beginning of Psalm 103. For example, in Psalm 102:3-5 the psalmist mentions severe illness as the reason for his suffering (Kissane 1954:144; Weiser 1978:654; Kraus 1989:284-285), but Psalm 103:3b responds to the suffering of the psalmist by confirming that Yahweh is

the one “who heals all your diseases.” Moreover, Psalm 102 informs us that the psalmist suffers because of his guilt (vv. 10-11), but once again Psalm 103 proclaims Yahweh’s forgiveness of sins (v. 3) and makes a further statement that “he does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities” (v. 11). A further link can also be noted. While in Psalm 102 the psalmist laments his loneliness (vv. 7-8) and affliction through the mocking of enemies (v. 9), Psalm 103:4a praises Yahweh who can deliver our life from death. On the other hand, the complaint about the shortness of the psalmist’s life in Psalm 102:24 is once again answered in Psalm 103:5 where it is stated that Yahweh satisfies lives with good things so that our youth is renewed like the eagle’s. The numerous thematic links illustrated above show that Psalm 103 can be read as the answer to the prayers expressed in Psalm 102.

Structural links

Structurally the psalms display certain common features. Psalm 102 begins with individual complaints and places communal concern in the middle section of the psalm. Similarly, Psalm 103 begins with individual praise, which is then followed by the concern for “us” (vv. 10ff). On the other hand, the theme of Yahweh’s kingship is found at the end of both psalms, but Psalm 103 has a larger portion devoted to it than does Psalm 102. The differences between the psalms are easily perceived. The concern for Zion is emphasized in the former, while the latter emphasizes the greatness of Yahweh’s love and the abundance of his grace as well as the observance of his covenant and commandments. On the whole, Psalm 102 ends with the lament reflecting the situation of the exile, while Psalm 103 closes with the theme of Yahweh’s

kingdom, which revitalizes the hope of the psalmist in Psalm 102. It is likely that in various ways Psalm 103 provides answers to the questions posed by Psalm 102.

3.2.10 Psalms 104 and 103⁵⁶

A large number of lexical and thematic links exist between Psalms 103 and 104. Psalm 103 demonstrates Yahweh's grace in the history of man, while Psalm 104 is concerned with his grace in nature. Thus, these two themes, history and creation, which are the realm of Yahweh's sovereignty shown in the history of Israel, seem to be demonstrated in these psalms.

Lexical links

They have 26 words in common.⁵⁷ Many lexical links exclusive to these two psalms are noted, though some of them are not directly related to thematic links. The word עֶפֶר “dust” occurs in three psalms (102:15; 103:14; 104:29) in Book IV. Since Psalm 102 forms links with Psalm 103, as noted, its occurrence in the former does not detract from

⁵⁶ The close links between Psalms 103 and 104 have been pointed out by many exegetes. Koch (1980:64-69); Seybold (1984:4-5); Auffret (1985-1986:197-225); Zenger (1991a:201-203; 1991b:242-244; 1994b:172-173); Koenen (1995:88-91).

⁵⁷ אֵין (103:16; 104:35); אֵשׁ (103:15; 104:15x2); אֶרֶץ (103:11; 104:5, 9, 13, 14, 24, 32, 35); בָּרֶךְ (103:1, 2, 20, 21, 22x2; 104:1, 35); גְּבוּהָ (103:11; 104:18); יְהוּרָה (103:1, 2, 6, 8, 13, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22; 104:1x2, 16, 24, 31, 33); חֲדָשׁ (103:5; 104:30); חַיִּים (103:4; 104:33); חֲצִיר (103:15; 104:14); טָל (103:5; 104:28); יָדַע (103:7, 14; 104:19); מְלֵאךְ (103:20; 104:4); מַעֲשֵׂה (103:22; 104:13, 24, 31); נֶפֶשׁ (103:1, 2, 22; 104:1, 35); עֶבֶר (103:16; 104:9); עֹלָם (103:16; 104:33, 35); עֹלָם (103:9, 17; 104:5, 31); עֶפֶר (103:14; 104:12, 29); עֲשֵׂה (103:6, 10, 18, 21, 20; 104:4, 19, 24); קֹל (103:20; 104:7, 12); מִקְרוֹם (103:16, 22; 104:8); רֶב (103:8; 103:24); רִיחַ (103:16; 104:3, 4, 29, 30); שֹׁבַע (103:5; 104:13, 16, 28); שְׁמַיִם (103:11, 19; 104:2, 12); שְׂרָחָה (103:21; 104:4).

