

Part III

3.3.1 Psalms 90-91 and 102-103

3.3.1.1 Psalms 90 and 102

The close links between Psalms 90 and 102 are universally accepted. Many exegetes have pointed out such links.¹ There are lexical and thematic links as well as structural links between the psalms. Both also contain the elements of prayer, reflecting desperate situations which the psalmists had experienced.

Lexical links

The psalms have 23 lexical terms in common² and the following terms can be seen as establishing significant links: חפלה “prayer,” יבש “wither,” כלה “consume.” The word חפלה “prayer” is found nowhere else in Book IV, but it occurs five times in these two psalms (90:1; 102:1, 2, 18x2). It occurs in the titles of the psalms which are both described as prayers. The word יבש “wither” is also found only in Psalms 90 (v. 6) and 102 (vv. 5, 12) in Book IV, and in both it is used to compare man with grass that withers,

¹ See Wilson (1985a:218); Steck (1990:364-365); Krüger (1994:216); Koenen (1995:83-84).

² אל (90:1, 2, 17; 102:25); אמר (90:3; 102:25); ארץ (90:2; 102:16, 20, 26); בא (90:12; 102:2, 14); בן (90:16; 102:21, 29); דר / דר / דר (90:1; cf. 102:13, 19, 25); יהוה (90:13; 102:1, 2, 13, 16, 17, 20, 22, 23); היה (90:5; 102:7, 8); יד (90:17x2; 102:26); יבש (90:6; 102:5, 12); יום (90:4, 9, 12, 14, 15; 102:3x2, 4, 9, 12, 24, 25); ירא (90:11; 102:16); כן (90:17x2; 102:29); כלה (90:7, 9; 102:4); לב/לבב (90:12; 102:5); עבר (90:13, 16; 102:15, 29); עולם (90:2x2; 102:13); ענה (90:15; 102:1, 24); מעשה (90:17x2; 102:26); חפלה (90:1; 102:1, 2, 18x2); פנה (90:8, 9; 102:3, 29); ראה (90:15, 16; 102:17); שנה (90:4, 9, 10x3, 15; 102:25; 28).

an important theme in both psalms. Its only occurrence in these psalms in Book IV and the correspondence of the theme between both establish an important link. A further link is established by the word כלה, “consume,” in Psalms 90:7, 9 and 102:4, a word which is not found elsewhere in Book IV. As in the case of the two words noted above, this word is also associated with a common theme: in both psalms it is used to describe the transient life of man. Thus, this word is also regarded as a significant link.

There are other significant lexical links that may be noted. The word יום “day” occurs five times in Psalm 90 (vv. 4, 9, 12, 14, 15) and seven times in Psalm 102 (vv. 3x2, 4, 9, 12, 24, 25). This is the highest frequency of the word in the Psalter. For example, in the whole of the Psalter Psalms 37 (vv. 18, 19), 39 (vv. 5, 6), and 44 (v. 2x2) have the plural form “days” of the word twice respectively, but Psalms 90 and 102 contain it more than twice.³ This evidence indicates that its occurrence in these psalms can hardly be coincidental. Indeed, the fact that it is used mainly in these two psalms in association with the theme of transient man, confirms its importance. In this regard, the word שנה “year” is also worth noting. It occurs in three psalms (90; 95; 102) in Book IV, but only in Psalms 90 and 102 with a common theme: God’s eternal “years” (90:4; 102:25, 29), which are contrasted to the temporal years of man. Furthermore, the phrase “their children” (בְּנֵי יְהוָה) in 90:16, the descendants of Yahweh’s servants, exactly corresponds to the phrase “the children of your servants” (בְּנֵי עַבְדֵי יְהוָה) in 102:29, while “the work of our hands” (מְצֵעֵנוּ) in 90:17 may be

³ 90:9, 10, 12, 14, 15; 102:4, 12, 24, 25.

reflected in the phrase “the work of your hands” (מַעֲשֵׂה יָדָיךָ) in Psalm 102:26. Finally, the word עַבְדְּךָ “servant” occurs only in these psalms (90:13, 16; 102:15, 29) and Psalm 105 (vv. 6, 17, 25, 26, 42) in Book IV, while in Psalms 90 and 102 they refer to Yahweh’s servants to whom his compassion should be shown.

Thematic links

The thematic links between the two psalms also indicate the relatedness of Psalm 90 with Psalm 102. Both describe Yahweh as creator (90:2; 102:26) and also mention his eternity (90:1-2, 4; 102:13, 25-29). Especially the phrase “a thousand years” in 90:4 referring to the eternal time of God corresponds to the sentence “thy years have no end” in 102:28. As noted, the distress of man (cf. 90:10; 102:3ff) is emphasized by the repetition of the word “days” and in both man is compared to grass that quickly withers (90:4-6; 102:5, 12). Both psalms contain references to the shortness of human life (90:10; 102:24-25) and to Yahweh’s wrath (90:7-8, 9, 11; 102:11). Moreover, the concern for the coming generations is also observed in both (90:16; 102:19, 29) and in both Yahweh is described as the one who has pity: in Psalm 90 (v. 13) on his servants and in 102 (v. 13) on Zion where his servants dwell. Furthermore, the statement in Psalm 90:15 “...as you have afflicted us” may be reflected in Psalm 102:9 which says that the psalmist has been taunted by the enemies. In the light of the conjunction of Psalm 89 with 90, the statement of Psalm 90:15 reflects the suffering of the psalmist at the hand of the enemies, as noted in the discussion of Psalms 89 and 90. Psalm 90:15 implicitly mentions the affliction of the psalmist by the enemies, but Psalm 102:9 explicitly

blames their acts. Since the words הָרַךְ “taunt” and אֵיב “enemy” in Psalm 89:52, where the psalmist laments the mocking of the enemies, also occur in Psalm 102:9, this leads us to see a connection between Psalms 89 and 90 and in turn a connection of the latter with Psalm 102.⁴ The word הָרַךְ occurs only in Psalm 102:9 in Book IV.

In both psalms Yahweh is depicted as one who can provide security for his people. In Psalm 90 Yahweh was described as a refuge for many generations (v. 1), and on the basis of such trust, the psalmist prays for the salvation of the children (v. 16). In a similar way the psalmist’s trust in Yahweh in Psalm 102 makes him anticipate that Yahweh will regard the prayer of the destitute (v. 18) and hear the groans of the prisoners (v. 21). In addition, in both psalms the psalmists have experienced sins and injustice (90:7-8, 15; 102:10, 21).

Structural links

The psalms display structural links. Both begin with an expression of trust in Yahweh (90:1-2; 102:2-3), which is then followed by a description of the ephemeral nature of man (90:3ff; 102:4-12), and both psalms close with a prayer for the security of future generations (90:16-17; 102:29). As noted, in both Yahweh’s eternity is contrasted to the transitoriness of man and in both a reference to sin is included (90:8) or implied (102:10). However, the difference between the psalms is that while Psalm 102 has a reference to Yahweh’s enthronement in Zion and prays for the

⁴ There are some connections between Psalm 89 and 102, as we have noted above.

rebuilding of Zion, Psalm 90 omits such an expression. The latter is a communal lament and the former is an individual lament, but both can be classified as a prayer, as the titles of the psalms also indicate. In addition, Psalm 90 reveals a concern for the faithful community, and Psalm 102 also shows such a concern (vv. 13-23). The former reveals the direct reaction to the failure of the Davidic dynasty, while Psalm 102 has many references to the situation of the exilic period (see analysis of the psalm).

3.3.1.2 Psalms 90 and 103

Like Psalm 102, Psalm 103 has strong links with Psalm 90. The strong lexical and thematic links between Psalms 90 and 103 leave a strong impression that the latter may be read together with the former,⁵ though the genre of the two differs: the former is a lament and the latter is a thanksgiving psalm.

Lexical links

The psalms have 18 words in common,⁶ and there are four words which establish links. The word עֲוֹנוֹת, “iniquities,” occurs only

⁵ Wilson (1985a:218) has pointed out that “Ps 103 stands almost as an answer to the questions and problems raised in Ps 90; problems which received their impetus from the situation described in Ps 89.”

⁶ אָנָּה (90:3; 103:15); אָרֶץ (90:7, 11; 103:8); אֶרֶץ (90:2; 103:11); בֶּן (90:3, 16; 103:7, 13, 17x2); גִּבֹּרֹת (90:10; 103:20); יְהוָה (90:13; 103:1, 2, 6, 8, 13, 19, 20, 21, 22x2); חֶסֶד (90:14; 103:4, 8, 11, 17); חֲצִיר (90:5; 103:15); יָדַע (90:11, 12; 103:7, 14); יָוֵם (90:4, 9x2, 12, 14, 15; 103:15); יָרָא (90:11; 103:11, 13); כֹּהֵן (90:17x2; 103:19); מֹשֶׁה (90:1; 103:7); עֲוֹנוֹת (90:8; 103:3, 10); עֲוֹנוֹת (90:2x2; 103:9, 17); מַעֲשֵׂה (90:17x2; 103:22); צָרוּךְ (90:6; 103:15x2); שֹׁבֵעַ (90:14; 103:5).

in three psalms (90:8; 103:3, 10; 106:43) in Book IV, but its occurrence in Psalm 106 is used to mention the “iniquities” of the fathers in the wilderness, which are not related to the theme of the first two psalms. Yet Psalms 90 and 103 are linked to each other through the use of this word. In Psalm 90:8 the psalmist mentions his/ her dismayful experience by saying that “you [Yahweh] has set our iniquities before you,” but Psalm 103:3 and 10 answer the question set forth by the former by speaking of Yahweh as the one who can forgive our iniquities (v. 3) and who does not treat us according to our iniquities (v. 10). With regard to this, the word אַף “anger” is also worth noting. It is found in four psalms (90:7, 11; 95:11; 103:8 and 106:40) in Book IV, but it is used in a similar way as the word “iniquities.” Its occurrence in Psalms 95 and 106 is associated with the sins of the fathers in the wilderness which have caused Yahweh’s anger, but Psalms 90 and 103 do not deal with such a historical situation. Rather Psalm 90 refers to the psalmist’s mental agony as a result of Yahweh’s anger (אַף), while Psalm 103:8 says that Yahweh is slow to anger and abounding in love.