the link between Psalms 103 and 104 regarding the occurrence of the word. The word רוּחַ “wind” or “spirit” is found in three psalms (103:16; 104:3, 4, 29, 30; 106:33) in Book IV, but its occurrence in Psalm 106 does not suggest any link between this psalm and Psalms 103-104. Concerning the use of the two words עֶפֶר and רוּחַ noted above, Psalms 103 and 104 have a similar context and a common theme. In the former psalm the two words occur in vv. 14 and 16 which are part of the same segment (v. 14 functions as a nexus verse linking what precedes with what follows, see the analysis of the psalm) and are associated with the theme of human transitoriness: without Yahweh’s love (vv. 11, 17) and mercy (v. 13) man can return to dust (עֶפֶר) and disappear like the wind (רוּחַ). A similar theme is also found in Psalm 104:29 where the two words occur. As in Psalm 103, the verse emphasizes that when Yahweh hides his face, the breath (רוּחַ) of all creatures is taken away and they return to dust (עֶפֶר). Thus, in this psalm the words are used in reference to the weakness of man, while in Psalm 104 they are used to depict the destiny of all creatures. There is a slight difference between the contents of the psalms, but they deal with the same theme, namely that man and all creatures should depend on Yahweh for their existence. Thus, in both psalms the two words are used to emphasize Yahweh’s mercy upon man and all creatures.

A striking lexical link is formed by the phrase בְּרַכֵּי נַפְשִׁי אֶת־יְהוָה “Bless Yahweh O my soul” at the beginning and at the end of both Psalms 103 (vv. 2, 22) and 104 (vv. 1, 35). As has been pointed out by many scholars, since the phrase is not found in the rest of the Psalter, nor in other texts in the Old Testament, this is considered a highly important link and it seems that the psalms are supposed to be read together since the phrase is repeated at the beginning and at the

end of each psalm. On the other hand, the end of Psalm 103 and the beginning of Psalm 104 both deal with Yahweh's cosmic kingship and both repeat the words שְׂרָתָה "ministers" and מַלְאָךְ "messengers." The former word occurs only three times in the whole Psalter, namely once in Psalm 101:6 and Psalms 103:21 and 104:4 respectively, but only in the latter two psalms does it have the meaning of "the ministers" of Yahweh. On the other hand, the word מַלְאָךְ occurs three times in Book IV, in Psalms 91:11, 103:20 and 104:4, but since Psalm 91 forms strong links with Psalm 103 (see below), its occurrence in Psalms 103 and 104 is regarded as an important link. These two words (שְׂרָתָה and מַלְאָךְ) occur in Psalm 103:20-21, which is a single segment, while Psalm 104:4 itself has both of them. Concerning the use of the words, the verses of the psalms containing the words all relate to Yahweh's cosmic kingship, and in both "the ministers" and "the messengers" are identified as the entities serving Yahweh. The fact that these very rare words occur at the end and at the beginning of two adjacent psalms and that they are at the same time associated with the same theme, can hardly be incidental.

Other significant links are also found between the psalms. The word חָדַשׁ ("renew") occurs only three times in the Psalter as a verb, once in Psalm 51:12 and once in Psalms 103:5 and 104:30 respectively. Its occurrence in Psalms 103 and 104 is notable since in both it is joined by the same theme, "Yahweh's renewal of life": in Psalm 103:5 his grace renews the lives of his people, while in Psalm 104:30 the lives of all his creatures are renewed by his grace. With regard to this, Psalms 103:5a and 104:28b have the two words שָׂבַע "satisfy" and טוֹב "good" in common and in both psalms the phrases combined with the words are almost identical: הַמְשַׂבֵּעַ בְּטוֹב "he satisfies with good things"

(103:5)// יִשְׂבְּעוּן טוֹב “they are satisfied with good things” (104:28). This is also a significant link, but there is yet a further link between the verses of the psalms: the two psalms have a common theme, the satisfaction of human beings (103) and of all creatures (104). The word שָׂבַע occurs in five psalms (90:14; 91:16; 103:5; 104:13, 16, 28; 105:40) in Book IV, and they are linked to one another in certain ways. For example, Psalm 90 has links with Psalm 91, Psalms 90 and 91 with 103, Psalm 103 with Psalm 104 and Psalm 104 with Psalm 105.

Further lexical links can be noted. The word גְּבוּהָ “height” is found in Psalms 101:5, 103:11 and 104:18, but it is not found in any other place in Book IV. Psalms 103:4 and 104:33 have the word חַיִּים “life” in common, which is found nowhere else in Book IV. The occurrence of the word מְקוֹם “place” is worth noting. It is found three times in Book IV, twice in Psalm 103 (vv. 16, 22) and once in 104:8, but its occurrence in Psalms 103:22 and 104:8 leads to a link. In the former it is used to refer to all “places” (מְקוֹם) of Yahweh’s dominion, while in the latter it is used to mention the place in which Yahweh’s dominion is exercised. In addition, in Psalm 103:19 the reference to Yahweh’s establishing his throne in the heavens (יָהוָה בִּשְׁמַיִם הִכִּין כִּסְאוֹ) is strongly echoed in the expression “the stretching of the heavens” (נִרְטָה שְׁמַיִם) in Psalm 104:2. According to Habel (1972a:417-430) the formula “stretching out the heavens” “serves to introduce Yahweh as the creator who pitches the heavens to be an overarching tent...” (1972a:423), and Yahweh there exercises his kingship as creator. If this is the case, the expression in Psalm 103:19, which refers to Yahweh’s kingship in the heavens, is identical with the one in Psalm 104:2. Indeed, both verses of these psalms deal with Yahweh’s kingship.

In addition, the three words אִישׁ אֶן וְשׁ (“man”),⁵⁸ חֲצִיר (“grass”)⁵⁹ and עִבֵּר (“pass over”),⁶⁰ occur only in three psalms in Book IV, namely Psalms 90 and 103-104. Since Psalm 90 displays close links with Psalm 103, their occurrence in 103 and 104 are regarded as links, though it is difficult to identify thematic correspondences concerning the use of the words.

Thematic links

Strong thematic links between the psalms are also noticeable. In both Yahweh’s sovereignty over the heavens (103:19ff; 104:2ff), the beings in the heavens (103:20-21) and the living things in all places (103:22; 104) is confirmed. As creator he is also a heavenly king (103:19ff; 104:1-4ff), and the end of Psalm 103 and the beginning of Psalm 104 both confirm that he is surrounded by the heavenly entities serving him. In Psalm 103 Yahweh is described as the one who cares for and sustains an individual (vv. 2-5), people (vv. 6-9) and his people (vv. 10-14), and in Psalm 104, man (vv. 14-15), animals (vv. 16ff), and even nature (vv. 10ff). With regard to this, satisfied life is portrayed in both. In Psalm 103 an individual is satisfied with good things (v. 5), while in Psalm 104 trees, the earth and the living things in the sea are satisfied by his caring (vv. 13, 16, 28). In addition, Yahweh is also described as the one who can give renewed life to the children of Israel (103:7, cf. v. 5) and to all creatures on earth and in the sea (104:28-30).

⁵⁸ Psalms 90:3, 103:15 and 104:15.

⁵⁹ Psalms 90:5, 103:15 and 104:14.

⁶⁰ As a verb it occurs in Psalms 90:4, 103:16 and 104:9.

There are also further thematic links that may be noted. The end of Psalm 103 (v. 22) summons all places of Yahweh's dominion to praise him, but Psalm 104 demonstrates how he exercised his sovereignty over them. He makes the clouds his chariot and also winds his messengers (104:4). In Yahweh's order the foundation of the earth shall no longer be shaken (104:5) and the waters will not pass over the place which he has set for them (vv. 7-9). In addition, the whole of Psalm 104 demonstrates how all creatures are arranged according to his order. A similar idea to that above is found between Psalms 103 and 104. In Psalm 103:22 all his works (מַעֲשָׂיו) are called upon to praise him. Psalm 104 then illustrates how his works have been accomplished in the heavens (v.2), on the earth (vv. 5ff) and in its creatures (vv. 13ff), praising Yahweh's great deeds (מַעֲשָׂיו in vv. 24, 31).