Further lexical links can also be observed. The word חֲצִיר “grass” occurs only in three psalms (90:5; 103:15; 104:14) in Book IV, and these psalms are related to one another: Psalm 90 is linked to Psalm 103 and the latter in turn to Psalm 104. On the other hand, the word צָרַח “flourish” is found only five times in the Psalter (72:16; 90:6; 92:8; 103:15; 132:18), three instances being in Book IV. Its occurrence in Psalm 92 forms a certain link with Psalm 90, as noted above, and thus also with Psalm 103. The two words חֲצִיר and צָרַח also occur in the same segment in each of Psalms 90:5-6 and 103:15, and are used in connection with a common theme

in both, namely the analogy between the transient life of man and grass that flourishes and perishes quickly. The fact that the two rare words are related to a common theme in these psalms, indicates that their occurrence forms a significant link between the two.

Furthermore, the word אָנוּשׁ “man” appears three times in Book IV, namely in Psalms 90:3, 103:15 and 104:15, but both Psalms 90:3 and 103:15 use it to refer to the ephemeral nature of man. Psalm 104:15 in turn uses it to refer to man’s (אָנוּשׁ) joyful heart. In addition, Psalms 90:2 and 103:17 have an identical phrase (מֵעוֹלָם עַד-עוֹלָם) “from everlasting to everlasting”) in common, and the word גְּבוּרָה “strength” occurs only in three psalms (90:10; 103:20; 106:2, 8) in Book IV, though it does not seem to refer to a common theme.

Thematic links

Thematic links between the psalms are also clearly evident. The plea “satisfy us with your love in the morning” in Psalm 90:14 is answered in the statement of Psalm 103:5 that Yahweh satisfies your desires with good things and renews your youth. Psalm 90 mentions God’s wrath caused by sins (vv. 7-8) and experiences of toil and trouble (v. 10); but Psalm 103 informs us that God forgives all our iniquities (v. 3) and does not treat us according to our sins (103:10). Moreover, Psalm 90:13 asks Yahweh to “have pity (רַחֵם) on your servants,” while Psalm 103:13 answers that he has pity (רַחֵם) on those who fear him. On the other hand, in both psalms man is mentioned as “dust” (אֶבֶר in 90:3 and עֶפֶר in 103:14), and Psalm

90:13 uses it as a motif to appeal to Yahweh to act.⁷ However, Psalm 103:14-15 say that Yahweh has acted on behalf of his people, because he remembered that they are “dust.” In addition, both psalms describe Yahweh’s eternity (90:2; 103:17, 19), and since his love is from everlasting to everlasting (103:17), those who ask his love (90:14) can trust him. Finally, as noted, the transient nature of man is also observed in both (90:4-6; 103:15), both include the reference to “Moses” (90:1; 103:7), and Yahweh is characterised as the one who cares for his people (90:1, 16; 103:8ff).

Structural links

The structural links between the psalms are very weak. The reason for this may be that Psalm 90 is a lament mixed with a prayer, while Psalm 103 is a psalm of thanksgiving. However, as has been illustrated above, the latter functions as a response to the problems posed by the former.

3.3.1.3 Psalms 91 and 103

Psalms 91 and 103 do not have many lexical or thematic links. These psalms have eight words in common,⁸ but there are only a few words unique or exclusive only to these psalms. Most of the

⁷ As noted, Psalm 90:3 is closely linked with v. 13 where the word שׁוֹב, found in v. 3, is used again. The use of this word in v. 13 may be reminiscent of the idea of v. 3 that Yahweh turns man back to dust (death). This may imply that its use in the plea of v. 13 functions as a reminder that man is dust.

⁸ יהוה (91:2, 9; 103:1, 2, 6, 8, 13, 17, 29, 20, 21, 22x2); דרך (91:11; 103:7); ידע (91:14; 103:7, 14); יום (91:16; 103:15); ירא (91:5; 103:11, 13, 17); מלאך (91:11; 103:20); שבע (91:16; 103:5); שם (91:14; 103:1).

words are general, and thematic links are not as strong as, for example, those between Psalms 90 and 103. Nevertheless, there are certain features that make it possible to see a connection between the psalms.

Lexical links

A strong lexical link is established by the word מַלְאֲךְ “messenger” in Psalms 91:11 and 103:20. It occurs only eight times in the entire Psalter⁹ and three times in Book IV (91:11; 103:20; 104:4), and its appearance in Psalm 103:20 marks a link with Psalm 104:4, as noted earlier. Concerning the use of the word, Psalms 91 and 103 both mention Yahweh’s messengers: those who protect his people in the former and those who practise his words in the latter. Since only these two psalms have the word in Book IV, except for Psalm 104, this can be regarded as an important link.

Another link, less important than the one above, but still important, is the word שָׂבַע “satisfy.” It occurs in five psalms in Book IV,¹⁰ constituting links between them concerning the use of the word: Psalm 90 forms a link with Psalms 91:16 and 103:3, Psalm 103 with Psalm 104, and Psalm 104 with Psalm 105. It is quite surprising that it occurs only in the psalms relating to one another. Regarding its use in Psalms 91:16 and 103:5, in the former it is used to speak of Yahweh’s promise of a satisfied life to those seeking protection from him, while in the latter it is used to depict Yahweh as the one who satisfies with good things. Thus, they have

⁹ Pss 34:8; 34:5, 6; 78:49; 91:11; 103:20; 104:4; 148:2.

¹⁰ Pss 90:14; 91:16; 103:5; 104:13, 16, 28; 105:40.

a similar theme. With regard to this, the word כָּבוֹד “honour” in Psalm 91:15 forms a parallel with the עֹטֶר “crown” in Psalm 103:4, since the two words form a wordpair, as is shown in Job 19:9 and Psalm 8:6b.¹¹ The occurrences of these two related words in Psalms 91:15 and 103:4 are the only instances in Book IV and in conjunction with a similar theme: Yahweh is described as the one who crowns or honours his people. Interestingly enough, the two words “honour” and “crown” appear in close association with the above-mentioned word שָׂבַע, “satisfy,” and thus there is a strong link between Psalms 91:15b-16a and Psalm 103:4b-5a. Furthermore, the statement in Psalm 91:15, “I will be with him in trouble and I will deliver him” may be seen to be reflected in Psalm 103:4 where it says “he who redeems your life from the pit.” The idea is similar: Yahweh is depicted as the one who can save life. The words found in the two psalms are sometimes used in similar contexts. For example, the word גָּאֵל “redeem” in Psalm 103 is often found in association with the words צוּר “rock” (Pss 19:15; 78:35) or עֲלִיוֹן “Most High” (Ps 78:35) or צָרָה “trouble” (Ps 107:2), and the latter three words have a close relationship with Psalm 91: the word צוּר often appears along with the word חֹסֶה “refuge,” which is used three times in Psalm 91 (see the discussion of Psalms 90 and 91), the word “Most High” is used as a divine epithet in Psalm 91:1, and the word “trouble” occurs exactly in Psalm 91:14, which may be seen as a parallel to Psalm 103:4. In addition, Psalm 25:22 uses the words

¹¹ Job 19:9: עֲטָרַת רִאשִׁי וְיָסַר עֲטָרַת רִאשִׁי (“He has stripped me of my honour and removed the crown from my head”); Ps 8:6b: תִּעֲטָרְהוּ: כְּבוֹד וְהָדָר (“You crowned him with glory and honour”). The root קָבַד used in Job 19:9 and Psalm 8:6b is derived from the root כָּבַד used in Psalm 91:15.

פדה “redeem” and צרה “trouble” in parallel, though the meaning of the former word differs from that of the word גאל under discussion. All these features likewise support the possibility that Psalm 91:15b may be linked to Psalm 103:4a. If this is the case, Psalm 91:14b-16a are closely linked to Psalm 103:4-5, and these verses mark the strongest links between the two psalms.

Thematic links

The thematic links between the psalms are also confirmed. Psalm 91 employs a number of metaphors in speaking of the certainty of Yahweh’s protection, and the expressions in v. 6 “the plague in darkness” and the scourge at noonday” likewise represent attacks of illness (Tate 1990:455; cf. Anderson 1972:658).¹² This theme, a reference to disease, has an echo in Psalm 103:3 where it says that Yahweh is the one “who heals all your diseases.” Thus, as Psalm 91 proclaims Yahweh’s protection from the dangers of illness, so does also Psalm 103. Psalm 106:15 has a reference to the wasting disease (רזון) which Yahweh sent to his rebellious people, but no other psalm in Book IV has a reference to Yahweh’s protecting his people from disease, except for Psalms 91 and 103. This can be considered as a significant link.