Structural links

Structurally the two psalms display similar features. As noted above, both psalms begin and end with the phrase "Bless Yahweh, O my soul," and the end of Psalm 103 is closely linked with the beginning of Psalm 104 through the repetition of words and ideas. Moreover, both begin with a section of hymnic participles (103:3-5; 104:2-4), and whereas Psalm 103 has the hymnic section in the last three verses of the psalm (vv. 20-22), Psalm 104 also has a praise section in the last three verses of the psalm (vv. 33-35).

The two psalms also display similarities in content. Psalm 103 enumerates and illustrates Yahweh's gracious acts in the life of an individual and in the history of Israel, and Psalm 104 similarly enumerates his great works in nature and in creatures. On the other hand, in Psalm 103 the ephemeral life of man is portrayed as a

negative element (vv.14-16), while in Psalm 104 sinners and the wicked constitute threatening elements to the order of God's creation (v. 35). Interestingly, the words אֵין "vanish" or "nothing" and עוֹד "any more" used in Psalm 103:16 to describe the ephemeral nature of man, are again used to refer to the destruction of the sinners and the wicked. The former word occurs only in these psalms in Book IV.

3.2.11 Psalms 105 and 104

Though Psalm 105 contains historical stories of Israel which are absent from Psalm 104, these two psalms form certain links. In fact, the introductory section of Psalm 105 repeats many words from the end of Psalm 104. Moreover, since Psalm 104 praises Yahweh's wonderful works in nature and Psalm 105 sings about his works in the early history of Israel, they provide common ground for investigating them from the perspective of concatenation.

Lexical links

These psalms have 39 words in common.⁶¹ Most of these words

⁶¹ אדם (104:14, 23; 105:14, 35); אֵין (104:2; 105:39); אלהים (104:1, 33; 105:7); ארץ (104:5, 9, 13, 14, 24, 32, 35; 105:7, 11, 16, 23, 27, 30, 32, 35, 36, 44); אש (104:4; 105:39); בקש (104:21; 105:3, 4); גבול (104:9; 105:31, 33); יהרה (104:1x2, 16, 24, 31, 33, 34, 35x2; 105:1, 3, 4, 7, 19); היה (104:20, 31; 105:12); הלך (104:3, 10, 26; 105:13, 41); זמר (104:33; 105:2); חכם (104:24; 105:22); ידע (104:19; 105:1); יצא (104:14, 23; 105:37, 43); לב/לבב (104:15x2; 105:3, 25); לחם (104:14, 15; 105:16, 40); לילה (104:20; 105:39); מאד (104:1; 105:24); מים (104:3, 6; 105:29, 41); נגע (104:32; 105:15); נפש (104:1, 35; 105:18, 22); נחן (104:12, 27, 28; 105:11, 32, 44); עולם (104:5, 31; 105:8, 10); עמד (104:6; 105:10); עת (104:27; 105:19); עץ (104:16; 105:33); עשב (104:14; 105:35); עשה (104:4, 19, 24, 31; 105:5); פנה (104:15, 29, 30; 105:4, 17); פרה (104:13; 105:24, 35); פתח (104:28; 105:20, 41); קנין (104:24; 105:21); שבע (104:13, 16, 28; 105:40); שום (104:3, 9; 105:21, 27); שׁיח (104:34; 105:2); שמח (104:31, 34; 105:3, 38);

are incidental, but some of them establish important links between the psalms. Strong lexical links are found between Psalms 105:1-5 and 104:31-35, where six words are found in common: זָמַר “praise” (104:33; 105:2); יְהוָה “Yahweh” (104:31, 33, 34; 105:1, 3, 4); עָשָׂה “work” (104:31; 105:5); שָׁיַח “meditation” (104:34; 105:2); שָׂמַח “rejoice” (104:31, 34; 105:3), שָׁיר “sing” (104:33; 105:2). This high incidence of common words in such a small section does not seem coincidental, and it provides a good example of the concatenation principle. Most of the words are involved in the description of praise to Yahweh. Of the words listed, the term שָׁיַח “meditation” occurs only in these two psalms in Book IV, except for Psalm 102 where it occurs in the title. Both sections, 104:31-35 and 105:1-5, function as an invitation to praise Yahweh within each of the psalms and in both the reason for the praise is his wonderful deeds, those at creation in the former and in the history of Israel in the latter. Thus, creation and history are woven into these psalms.

The lexical links between the psalms also deserve investigation. The roots בָּקַשׁ “seek” (104:21; 105:3, 4), נָוַע “touch” (104:32; 105:15) and פָּרַה “fruit” (104:13; 105:24, 35) occur only in these psalms in Book IV, and the last of these is related to a similar theme. In Psalm 104:13 Yahweh’s causing waters to fall upon the mountains makes all creatures fruitful (פָּרַה) (cf. v. 14), while Psalm 105:24 depicts him as the one who has made his people fruitful (פָּרַה). Thus, in both the fruitfulness of men and all creatures is determined by Yahweh’s grace. On the other hand, the word לָחַם “bread” is used similarly in both. In Psalm 104:14-15 Yahweh’s watering the mountains causes

שָׁיר (104:33; 105:2); שָׁלַח (104:10, 30; 105:17, 20, 26, 28); שָׁמַיִם (104:2, 12; 105:40).

plants to grow so that they in turn satisfy man with bread (לחם), but in Psalm 105:16 his punishment causes a lack of bread and in v. 40 his grace once again causes his people to receive the bread in abundance. The word לחם occurs only in three psalms in Book IV, namely in Psalms 102:5, 10; 104:14, 15; 105:16, 40, but only these psalms deal with God's providing bread to men (cf. as implied in Ps 104:14-15). With regard to this, Psalms 104:27-28 and 105:40-41 are closely linked to each other, having a similar theme. As the creatures of Yahweh look for their food (אכל) in Psalm 104:27, so in Psalm 105:40 Yahweh's people request their food (לחם) from him. The sentence in Psalms 104:28 "when you [Yahweh] opens (פתח) your hand" is also parallel to the one "he [Yahweh] opened (פתח) the rock" in Psalm 105:41. Psalms 104:27-28 and 105:40-41 repeat the two words שבע "satisfy" and פתח "open," and the word אכל "food" in Psalm 104:27 corresponds to לחם "bread" in Psalm 105:40. In addition, the verses of both psalms commonly deal with the theme of Yahweh's providing bread and water in abundance (105) and of his providing good things to satisfaction (104).⁶² These verses of the psalms constitute strong links between each other.

Other lexical links are to be noted. The word קנין "acquisition" is not found elsewhere in the Psalter, except for Psalms 104:24 and 105:21. The term חכם "wisdom" is also a rare word in Book IV. It occurs only in three psalms (90:12; 104:24; 105:22), but its occurrence in two adjacent psalms is found nowhere else in Book IV. These two words occur in the same segment in each of the psalms, namely in

⁶² In Psalm 105:41 the expression, "it [water] flowed . . . like a river," also carries the theme of abundance in the same way as the word שבע in Psalms 104:28 and 105:40.

Psalm 104:24 and in Psalm 105:21-22. The former describes how Yahweh created all his creatures in wisdom, but in the latter his servant (cf. v. 17), Joseph, instructs his elders in wisdom (v. 22). On the other hand, the word $\gamma\upsilon$ “tree” occurs in three psalms (96:12; 104:16; 105:33) in Book IV, but its occurrence in the adjacent Psalms 104 and 105 is unique (the word $\gamma\upsilon$ “tree” also occurs in Psalm 106, but Psalms 105 and 106 can be regarded as a twin psalm, see below).

Thematic links

The psalms have thematic links. In both Yahweh is described as being sovereign over the heavens (104:1-4; 105:39), the earth (104:5ff; 105:27ff), all creatures (Ps 104) and his people (Ps 105). Yahweh’s heavenly kingship is confirmed in both (104:1-2; 105:27ff, cf. v. 14), and both praise Yahweh’s works in nature (Ps 104) and in history (Ps 105), as noted. In both Yahweh reveals himself through clouds and fire (104:3-4; 105:39) and he makes all creatures (104) and all his people (105) enjoy their lives. In addition, in both sinners and the wicked are described as those who are opposed to Yahweh (104:35; 105:24, 28ff).