Further thematic links can be noted. The expressions in Psalm

¹² The fact that Psalm 91 has the reference to illness has been observed by many scholars (Mowinckel; Anderson; Kraus; Tate). Kraus (1989:219-225) interprets the whole of the psalm in terms of this view. He notes as follows: “ ‘In all probability’ it can be assumed that Psalm 91 belongs among the psalms of sickness and healing; i.e., we would have to assume that the psalm is a prayer song which was presented as a formulary to a sick person. ...(221)” In contrast to Tate (1990:455) who regarded the expressions in v. 6 as referring to sickness, he identifies the phrase “the arrow that flies by day” in v. 5b as including the reference to illness (1989:223; also Anderson 1972:657).

91:3 “the snare of the fowler” and “the pestilence of destruction” “imply the danger of violent death” (Tate 1990:454), and the psalmist also speaks of Yahweh’s protection from such a danger. The imagery of these metaphors is echoed in the expression in Psalm 103:4a, “he [Yahweh] who redeems your life from the Pit.” The word שַׁחַת “Pit”, synonymous with the word שְׁאוֹל “Sheol” (Ps 16:10), is used to describe the power of overwhelming death (Pss 30:10; 49:10; 55:24). Thus, both psalms refer to the danger of death and at the same time mention the security in Yahweh. Though there is no lexical correspondence between the psalms concerning this theme, the thematic link itself is regarded as a significant one, since the theme is not found elsewhere in Book IV.

The word אָהַב “love” in Psalm 91:14 may also be reflected in Psalm 103:17-18 where the covenant relationship between Yahweh and his people is described. The word is often used in describing mankind’s devotion to God (as in Psalm 91:14), or it is used to refer to the bond of love between Yahweh and his own people (i.e., Deut 10:15; 7:7f) (Wallis 1986:262; cf. Anderson 1972:659). Thus, the meaning of the word may be echoed in the reference to the close relationship between Yahweh and his people described in Psalm 103:17-18.¹³

Structural links

These psalms reveal certain similarities that can be seen to

¹³ Anderson (1972:659) notes as follows concerning the meaning of Psalm 91:14: “The ‘loving of God’ is synonymous with ‘knowing his name’ ..., and both expressions point to the worshipper’s intimate relationship with God, based upon loyalty and obedience to him.”

contribute further links between them. First, both psalms begin with a description of Yahweh: Psalm 91 points to the fact that Yahweh is a safe refuge, and Psalm 103 notes that Yahweh is the one who can provide in all the needs of the psalmist (v. 2). The bodies of the psalms also have similar contexts. Psalm 91 takes examples of various metaphors from nature or daily life and demonstrates through such examples that Yahweh is a faithful refuge. Similarly, Psalm 103 describes Yahweh as being gracious and merciful, stating what Yahweh has acted on behalf of an individual's life (vv. 3-5) and on behalf of his people (vv. 7-10), and illustrating the greatness of his love through various metaphors (vv. 11-16). The concluding sections of both psalms also seem to perform a similar function within each psalm. The oracle section within Psalm 91, vv. 14-16, reaffirms the statement of vv. 1-13 and provides a further confirmation through the words of Yahweh's mouth that Yahweh can protect those seeking a refuge. Psalm 103:19-22 may also be seen in a similar light. This section refers to Yahweh's kingship and his sovereignty is described as being over the heavens and all places of his dominion (v. 22). This superiority of his sovereignty provides the basis of trust for all statements made in vv. 1-18, and in doing so the psalm convinces the reader or the listener that Yahweh is a source of trust. Thus, the last section of Psalm 103 is similar to that of Psalm 91 in that both have a function in persuading the readers.

Finally, the links between Psalms 91 and 103 may be described from the perspective of the positions that the psalms have within Book IV. Each of these psalms is placed after a lament and functions as an answer to the lament psalm: Psalm 91 responds to Psalm 90 and Psalm 103 to Psalm 102. The link between Psalms 91

and 103 can be seen as a natural consequence of the link between Psalm 90 and Psalms 102 and 103.

3.3.2 Psalms 92-93 and 104

3.3.2.1 Psalms 92 and 104

The closest links Psalm 104 has in the larger context of Psalms 90-106 are with Psalms 92 and 93. First of all, the links between Psalms 92 and 104 should be noted.

Lexical links

The psalms have 20 words in common,¹⁴ and of these, three are exclusive to these psalms: אָרְזוּ; לֵבָנוֹן; שִׁמְרָן. The word אָרְזוּ “cedar” appears only five times in the Psalter (29:5; 80:11; 92:13; 104:16; 148:9), but is found nowhere else in Book IV, apart from Psalms 92 and 104. The word לֵבָנוֹן “Lebanon” also occurs five times in the Psalter (29:5, 6; 72:16; 92:12; 104:16), but only Psalms 92 and 104 in Book IV have it. Moreover, the phrase “like a cedar in Lebanon” in Psalm 92:13 is almost identical to “the cedars of Lebanon” in Psalm 104:16, and as Psalm 92:14, the following verse, mentions Yahweh’s trees,¹⁵ so Psalm 104:16, where the phrase “the

¹⁴ אֵל (92:14; 104:1, 21, 33); אָרְזוּ (92:13; 104:16); בֵּיתָה (92:14; 104:17); גֵּר וְלֵ (92:6; 104:1, 25x2); יְהוָה (92:2, 5, 6, 9, 10, 14, 16; 104:1, 1, 16, 24, 31, 33, 34, 35); יָד (92:5; 104:28); טֹב (92:2; 104:28); יָדַע (92:7; 104:19); לֵבָנוֹן (92:13; 104:16); לַיְלִיָּה (92:3; 104:20); מָה (92:6; 104:24); נִבְטָה (92:12; 104:32); עֹד (92:15; 104:33, 35); עֹלָם (92:9; 104:31); עֲשׂוּבָה (92:8; 104:14); מַעֲשֵׂהָ (92:5, 6; 104:13, 24, 31); פָּעַל (92:5, 8, 10; 104:23); רִשְׁעָה (92:8; 104:35); שִׁמְרָן (92:5; 104:15, 31, 34); שִׁמְרָן (92:11; 104:15).

¹⁵ In Psalm 92:13 the expression “they [trees] are planted in the house of Yahweh” is reminiscent of “the trees of Yahweh” in Psalm 104:16.

cedars of Lebanon” occurs, also includes a reference to Yahweh’s trees. Thus, Psalm 92:13-14 are very similar to Psalm 104:16. Concerning the use of the two words, they are related to a common theme in the two psalms: the flourishing trees of Yahweh. But what is more important than this is that the reference to the trees of Yahweh is found nowhere else in the whole of the Psalter. This should be regarded as a highly important link between them. In addition, the word שמן “oil” is also found only in Psalms 92:11 and 104:15 in Book IV.

The parallel between Psalm 92:6a and 104:24a can also be described as contributing to a link. As indicated earlier, Psalm 92:5-6 deal with the works of Yahweh’s creation and v. 6 includes an exclamation to them in a sentence, “How great are your works, O Yahweh” (מִה־גָּדְלוֹ מַעֲשֵׂיךָ יְהוָה). A similar expression is found in Psalm 104:24a which also describes the wonder of Yahweh’s creation: “How manifold are your works, O Yahweh” (מִה־רַבּוֹ מַעֲשֵׂיךָ יְהוָה). These two sentences are almost identical, and in both Yahweh’s works of creation are proclaimed in admiration so that the impression that they speak of the same thing cannot be erased.¹⁶ In addition, a further link is found between Psalms 92:5 and 104:31, since they also deal with the works of Yahweh in creation and likewise repeat the two words שמח “rejoice” and מעשה “work.”

Thematic links

The psalms display thematic links in significant ways. Both

¹⁶ Whybray (1974:96-96) notes that the thought of חכמה “wisdom” in Psalm 104:24 summarizes the thought of the whole psalm. If this is the case, the link between Psalm 92:5-6 and Psalm 104:24 is seen as being much more profound.

describe the greatness of Yahweh's creation (92:5-6; 104:24, 31) and in both he is described as being in heaven (92:9; 104:2-4).¹⁷ He as a creator cares for his people (92) and for all his creatures (104) and those who are under his care enjoy their lives (92:13-15; 104:14-15).

The destruction of the wicked is strongly emphasized in both (92:10; 104:35): Psalm 92 emphasizes their disappearance by means of anadiplosis in v. 10 and Psalm 104 similarly uses a paralleled phrase to emphasize their demise: "May sinners (חַטָּאִים) vanish from the earth" // "the wicked (רָשָׁעִים) be no more" (v. 35). There is no doubt that Psalm 92 stresses the destruction of the wicked, but in Psalm 104 such a view is sometimes dismissed, since v. 35 appears to have little to do with the psalm. However, Kraus (1989:304) correctly notes the thought reflected in Psalm 104:35 as follows:

The petition for the elimination of all רָשָׁעִים is to be understood on the basis of the whole psalm...For human beings who turn away from God...there is no longer room in the vast realm of joy, order, and dependence directed to God.¹⁸

Psalm 104 regards the wicked and the sinners as the only entities disturbing the order of God's creation,¹⁹ and the psalmist's

¹⁷ Tate (1990:467) notes that the meaning of the word מָרוֹם "exalted" in Psalm 92:9 "serves as a synonym for the heavens where God dwells and is enthroned..."