Structural links

The structural links between the psalms are weak, but there is something to be noted. As has been noted, the end of Psalm 104 and the beginning of Psalm 105 are closely linked through the repetition of several common words. Though large parts of Psalm 105 deal with stories from the history of Israel, the psalm has hymnic elements at its beginning and end, and this feature constitutes a natural link with Psalm 104 which is also a hymn. The acts of Yahweh, which are mentioned at the creation ($\pi\psi\epsilon$ in 104:24), seem to be continued

through history (עֶשְׂה in 105:5).

3.2.12 Psalms 106 and 105

It has long been recognized that Psalms 105 and 106 form a twin-psalm (Zimmerli 1972:109-111). These psalms are concerned with the history of Israel and deal with Yahweh's covenant people. The correspondence of numerous words and themes between two psalms further support the classification of a twin-psalm. Despite this correspondence, however, the main themes are opposite: Psalm 105 deals with a faithful God, while Psalm 106 deals with unfaithful people (Zimmerli 1972:111).

Lexical links

The lexical links between the psalms are much stronger than between any other two adjacent psalms in the corpus of Psalms 90-106. They have 55 words in common,⁶³ the highest percentage of

⁶³ אהרן (105:26; 106:16); אל (105:7; 106:14, 21, 47, 48); אמר (105:11, 31, 34; 106:23, 34, 48); ארץ (105:7, 11, 16, 23, 27, 30, 32, 35, 36, 44; 106:17, 22, 24, 27, 38); אש (105:32, 39; 106:18); בחר (105:6, 26, 43; 106:5, 23); בן (105:6; 106:37, 38); ברית (105:8, 10; 106:45); ג' וי (105:13x2, 44; 106:5, 27, 35, 41, 47); דבר (105:8, 19, 27, 28, 42; 106:12, 24); ד' ור (105:8; 106:31); דם (105:29; 106:38x3); יהרה (105:1, 3, 4, 7, 19, 45; 106:1, 2, 4, 16, 25, 34, 40, 47, 48); היה (105:12; 105:36); הלך (105:13, 41; 106:9); חם (105:3, 45; 106:1, 5, 48); זכר (105:5, 8, 42; 106:4, 7, 45); זרע (105:6; 106:27); חם (105:23, 27; 106:22); ידה (105:1; 106:1, 47); ידע (105:1; 106:8); כנען (105:11; 106:38, 42); להבה (105:32; 106:18); מות (105:29; 106:28); מים (105:29, 41; 106:11, 32); מצרים (105:38; 106:7, 21); מרה (105:28; 106:7, 33, 43); משה (105:26; 106:16, 23, 32); משל (105:20, 21; 106:41); נחלה (105:11; 106:5, 40); נפל (105:38; 106:26, 27); נפש (105:18, 22; 106:15); נתן (105:11, 32, 44; 106:15, 41, 46); עבד (105:6, 17, 25, 26, 42; 106:36); עמד (105:45; 106:32); עלל (105:1; 106:29, 39); ע' ולם (105:8, 10; 106:1, 31, 48); עמך (105:10; 106:23, 30); עם (105:1, 13, 20, 24, 25, 43; 106:4, 34, 40, 48); עת (105:19; 106:3); פלא (105:2, 5; 106:7, 22); פנה (105:4, 17; 106:23, 46); פתח (105:20, 41; 106:17);

occurrences of words in adjacent psalms in the corpus of Psalms 90-106. The reason for this is of course that Psalms 105 and 106 have relatively long verses, but a close scrutiny shows a large number of significant lexical links between these two psalms.