¹⁸ Clifford (1985:515-516) aptly points out the thought reflected in Psalm 104: "Both [Psalms 19 and 104] are sometimes said to be the only psalms in which the idea of creation is found as an independent (i.e., not subordinate to redemption) theme, that fact being attributed to foreign influence. Yet both are ultimately concerned with human community, how it was 'created,' how it was 'redeemed' from threats." Anderson (1984:14) notes the thought of creation reflected in Psalm 104 as follows: "Creation is not just an event that occurred in the beginning, at the foundation of the earth, but is God's continuing activity of sustaining creatures and holding everything in being."

¹⁹ Indeed, Psalm 104:35 may be the climax of the psalm, a point which the whole of the psalm has anticipated.

appeal for their destruction has an echo in the reference to the destruction of the wicked in Psalm 92.

Another significant thematic link is a creation motif. The title of Psalm 102 classifies it as a song used on the Sabbath day, which is unique in the Masoretic texts. As noted earlier, the theme associated with the day is the chaos motif and Psalm 92:8 and 10 seem to reflect the motif (Sarna 1962:155-168).²⁰ This motif is also found in Psalm 104:5-9, as a large number of scholars have pointed out.²¹ In addition, both psalms reflect characteristics of wisdom.²²

Structural links

The structural connections between the psalms are not strong, but there are certain connecting features between them. Both begin with the praise of Yahweh (92:1-4; 104:1) and include descriptions of creation (92:5-7; 104:10ff) as well as the chaos motif (92:8, 10; 104:5-9), and the concluding section of each psalm mentions the destruction of the wicked (cf. “there is no unrighteousness in him” [Yahweh] in Psalm 92:16; Psalm 104:35). Psalm 104 is largely

²⁰ Sarna (1962:159) notes the theme associated with the Sabbath as follows: “The Sabbath is the symbol of creation and of cessation from creation. It expresses human imitation of ‘the primordial gesture of the Lord’ when he transformed chaos into cosmos.”

²¹ Hermisson (1978:43-57); Allen (1983:26); Day (1985:28-35); Jeremias (1987:45-50); Kraus (1989:300); Podella (1993:310-313); Booij (1994:250-251).

²² For wisdom elements in Psalm 92, see the discussion of Psalms 90 and 92; for wisdom elements in Psalm 104, see Hermisson (1978:47-48) and Anderson (1984:13-14). Anderson (1984:13) notes that Psalm 104 has theological dimensions characteristic of wisdom: “Wisdom is concerned not just with the ‘ordered functions’ of the world but ... also with ‘the foundation of the orders of the world,’ and these concerns prompt reflection on Yahweh’s creative activity in the past as well as the continuation of that activity in the present.”

concerned with the creator who has created and sustained all creatures according to his order, while Psalm 92 contrasts the wicked with the righteous and the description of Yahweh is emphasized in v. 9 which is the pivotal verse of the psalm (see the analysis of the psalm). Thus, in both psalms he is stressed in significant ways, and both talk about his providence for creation.²³

3.3.2.2 Psalms 93 and 104²⁴

The lexical and thematic links between Psalms 93 and 104 are not as strong as, for example, those between Psalms 90 and 103 or 92 and 104, but they are seen as being linked to each other. The chaos motif appears in both and it serves as a strong thematic link. These psalms have ten words in common,²⁵ but some are incidental and some serve as links.

Lexical links

A strong lexical link is the word לָבַשׁ “to put on” or “be clothed,” which is found only in Psalms 93:2 and 104:1 in Book IV.

²³ Booij (1994:123) points out that the central thought of Psalm 92 is not about the fate of the individual, but about the dispensation (“bestel”) of the world and that the psalmist sees his fate within the universal perspective. According to him, the psalmist sees the destruction of the wicked and the salvation of the righteous as being achieved in the completion of the Sabbath.

²⁴ Koenen (1995:91-92) also notes certain links between Psalms 93 and 104.

²⁵ מֵאֵד (93:5; 104:1); בֵּית (93:5; 104:17); יְהוָה (93:1x2, 3, 4; 104:1x2, 16, 24, 31, 33, 34, 35x2); יָם (93:4; 104:25); לָבַשׁ (93:1x2; 104:1); מוֹט (93:1; 104:5); מִיָּם (93:4; 104:3, 6); עוֹלָם (93:2; 104:5, 31); קוֹל (93:3, 4; 104:7); רַב (93:4; 104:24).

It occurs nine times in the Psalter,²⁶ but the only texts which use Yahweh as a subject are Psalms 93 and 104 in the Psalter and only Isaiah 57:17 in other texts in the Old Testament (Gosse 1994:305). This can be regarded as a highly significant link. Concerning the use of the word, the two verses of the psalms are associated with a similar context: both describe Yahweh as a warrior-king, as implied by the words associated with the word לבש, like עו "strength" and אור "gird" in Psalm 93:1 (see the analysis of Psalm 93) and like הוד "honour" and הדר "majesty" in Psalm 104:1 (i.e. the insignia of kings, Anderson 1972:718), and in both verses Yahweh is depicted as being clothed with the insignia of a king, namely "strength" in Psalm 93 and "honour" and "majesty" in Psalm 104.²⁷ The verses of the psalms containing the word לבש are so similar that it leaves a strong impression that they may be involved in a similar thought.²⁸

The word מוט "shake" also forms a strong link. It occurs four times in Book IV, namely in Psalms 94:18, 93:1, 96:10 and 104:5, but in Psalm 94 as a verb it has the Qal perfect form הטה, taking its subject as רגל "foot," while the rest has the same phrase הטה-בל "it can never be moved," which is composed of the niph'al imperfect form plus a negative. Of these three psalms (i.e. 93, 96 and 104), Psalms 93 and 96 take the subject of the verb מוט as תבל "the world," thus suggesting a close link, while Psalm 104

²⁶ 35:26; 65:14; 93:1; 104:1; 109:18, 29; 132:9, 16, 18.

²⁷ In Psalm 96:6 the words "honour" and "majesty" are paralleled with the word "strength."

²⁸ Allen (1983:28) notes that the theme of creation is closely associated with Yahweh's kingship in the Old Testament, especially in the Psalter. This supports a logical link between Psalms 93 and 104.

takes its subject as ארץ "the earth." Indeed, Psalms 93:1c and 96:10 form close links with each other by taking the same subject for the verb מוט and by having in common the phrase יהוה מלך, "Yahweh reigns."²⁹ It is likely that Psalm 93 as a psalm of Yahweh-kingship may have certain connections with Psalm 96. However, since Psalms 93 and 104 have the chaos motif which Psalm 96 does not visually contain, the strongest connections Psalm 93 may have in the large context of Book IV are with Psalm 104. This conclusion is further supported by the following links between the psalms. Psalms 93:3-4 and 104:5-9, following Psalms 93:1 and 104:4, commonly deal with the chaos motif and in these verses we have other important lexical links. The word מים "water" occurs in four psalms in Book IV,³⁰ but only Psalms 93:4 and 104:6 (cf. v. 3) use it to refer to the chaos motif, and at the same time these verses have the word קול "sound" (93:3; 104:7; cf. 104:12), which comprises an element of the chaos motif. The word נהרות "floods" in Psalm 93:3 has an echo in the word תהום "deep" in Psalm 104:6, which is the primeval flood (Delitzsch 1973:130; Kraus 1989:300) and the phrase "the sound of your [Yahweh's] thunder" (קול רעם) in Psalm 104:7 is also echoed in the expression in Psalm 93:4, [You are] "mightier than the sounds (קול) of waters." Thus, all these features noted above support the close links between Psalm 93 and some segments of Psalm 104.

As noted, the links between Psalms 93 and 104 are largely

²⁹ Howard (1986:154) argues that Psalm 93 forms the strongest connections with Psalm 96 among Psalms 93-99. His argument is largely based on the verbatim repetition of Psalm 93:1c in 96:10b.

³⁰ 93:4; 104:3, 6; 105:29, 41; 106:11, 32.

based on the chaos motif. However, as many scholars have noted, the psalms differ in certain perspectives. Psalm 93 implies the present threat of the worldly order by the forces of chaos, but in Psalm 104 this perspective is dismissed: Yahweh completely subjugates the forces of the chaos by setting up a boundary that chaotic waters cannot transgress (v. 9) and by placing a firm foundation that shall not be shaken again (v. 5) (Krüger 1993:71; Hermisson 1978:49-51; Anderson 1984:12-13). If the forces of the chaos represent historical enemies, Psalm 104 pictures the world without such a threat, as v. 45 implies the destruction of the wicked.

3.3.3 Psalms 94 and 101³¹

Psalms 94 and 101 display close lexical and thematic ties to each other, though they differ in genre. They have 15 words in common,³² and many of these contribute to the links between them.

Lexical links

Three words are unique only to these psalms and serve to link the psalms in significant ways. The word צאת “destroy” appears

³¹ Auffret (1984:69-72) marks the connections between Psalms 94 and 101 with several examples, but no scholar, to my knowledge, pays attention to the links between the psalms.

³² און (94:4, 16, 23; 101:8); ארץ (94:2; 101:6, 8); דבר (94:4; 101:7); יהוה (94:1, 3, 5, 7, 11, 12, 14, 17, 18, 22, 23; 101:1, 8); חסד (94:18; 101:1); ידע (94:10, 11; 101:4); לבב / לב (94:15; 101:2, 4, 5); מחי (94:3x2, 8; 101:2); עין (94:9; 101:3, 5, 6, 7); פעל (94:4, 16; 101:8); צאת (94:23x2; 101:5, 8); רע (94:13, 16, 23; 101:4); רשע (94:3x2, 13, 21; 101:8); שכל (94:8; 101:2); שפט (94:2, 15; 101:1).

twice in each of the these psalms (94:23x2; 101:5, 8), but no other psalm in Book IV has it. Each of the psalms has an association of the word **צַדִּיק** with the word **רָשָׁע** “the wicked” and refer to the destruction of the wicked: Psalm 94 asks for their destruction, while Psalm 101 promises their extermination. The word **פֶּעַל** “work” is also significant. It is found five times in Book IV in Psalms 92:8, 10; Psalms 94:4, 16 and 101:8, but these psalms are related to one another: Psalm 92 forms close ties with Psalm 94, which in turn has links with Psalm 101, so that its occurrence in Psalm 92 does not diminish the relationship between Psalms 94 and 101 concerning the use of the word. Especially these three psalms combine the word **פֶּעַל** with the word **אָוֶן** “evil,” and they all contain a common phrase **כָּל-פֹּעְלֵי אָוֶן** “all the workers of evil” and emphasize the destruction of the wicked (see the discussions of Psalms 92 and 94). Psalm 94 charges them on account of their behaviour (v. 4ff) and puts the rhetorical question “who stands up for me against the workers of evil ?” (v. 16), but in Psalm 101 the psalmist answers that question by saying, “I will cut off all the workers of evil from the city of Yahweh” (v. 8b). Once again Psalm 101 functions as a response to Psalm 94 regarding the use of the words noted above. On the other hand, Psalms 94:8 and 101:2 have the word **שָׂכַל** “be prudent,” which is not found in any other place in Book IV, except for Psalm 106:7 where it is used to mention the unfaithfulness of the fathers in the history of Israel. Like the use of the above two words **צַדִּיק** and **פֶּעַל**, its use in Psalms 94 and 101 is contrastive: in Psalm 94 the psalmist uses the word to accuse the wrongdoings of the wicked who are not doing wisely (**שָׂכַל**), but in Psalm 101 the psalmist employs it to confess that he does not follow the heedless

(שכל) way that is blameworthy.

Thematic links

Some of the thematic links, integrated into lexical links, have already been pointed out, but in addition, numerous thematic ties between the psalms are visible. Psalm 94 represents Yahweh as a judge of the earth, anticipating his judgement against the wicked (vv. 1-3 and 23), but in Psalm 101 the psalmist swears to eradicate them from the land (vv. 5, 8). With regard to this, the former refers to the corruption of justice (v. 20) (see the discussions of Psalms 89 and 94), while in the latter the psalmist emphasizes the practice of justice (משפט, v. 1) by putting the word משפט “justice” at the beginning of the psalm³³ and by deciding to follow “the way that is blameless” (v. 2) and not to set anything that is base before his eyes. On the other hand, the concept found in the sentence “justice will return to the righteous” (עֲדֹר־צֶדֶק יָשׁוּב מִשְׁפָּט) in Psalm 94:15 is likewise echoed in Psalm 101, since in the latter the psalmist emphasizes the protection of the righteous (v. 6) and the destruction of the wicked (vv. 5 and 8).

A description of the behaviour of the wicked is also presented in both. In Psalm 94 the wicked are charged with crushing, afflicting, slaying and murdering Yahweh’s people (vv.5-6), while in Psalm 101 the psalmist once again speaks of their eradication, mentioning that there are those who slander their neighbour in secret (v. 5). Both also describe the words of the wicked. In Psalm 94:4 the wicked’s pouring out arrogant words and being full of boasting

³³ The theme “justice” comprises the theme of the psalm, see the analysis of the psalm.

may have an echo in the attitude of those who practise deceit and who utter lies in Psalm 101:7, and in the latter the psalmist declares that no one who does such misdeeds may dwell in his house or stand before him. The contrast between the psalms is further confirmed. In Psalm 94 the wicked act wrongly, because they think that God's eyes do not see them (vv. 8-9), but in Psalm 101 the psalmist responds by swearing that his eyes will be on the faithful of the land (v. 6), but he will destroy haughty eyes (v. 5). In both psalms the attitude of the wicked's heart are also mentioned. In Psalm 94:8 the dull-hearted ones (בער) are mentioned, and this is echoed in the reference to a "perverse mind" (לִבְּ עִקְשׁ) in Psalm 101:4 and to the "proud heart" (לִבְּ חִבּוֹ) in v. 5, but once again the psalmist in Psalm 101 says that no one who has a twisted heart or a proud heart will be allowed before him.

As we have seen so far, the close links between the psalms are confirmed in various ways. The parallels between concepts embodied in the psalms identified above are so close that it seems difficult to deny that Psalm 101 responds to Psalm 94. A large number of the lexical and thematic correspondences between the psalms are used in contrast, and the presence of the king in Psalm 101 is seen as answering to the questions posed by the lament Psalm, 94. In addition to the links noted above, both psalms have wisdom vocabulary which can be regarded as a link (see the analysis of Psalm 94).³⁴

³⁴ Kenik (1976:402) points out that in Psalm 101 "the Israelite traditions of covenant and wisdom attain a point of contact in the royal leader."

3.3.4 Psalms 95-100 and 105-106

We have suggested above that Psalms 95-100 can constitute links with Psalms 105-106 in a larger context. Our main purpose here is to illustrate this suggestion and to trace the links between Psalms 95-100 and 105-106. However, because of the close links between Psalms 96-99 on the one hand, and between Psalms 105 and 106 on the other, it is not easy to distinguish how each individual psalm of Psalms 95-99 is related to each of Psalms 105-106. For this reason, we will here compare each of Psalms 105 and 106 to every psalm of Psalms 95-99 in terms of lexical, thematic and structural aspects. This comparison naturally shows that Psalm 105 forms stronger links with Psalms 96-97 than with Psalm 98-99 on the one hand, while Psalm 106 has stronger links with Psalms 98-99 on the other. Similarly, the first part of Psalm 95, vv. 1-5, has closer links with Psalm 105 than with Psalm 106, while the third part of the psalm, vv. 7c-11, has closer links with Psalm 106.

This conclusion seems rather mechanical, because each of Psalms 95-99 is related to both Psalms 105 and 106 in one way or another. However, as will be seen below, the perspective reflected in Psalms 96-97 shows closer affinities with that in Psalm 105 than that in Psalm 106, while Psalms 98-99 and 106 are closely related to one another by sharing similar perspectives.

Concerning the function of Psalm 95, we have seen above that the first part of the psalm, vv. 1-5, has links with Psalms 96-97, while the second and third parts of the psalm, vv. 6-11, form links with Psalms 98-99. This division also seems applicable to Psalms 105 and 106, that is to say, Psalm 95:1-5 are linked with Psalm 105

and Psalm 95:7c-11 in turn with Psalm 106. On the other hand, Psalm 100 has been classified as a conclusion to Psalms 95-99. The psalm itself has relatively short verses and has general links with Psalms 95-99, as noted above. Thus, its discussion is here omitted. On the other hand, since Psalm 95:6-7b has very short verses, it is not easy to make a decision regarding the links between the psalms. These verses are not here dealt with.

3.3.4.1.1 Psalms 95 and 105³⁵

Lexical links

The two psalms have sixteen words in common,³⁶ but lexical links are very weak. Most of the words are general in nature. However, a few lexical links that may be important, are noted. The first is the word צור “rock,” which occurs in four psalms (92:16; 94:22; 95:1; 105:41) in Book IV. These psalms containing the word are related to one another. Psalm 92 forms links with Psalm 94 and the latter also forms links with Psalm 95, as noted. Thus, its occurrence in Psalms 92 and 94 does not diminish the link between Psalms 95 and 105 concerning the occurrence of the word.

³⁵ Koenen (1995:93-94) notes the link between Psalms 95 and 105 by saying that both psalms describe in their own way the salvational action of Yahweh throughout history. However, he fails to point out the links between Psalms 95 and 106 as well as the relationship between Psalms 95 and 105-106 (see below).

³⁶ אל (95:3x2, 7; 105:7); אמר (95:10; 105:11, 31, 34); ארץ (95:4; 105:7, 11, 16, 23, 27, 30, 32, 35, 36, 44); בא (95:6; 105:18, 19, 23, 31, 34, 40); דר (95:10; 105:8x2); יהרה (95:1, 3, 5; 105:1, 3, 4, 7, 19, 45); הלך (95:1; 105:13, 41); זמר (95:2; 105:2); ידה (95:2; 105:1); ידע (95:10; 105:1); לב/לבב (95:8, 10; 105:3, 25); מלך (95:3; 105:14, 20, 30); עם (95:7, 10; 105:1, 13, 20, 24, 25, 43); עשה (95:5, 6; 105:5); פניו (95:2, ;105:4); צור (95:1; 105:41).