First of all, the following words occur at the beginning of the two psalms, at their end or at both their beginning and end: הלל "praise" (105:3, 45; 106:1, 5, 48); ידה "thank" (105:1; 106:1, 47); יהוה "Yahweh" (105:1, 3, 4; 106:1, 2, 4); עם "people" (105:1, 43; 106:4, 48); שם "name" (105:1, 3; 106:8, 47); שמר "keep" (105:45; 106:3); משפט "justice" (105:5, 7; 106:3) and פלא "wonderful works" (105:2, 5; 106:7). Of the eight words listed, seven occur at the beginning of both psalms. This high incidence at the beginning of both psalms is not accidental at all. The phrase הַלְלוּ-יְהוָה "Praise the Lord" at the end of Psalm 105 also appears at the beginning and end of Psalm 106, and there is no other psalm in Book IV containing both the words הלל and ידה at the beginning, except for Psalms 105 and 106. The occurrence of the word פלא at the beginning of these psalms is the only case found in the psalms of Book IV, except for Psalms 96 (v. 3) and 98 (v. 1) which also form strong links with Psalms 105 and 106 (see below). Moreover, the phrase "his holy name" (קִדְשׁוֹ שֵׁם) at the beginning (v. 3) of Psalm 105 is also identical with "your holy name" (לְשֵׁם קִדְשֶׁךָ) occurring at the end of Psalm 106 (v. 47), and the reference to Yahweh's laws (חֻק "statute" and חֹרֶה "law") at the end

צַר (105:24; 106:11, 44); קִדְשׁוֹ (105:3, 42; 106:16, 47); רַעַע (105:15; 106:32); שׁוֹמֵחַ (105:3, 38; 106:5x2); שׁוֹא (105:25; 106:41); יִשְׂרָאֵל (105:10, 23; 106:48); שׂאֵל (105:40; 106:15); שִׁיר (105:2; 106:12); שְׁלַח (105:17, 20, 26, 28; 106:15); שֵׁם (105:1, 3; 106:8, 47); שָׁמַר (105:45; 106:3); מִשְׁפָּט (105:5, 7; 106:3).

of Psalm 105 (v. 45), along with the verb שמר “keep,” is again echoed in the words משפט “justice” and צדקה “righteousness” at the beginning of Psalm 106 (v. 3) where the verb שמר also occurs. In addition, both psalms constitute a call to praise Yahweh with imperative verbs at the beginning, and Yahweh’s deeds on behalf of his people (cf. 105:1, 3, 5; 106:2) are mentioned as the reasons for the praise in both. All features shown above illustrate striking examples of concatenation, implying that the juxtaposition of the psalms can hardly be coincidental.

There are also lexical ties that are unique to these psalms. The phrase בְּאֶרֶץ-חַם (“in the land of Ham”) is found only in these psalms (105:23, 27; 106:22) in the Hebrew Bible and in Psalms 105:27 and 106:22 it is associated with Yahweh’s works for Israel. The former has the two words, אוֹת “sign” and מִוִּפְתּוֹ “miracle,” which are used to refer to Yahweh’s works, and which may also be linked to the words פֶּלֶא “wonderful work” and יִרְא “terrible things” in the latter. In fact, Psalm 105:27 does not have the word פֶּלֶא which occurs in Psalm 105:5, but since the word occurs in Psalm 105:5 in parallel with the word מִוִּפְתּוֹ, the word מִוִּפְתּוֹ in Psalm 105:27 may be seen to correspond to the word פֶּלֶא in Psalm 106:22. The following comparison shows the correspondence between the phrases: מִוִּפְתּוֹ בְּאֶרֶץ חַם “miracles in the land of Ham” (105:27) // נִפְלְאוֹת בְּאֶרֶץ חַם “wondrous works in the land of Ham” (106:22). The correspondence of the word and the phrase between the verses of the psalms noted above is regarded as a significant link.

The word כְּנָעַן (“Canaan”) occurs only three times (105:11; 106:38; 135:11) in the Psalter, and thus it is a very rare term. In Psalm 105:11 the land “Canaan” is described as the promised land

which should be granted to the Israelites, but in Psalm 106:38 the Israelites are charged with having worshipped the idols of Canaan. The occurrence of the word להבה “flame” is also very rare in the Psalter. It occurs only four times in the Psalter (29:7; 83:15; 105:32; 106:18), but is found nowhere else in Book IV, except in Psalms 105:32 and 106:18. In Psalm 105 it is used along with the word שא “lightning,” where Yahweh uses the flame and the lightning to destroy the Egyptians. However, in Psalm 106 the words are used to describe the punishment of the wicked among the Israelites. Thus, the psalms make comparable use of the word. On the other hand, Psalms 105:15 and 106:32 have the word רעע “harm” in common, a word which is not found elsewhere in the rest of Book IV, and its use in the former is in contrast with that in the latter: Psalm 105 uses it in association with Yahweh’s command which does not harm any of the prophets (אל־תִּרְעֶנּוּ (נְבִיאֵי)), while in the latter it is said that Moses was harmed through the action of the rebellious people among the Israelites who rebelled against Yahweh. It is interesting to see that in Psalm 105 the word is associated with the term “prophets,” while in Psalm 106 it is linked to the name “Moses,” who can also be designated as a prophet, according to the tradition of the Hebrew Bible. Thus, the word again seems to be used in two contrasting contexts. The word שאל “ask” is also worth noting. Its occurrence in Psalm 105:40 and 106:15 constitutes the only two cases in Book IV. The former informs us that when Yahweh’s people asked for food, they received it in abundance, while the latter tells us that he not only gave them what they asked, but he also sent a disease (רִזָּן) to them. Thus, once again there is a contrastive use of terms in Psalm 105 and Psalm 106. A further link is the word מרה “rebel” which is found only three times in Book IV, all three in

Psalms 105 and 106. Psalm 105:28 mentions that the Egyptians did not rebel (מרה) against Yahweh's words (Kirkpatrick 1903:621), but in Psalm 106 the people of Israel are described as being rebellious against Yahweh (v. 43; cf. v.33). Finally, another good example of the contrast between the psalms is found: Psalm 105:5 calls upon the covenant people to remember the wonderful works (פלא) that Yahweh has done (v. 5), but Psalm 106:7 states that their fathers in Egypt did not consider his works (פלא) and did not remember his love. Thus, once again the use of the word is contrastive.

All the words noted above contribute to the important links between the psalms. In addition to the words mentioned above, the word בחר "choose," which occurs only in Psalms 105 (vv. 6, 26, 43) and 106 (vv. 5, 23) in Book IV, is used to refer to Yahweh's people, and the following three terms are also found only in Psalms 105 and 106 in Book IV, though it is difficult to find thematic links concerning their use: מות "die" (105:29; 106:28); מצרים "Egypt" (105:38; 106:7, 21) and עבור "end" (105:45; 106:32).

Thematic links

The thematic links between the psalms are also quite strong. In both psalms Yahweh's sovereignty over the earth (105:7, 16, 27, 30ff; 106:22), the sea (105:29; 106:9), nations (105:13ff, 24ff; 106:41, 47) and his people is confirmed. He is also depicted as a Saviour (105:37ff, 41; 106:8, 10, 21ff), as a covenant God (105:8ff, 42; 106:5, 45) as well as a compassionate God (105:8; 106:4, 46). Praise of Yahweh's name is mentioned in both (105:1, 3; 106:8, 47) and the concern for his chosen people is also apparent in both (105:6ff; 106:5, 45ff). Both psalms emphasize Yahweh's laws (105:45; 106:3) and contain a reference to

Yahweh's judgement against the nations (105:28ff) and against the wicked among the Israelites (106:41).

Structural links

Structurally there are certain common features that may be noted. As has been mentioned, both psalms have words in common at their beginning and both celebrate Yahweh's works by using words like עלילה "deeds" (105:1), פלא "wonderful works" (105:2) and גבורה "mighty doings" (106:2). The end of Psalm 105 (v. 45) emphasizes the observance of Yahweh's statutes and his laws, something which his people lack in Psalm 106, and Psalm 106 begins with the emphasis on Yahweh's laws (i.e., "justice and righteousness" in v. 3) using the formula "blessed are those who..." (v. 3). Both also deal with the relationship between Yahweh and his people, but in Psalm 105 the emphasis falls upon Yahweh's acts on behalf of Israel, but against foreign nations. In contrast to this, Psalm 106 deals with negative aspects of Israel's history.

A final point to be noted is that the term ברית "covenant" occurs in three psalms (103:18; 105:8, 10; 106:45) in Book IV, though the terms implying the covenant are also found in some other psalms. In Psalm 103 Yahweh's people are described as those who should keep and remember the covenant, but Psalms 105:8 and 106:45 take Yahweh as a subject remembering (זכר) the covenant. When Psalms 105 and 106 are read together as a single text, Yahweh's remembering of the covenant frames the text in that it occurs at the beginning of Psalm 105 (v. 8) and at the end of Psalm 106 (v. 45).