Concerning the use of the word, Psalms 95:1 mentions Yahweh as “the rock” who can save “us,” and Psalm 105:41 describes him as the one who opened the rock and made water flow from it, thus as a Saviour.³⁷ In both Yahweh is confirmed as a Saviour. Other lexical links are זָמַר “praise” and תָּדַן “thanks.” These two words occur at the beginnings of both psalms (95:2; 105:1, 2) and seem to link Psalm 95 with Psalm 105. Only three psalms in Book IV contain both words: 92:2, 95:2, and 105:1, 2.

Thematic links

The thematic links between the psalms are much stronger than the lexical links. The shepherd motif found in the expression “we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand” in Psalm 95:7a is also reminiscent of the wilderness experience in Psalm 105:37-41 where Yahweh is depicted as the one who led and guided the people of Israel in the wilderness. It is clear that the shepherding language like “people,” “pasture” and “sheep” is closely connected to the Exodus event found in Psalm 105:37-38, as other texts in the Hebrew Bible illustrate (e.g. Psalm 77:20 and Psalm 78:52, see the discussion of Psalms 95-99).

A strong thematic link is found in Yahweh’s reign over the gods. Psalm 95:3 describes him as being over the gods. This motif is found in Psalm 105:28 that states the plague of darkness, which

³⁷ If the word צֶרֶף “rock” reflects the wilderness event in Exodus 17:1-7 and Num 20:2-13, where water flowed from a “rock,” then that scene is recalled in Psalms 95:8-11 (Howard 1986:75; Tate 1990:495) and 105:41 where the wilderness experiences associated with the flowing of water from the rock are mentioned. However, as noted in the analysis of Psalm 95, the meaning of the word is used as a metaphor of trust for Yahweh (Hossefeld 1994:33; Prinsloo 1995a:395). The reference in Psalm 95 forms a parallel with the event of Meribah and Massah mentioned in Psalm 106 (see below).

was originally the ninth plague in Exodus, but which was placed first in the lists of the psalm. According to Kirkpatrick (1903:621; also Fox 1977:219; Cassuto 1967:129), the darkness plague was originally intended to demonstrate Yahweh's supremacy over the sun-gods of Egypt (cf. Exod 12:12) and in Psalm 105 the reference to the plague speaks of Yahweh's reign over the gods. Thus, in Psalms 95 and 105 we have references to gods and to Yahweh's power over them. Since there is no mention of deities in Book IV, except for Psalms 96 and 97 which also form strong connections with Psalm 95:1-5 and with Psalm 105 (see above), this marks a strong link between Psalms 95 and 105.

There are also general thematic links. In both psalms Yahweh is described as our God (95:7; 105:7) who has a close relationship with his people. Yahweh's sovereignty is confirmed over gods (95:3; 105:28ff), the heavens (95:3; 105:32, 39), the sea (95:5; 105:29) and the earth (95:4; 105:30). Yahweh appears as a covenant God in both (95:7ff; 106:6ff) and he rules over his people (95:7ff; 105) and earthly kings (cf. 95:3; 105:13-14).

Structural links

Structural links are weak, but there are a few points to be noted. The psalms are similar in that they begin with imperative verb forms to convey the praise of Yahweh, and they contain historical sections reviewing the history of Israel. However, Psalm 95 has two hymnic sections (vv. 1-2 and 6) and a relatively short historical section, while Psalm 105 includes a hymnic section (vv. 1-6) and a relatively long review of the history of Israel. A further difference is apparent: Psalm 95 deals with apostasy in the early

history of Israel, but Psalm 105 treats the history of Israel positively without mentioning the sins of the Israelites. Both can be classified as hymns and they are similar in that they are concerned with the history of Israel.

3.3.4.1.2 Psalms 95 and 106

There are twenty four words in common between Psalms 95 and 106.³⁸ Some of them are incidental, and some lead to significant links. Psalm 95:7-11 especially form strong lexical and thematic links with Psalm 106.

Lexical links

The plural form אבות of the word אב “father” occurs only in Psalms 95:9 and 106:6-7 in Book IV, and in both cases it indicates the forefathers of Israel who have sinned against Yahweh: In the former they are mentioned as those who hardened their hearts and tested him and who did not know his ways, while in the latter they are labeled as those who did not consider his works or remember his love, and also as those who rebelled against him. Thus, both psalms have a rare word and a theme in common. This can be

³⁸ אב (95:9; 106:6, 7); אל (95:3x2, 7; 106:14, 21, 47, 48); אמר (95:10; 106:23, 34, 48); אף (95:11; 106:40); ארץ (95:4; 106:17, 22, 24, 27, 38); ברך (95:6; 106:48); גדל (95:3x2; 106:21); מדבר (95:8; 106:9, 26); דור (95:10; 106:31); יהוה (95:1, 3, 6; 106:1, 2, 4, 25, 34, 40, 47, 48x2); הלך (95:1; 106:9); יד (95:4, 5, 7; 106:10x2, 26, 41, 42); חודה / ידה (95:2; 106:1, 47); ידע (95:10; 106:8); ים (95:5; 106:7x2, 9, 22); ישע (95:1; 106:4, 8, 21, 47); נסה (95:9; 106:14); עם (95:7, 10; 106:4, 34, 40, 48); עשה (95:5, 6; 106:3, 13, 19, 21, 35, 39); קל (95:7; 106:25); ראה (95:9; 106:5, 44); מחיבה (95:8; 106:32); שחה (95:6; 106:19); שמע (95:7; 106:2, 25, 44).

regarded as a significant link.

The root נסה “test” constitutes an important link. It occurs only in Psalms 95:9 and 106:14 in Book IV, and in both it is used in a similar context: the fathers testing Yahweh in the wilderness. With regard to this, the name of the place, מריבה “Meribah,” where the rebellion of the Israelites against Yahweh took place (Exod 17; Num 20; Deut 32:51), is found in both psalms (95:8; 106:32) and in both the incident of Meribah is treated as an example of the rebellion against Yahweh. The name מריבה is found only in these two psalms in Book IV, and Psalm 105:41 deals with the Meribah incident, but emphasizes the event as the act of Yahweh’s benevolence in supplying water for his people, which differs from the perspective in Psalms 95 and 106 stressing the acts of the fathers’ disobedience. The words נסה “test” and מריבה “Meribah” are unique only to these psalms and the common theme relative to them is found in the psalms, so that this marks a highly significant link.

A striking link is found in 95:7c and 106:25b. In these verses the words שמע “hear” and קול “voice” are repeated and the verses correspond to each other as the following shows: אִם-בְּקוֹלוֹ תִשְׁמָעוּ (“if you would hearken to his voice”) // לֹא שָׁמְעוּ בְּקוֹל יְהוָה (“they did not obey the voice of Yahweh”). The only difference between them is that Psalm 106 notes the disobedience of the fathers, while in Psalm 95 the current generation is warned not to follow the behaviour of the fathers.

Thematic links

Strong thematic links are evident. Yahweh’s anger (אף) in the

psalms seems to explain why Yahweh's people suffer. In Psalm 106:40-41 it is said that the Israelites were ruled by foreign nations because of his anger against the disobedience of his people, while Psalm 95:11 mentions that his swearing in anger caused them not to enter his rest, which implies the loss of the promised land (see analysis of Psalm 95). Thus, both psalms likewise speak of the matter which the current generation is facing: the loss of the land. On the other hand, Yahweh's displeasure (טִקַּח) with his people in Psalm 95:10 can be compared with his abhorrence (בִּעַר) of his heritage in Psalm 106:40, and in Psalm 95:10 the expression "they did not regard my ways" may be reflected in the rebellious acts of the fathers described in Psalm 106.

General thematic links are present between the psalms. Yahweh's greatness (גִּדְלוֹ) is mentioned in both (95:3; 106:21) and in both he is depicted as a Saviour (יִשְׁעוֹ) (95:1; 106:4, 8, 21, 47). Both psalms designate the fathers as the ones who sinned (95:9-10; 106:6-7), as noted, and in both the rebellious past of Israel is also used as a warning to the contemporary generation (see analyses of Psalms 95 and 106).

Structural links

Structurally the psalms have certain features in common. Hymnic elements are found in both (95:1-2, 6 and 106:1-2) and both contain stories from Israel's past, though Psalm 95 has only a short section of stories. The psalms also end with the reflection on the contemporary situation which the community of the faith faces: Psalm 95 indicates the people's not entering the promised land, while Psalm 106 contains the anticipation of the salvation from

Yahweh (i.e., “save us, O Yahweh and gather us among the nations” in v. 47) which reflects the loss of the promised land similar to Psalm 95. Moreover, both have the word תודה “thank” at the beginning (95:2; 106:1), and both end in a sombre tone, namely Yahweh’s warnings in the former and the desperate prayer for salvation in the latter.

As has been shown above, Psalm 95 forms connections with Psalms 105 and 106. However, on the whole, Psalm 95:7c-11 have strong ties with Psalm 106. The rebellious history of Israel is repeated in both and the themes found in them are very similar, but Psalm 95:7c-11 do not display any lexical or thematic links with Psalm 105. This observation suggests that Psalm 95:1-5 may be related to Psalm 105, while Psalm 95:7c-11 may be read along with Psalm 106.

3.3.4.2.1 Psalms 96 and 105

The two psalms have 20 words in common.³⁹ The lexical and thematic links between the psalms seem quite strong, and the links likewise suggest the relatedness of Psalms 96 with 105.

Lexical links

³⁹ אל (96:4, 5; 105:7); אמר (96:10; 105:11, 31, 34); ארץ (96:1, 9, 11, 13; 105:7, 11, 16, 23, 27, 30, 32, 35, 36, 44); ברא (96:8, 13x2; 105:18, 19, 23, 31, 34, 40); גוי (96:3, 10; 105:13x2, 44); יהוה (96: 1x2, 4, 5, 7x2, 8, 9, 10, 13; 105:1, 3, 4, 7, 19, 45); הלל (96:4; 105:3, 45); מלך (96:10; 105:14, 20, 30); עז (96:6, 7; 105:4); עם (96:3, 5, 7, 10, 13; 105:1, 13, 20, 24, 25, 43); עץ (96:12; 105:33); עשה (96:5; 105:5); פלא (96:3; 105:2, 5); קדש (96:9; 105:3, 42); רנן (96:12; 105:43); שמח (96:11; 105:3, 38); שיר (96:1x3, 2; 105:2); שם (96:2, 8; 105:1, 3); שמים (96:5, 11; 105:40); משפט / שפט (96:13x2; 105:5, 7).

Striking lexical links are found at the beginnings of the psalms. They have six words in common, a high frequency in such a small section, and they reveal certain similarities: הלל “praise” (96:4; 105:3, 45); יהוה “Yahweh” (96:1x2, 4; 105:1, 3, 4); עם “people” (96:3; 105:1); פלא “marvelous work” (96:3; 105:2, 5); שיר “sing” (96:1x3; 105:2); שם “name” (96:2; 105:1, 3). The repetition of liturgical terms is prominent in these verses⁴⁰ and the ideas, which form the bases for the calls to praise, are very similar. In both the praise of Yahweh’s name is emphasized, the message is to be proclaimed *among* the peoples (96:3; 105:1), and Yahweh’s marvelous works (פלא) constitute one of the themes to be declared *among* the peoples (96:3; 105:105:2).⁴¹ In addition, the phrase ישועתו “his [Yahweh’s] salvation” in Psalm 96:2 may be reflected in the עֲלֵי לִוְיָהוּ “his [Yahweh’s] deeds” in Psalm 105:1. Of the six words listed above, the term פלא “wonderful work” occurs only in Psalms 96, 98, 105 and 106 in Book IV and in these four psalms its occurrence marks a strong link between them (see below). There is no other psalm in Book IV with which Psalm 96 has a similar correspondence at the beginning as with Psalm 105, except for the group of Psalms 95-100.

A further lexical link can be noted. The term עז “strength” occurs in five psalms (90:11; 93:1; 96:6, 7; 99:4; 105:4) in Book IV,

⁴⁰ The three words, “praise,” “people” and “wonderful works” occur at the beginning sections of only the following psalms: praise (96:4; 105:3; 106:1); people (96:3; 99:1, 2; 105:1; 106:4); wonderful works (96:3; 98:1; 105:2, 5). These data further support close links between Psalms 96-99 and 105-106.

⁴¹ Cf. in 105:2 the word “marvelous work” is parallel to the word “deeds” in v. 1 where Yahweh’s deeds should be proclaimed *among* the peoples.

but only Psalms 96 and 105 mention Yahweh's "strength" in a hymnic section (96:7; 105:4) of the psalm as a motif for the call to praise him.

Thematic links

The thematic links between the psalms are quite strong. The judgement motif is visible in both. In Psalm 96 Yahweh's coming to judge the earth (vv. 10, 13) becomes the reason for the call to worship Yahweh, and in Psalm 105 the motif is repeated in several places. The latter psalm celebrates Yahweh's deeds and wonderful works, including a reference to Yahweh's judgement (cf. vv. 2, 5, 7; cf. v. 27), and vv. 28-36 illustrate Yahweh's judgement over the Egyptians, as the following sentences show, for example: he struck down their vines and their trees (v. 33a) // he struck down all the firstborn in their land (v. 36). Since Psalm 96 also takes the judgement motif as a main theme, as evidenced by repetition of the word "judge" in vv. 10 and 13 (יָדַן in v. 10; שָׁפַט in v. 13), this constitutes a strong link between the psalms. With regard to this, in Psalm 96 the earth, sea and heavens are called upon to praise Yahweh, because of his coming to judge the earth, world and peoples (v. 13), but Psalm 105 contains the motif of the judgment over the earth (vv. 30-31 and 33-35), sea (v. 29) and heaven (v. 28 and 32) as well as the nations (cf. vv. 36 and 44). On the other hand, the reference to all gods in Psalm 96:4-5 may be seen to be reminiscent of the darkness plague in 105:28, since the plague was intended to attack the gods of Egypt, as noted above. This is also considered as a significant link.

There are general thematic links. Psalm 96:5 describes Yahweh

as one who made the heavens (שׁמַיִם), while in Psalm 105:40 he is portrayed as the one who brought food from the heavens for Israel. The phrase “Yahweh reigns” in Psalm 96:10, which implies the kingship of Yahweh, may be reflected in the reference to Yahweh’s sovereignty over the nations and the kings in Psalm 105 (vv. 14, 30 and 44). On the other hand, Yahweh is greater than the gods (96:4; 105:28ff), and his sovereignty is over the heavens (96:5; 105:32, 39) and the earth (96:10, 13; 105:7). He is also seen as a sovereign over the peoples (96:10, 13; 105:1, 14) as well as a judge (96:13; 105:28ff).

Structural links

A few structural links between the psalms are observed. The psalms begin the praise of Yahweh with imperative verbs and in both the psalmists are urged to proclaim Yahweh’s marvelous works *among* the peoples (96:3, 10; 105:1) rather than in Israel. The term שׁם “name” is used twice respectively (96:3, 8; 105:1, 3) in the hymnic section of each psalm and the people are summoned to praise Yahweh’s name.

3.3.4.2.2 Psalms 96 and 106

While Psalms 96 and 105 display quite strong ties to each other, the links between Psalms 96 and 106 are weak. The psalms have 22 words in common,⁴² but only a few words that are unique

⁴² אֵל (96:4, 5; 106:14, 21, 47, 48); אֱמֹר (96:10; 106:23, 34, 48); אֶרֶץ (96:1, 9, 11, 13; 106:17, 22, 24, 27, 38); בָּרַךְ (96:2; 106:48); גִּדּוֹל (96:4; 106:21); גּוֹי (96:3, 10; 106:5, 27, 35, 41, 47); יְהוָה (96:1x2, 4, 5, 7x2, 8, 9, 10, 13; 106:1, 2, 4, 25, 34, 40, 47, 48x2); הִלֵּל

to them. Most of the common words are incidental. However, there are certain features to be mentioned.

Lexical links

The links between the psalms are displayed at their beginnings. They have six words in common: גוֹי “nations” (96:3; 106:5); הַלֵּל “praise” (96:4; 106:1, 5); יְהוָה “Yahweh” (96:1x2; 106:1, 2, 4); יִשַׁע “save” (96:2; 106:4); עַם “people” (96:3; 106:4). Most of the words listed, except for the divine name יְהוָה, do not appear at the beginning of any other psalm in Book IV. An exception is only the groups of Psalms 95-100 and 105-106 which form links to one another.⁴³ This evidence suggests certain links between Psalms 96 and 106 on the one hand or between the group of Psalms 95-100 and Psalms 105-106 on the other hand.

As noted, the word פֶּלֶא “wonderful work” occurs in four psalms (96; 98; 105 and 106) in Book IV, and its occurrence in Psalms 96:3 and 106:7 and 22 can be considered as marking a link. However, the difference is clear. In Psalm 96 Yahweh’s “wonderful works” is the subject-matter to be told among the nations, but Psalm 106 mentions them to remind the Israelites of their wrongdoings in

(96:4; 106:1, 5, 48); יָם (96:11; 106:7x2, 9, 22); יָרָא (96:4; 106:22); יִשַׁע (96:2; 106:4, 8, 21, 47); יָדָבֵר (96:3, 7, 8; 106:20); עַם (96:3, 5, 7, 10, 13; 106:4, 34, 40, 48); עֲשֵׂה (96:5; 106:3, 13, 19, 21, 35, 39); פֶּלֶא (96:3; 106:7, 22); צַדִּיק (96:13; 106:3, 31); קָדָשׁ (96:9; 106:16, 47); שִׂמְחָה (96:11; 106:5x2); שָׁחָה (96:9; 106:19); שִׁיר (96:1x3, 2; 106:12); שָׁם (96:2, 8; 106:8, 47); שָׁפַט / מִשְׁפָּט (96:13x2; 106:3).

⁴³ Only the following psalms in Book IV contain the words “nation,” “people,” “save” and “praise” occur at their beginnings: nation (96:3; 98:2; 106:5); people (96:3; 99:1, 2; 105:1; 106:4); save (95:1; 96:2; 98:1; 106:4); praise (96:4; 105:3; 106:1). The evidence indicates certain links between Psalms 95-99 and 105-106.

that they did not remember Yahweh's wonderful works in Egypt. On the other hand, the word אֱלִיל "idol" in 96:4 may correspond to the word עֶצֶב "idol" in 106:36 and 38 in that they have a related meaning. However, once again the difference is obvious: Psalm 96 refers to the idol which will be judged and which the nations have worshipped, while Psalm 106 mentions the idols that Yahweh's people had served, the worship of which had caused Yahweh's anger. Thus, concerning the use of the words, the difference of perspective between the psalms is clearly noticeable.

Thematic links

General thematic links are perceptible between the psalms. In both Yahweh is mentioned as a saviour (96:2, 13; 106:4, 8, 21, 47) and a judge (96:13; 106:8ff) and it is said that glory should be ascribed to his name (96:8; 106:47). His reign over the world is clearly mentioned in Psalm 96 (v. 10), but in Psalm 106 it is only implied in the events dealing with his people. The praise of Yahweh is dealt with in both (96:1-3), and justice and righteousness are mentioned as the outcomes which will be accomplished by Yahweh's coming in Psalm 96 (v. 13), while in Psalm 106 these values are stated as desirable for Yahweh's people (v. 3). His sovereignty is confirmed over the heavens (v. 5) and the world (v. 10) in Psalm 96, but in Psalm 106 it is implied in the contexts of treating the history of Israel (i.e., 106:18, 27, 41, 47). In addition, in both the gods are described as standing against Yahweh (96:4-5; cf. 106:28, 36ff).

Structural links

Structural links are very weak. As noted, the beginnings of the psalms are tied together by repetition of several common words and both call for the praise of Yahweh with imperative verbs. The body of Psalm 106 has historical reviews which Psalm 96 does not contain. The latter ends with the anticipation of Yahweh, while the former closes with a prayer asking for Yahweh to save his people.

As we have seen, certain links between Psalms 96 and 105-106 are confirmed. They have many words in common in their respective beginnings and in both the motives for the praise of Yahweh are similar.

It is clear that the beginnings of Psalms 96 and 106 form certain links. However, the themes associated with the words פלא and “idol” (אֱלִילִים in 96:4; עֶצֶב in 106:36 and 38) are contrastive in perspective.

To summarize, the beginning of Psalm 96 is tied to the beginnings of Psalms 105 and 106, but Psalm 96 displays closer affinities with Psalm 105 than with Psalm 106. Psalms 96 and 105 reveal more universalistic overtones than does Psalm 106 and in both Yahweh’s judgement motive against the nations is present, a feature that is absent from Psalm 106.

3.3.4.3.1 Psalms 97 and 105

There are lexical, thematic and structural links apparent between the psalms. A few words are unique to these psalms, but they form close links in important ways. Twenty-four words occur in

both psalms,⁴⁴ and some of these are worth noting.

Lexical links

The term ענן “cloud” occurs only in three psalms (97:2; 99:7 105:39) in Book IV and only in one other psalm (i.e., 78:14) in the rest of the Psalter. Psalm 99:7 uses it in association with the wilderness experiences, as the names “Moses” and “Aaron” (v. 6) and the phrase “pillar of cloud” recall. However, Psalms 97 (v.3) and 105 additionally have the words אש “fire” and אור “light” which do not occur in Psalm 99. Psalm 97:2 uses the cloud in the description of a divine theophany, while Psalm 105:39 mentions it as a theophanic pillar (Briggs & Briggs 1969:347).⁴⁵ Since there is no other psalm in Book IV which contains all three words,⁴⁶ except for Psalms 97 and 105, the occurrences of these words in Psalms 97 and 105 are regarded as a significant link.

Striking links are found between the end of Psalm 97 (vv. 10-12), which is the second stanza of the psalm, and the beginning of Psalm 105 (vv. 1-6), which is the first strophe of the first stanza.

⁴⁴ אד (97:5; 105:21); אור (97:4; 105:39); אל (97:7, 9; 105:7); ארץ (97:1, 4, 5, 9; 105:7, 11, 16, 23, 27, 30, 32, 35, 36, 44); אש (97:3; 105:32, 39); יהוה (97:1, 5, 8, 9, 10, 12; 105:1, 3, 4, 7, 19, 45); הלך (97:3; 105:13, 41); הלל (97:7; 105:4, 45); זכר (97:12; 105:5, 8); זרע (97:11; 105:6); ידה (97:12; 105:1); לב (97:11; 105:3, 25); מלך (97:1; 105:14, 20, 30); נפש (97:10; 105:18, 22); עם (97:6; 105:1, 13, 20, 24, 25, 43); ענן (97:2; 105:39); צר (97:3; 105:24); קדש (97:12; 105:3, 42); רעע / רע (97:10; 105:15); שֹׁמֵחַ (97:1, 8, 11, 12; 105:3, 38); שָׁנָא (97:10; 105:25); שָׁמַיִם (97:6; 105:40); שָׁמַר (97:10; 105:45); מִשְׁפָּט (97:2; 105:5, 7).

⁴⁵ The terms ענן “cloud” and ערפל “thick darkness” in Psalm 97:2 are reminiscent of the theophany at Mount Sinai (Exod 19: 16; 20: 21; Deut 4: 11; 5: 22). Kuntz (1967:211-212) emphasizes that in the theophany of Psalm 97 “the motifs of Sinai are not only recollected but are sharpened and expanded” (212).

⁴⁶ The other occurrence of the three words in the Psalter is found in Psalm 78.

These sections have 7 roots in common: זָכַר / זִכָּר “remember” or “remembrance” (97:12; 105:5); זֶרַע “seed” (97:11; 105:6); יָדָה “thank” (97:12; 105:1); יְהוָה “Yahweh” (97:10, 12; 105:1, 3, 4); לֵב “heart” (97:11; 105:3); קָדָשׁ “holy” (97:12; 105:3); שָׂמַח “rejoice” (97:11, 12; 103:3), and such a close correspondence can hardly be accidental. Of the terms listed, the root זֶרַע occurs only four times (97:11; 102:29; 105:6; 106:27) in Book IV, and three of these psalms, excluding Psalm 102, are related to one another. Moreover, the sentence “joy is for the upright of heart” in 97:11b (וְלִישְׂרָיִם לֵב (שִׂמְחָה) corresponds closely to the “let the hearts of those who seek Yahweh rejoice” (יְשָׂמַח לֵב מִבִּקְשֵׁי יְהוָה) in Psalm 105:3b, and there is no other psalm in Book IV which mentions the rejoicing of the hearts of Yahweh’s people. In addition, the phrase לְזִכָּר קָדְשׁוֹ (“to his holy name”) in Psalm 97:12 is identical with בְּשֵׁם קָדְשׁוֹ (“in his holy name”) in Psalm 105:3a and in both Yahweh’s people are urged to praise his name. All these features confirm that the end of Psalm 97 has strong links with the beginning of Psalm 105.

Furthermore, both psalms have the word צָר “foes” (97:3; 105:24), which is also found in Psalms 102:3, 106:11 and 44 (cf. 91:15) in Book IV. However, the meaning “foes” is found only in three places (97:3; 105:24; 106:11) and the rest have the meaning “distress.” These three Psalms 97, 105 and 106, are related to one another, that is to say, Psalm 97 is related to Psalm 105 and the latter also to Psalm 106.

Thematic links

Strong thematic links are apparent. As noted above, Psalm 97 explicitly mentions gods (vv. 7 and 9) and Psalm 105 implicates

their existence through the contexts dealing with the darkness plague (v. 28ff), while both describe Yahweh's sovereignty over them. The judgement motif is strongly present in both. In Psalm 97 the motif comprises the main message of the psalm, and Psalm 105 uses the word *מִשְׁפָּט* "judgement" twice (vv. 2, 7) at the introduction of the psalm, while the body of the psalm demonstrates how Yahweh judged foreign people and saved Israel.

General thematic links are present between the psalms. The psalms describe Yahweh's sovereignty over the heavens (97:6, 9; 105:28ff, 32, 39), the earth (97:5; 105:7, 11, 32), the world (97:4, 6; cf. 105:44) and the people (97:6; 105:44). Both also include theophanic descriptions (97:2-3; 105:39) and describe Yahweh as a judge (97:7-8; 105:28-36). In addition, both mention the salvation of Yahweh's people, from the hands of the wicked in Psalm 97 (v. 10) and from the hands of Egyptians in Psalm 105 (vv. 37-38), and in both Yahweh is described as a king, as implied by the phrase "Yahweh reigns" in Psalm 97:1 and by the reference to Yahweh's reign over the kings in Psalm 105:14.

Structural links

Structurally the psalms display certain similar features. They can be classified as hymns and are concerned with the praise of Yahweh. In Psalm 97 Yahweh's kingship is mainly concerned, while Psalm 105 celebrates Yahweh's deeds manifested in the history of Israel. As noted, the end of Psalm 97 and the beginning of Psalm 105 have many words and phrases in common and both are concerned with Yahweh's people. In the former the righteous people are summoned to rejoice and give to thanks, while in the latter

Yahweh's chosen people are called to praise. In addition, the middle sections of both psalms deal with the judgement motif (97:7-8; 105:28-36), and after this motif, in both Yahweh's people enjoy the result of the judgement (97:8; 105:37-38).

3.3.4.3.1 Psalms 97 and 106

Certain lexical and thematic links between Psalms 97 and 106 are observed, but most of them are used contrastively. This may be caused by the difference of perspective between them: Psalm 97 has an universal scope, while Psalm 106 is more domestic by focusing on the wayward history of Israel.

Lexical links

The psalms have 26 words in common,⁴⁷ of which several contribute to the links between them. A link is found in Psalms 97:10 and 106:10. The word יד “hand” occurs in both and both verses state the deliverance of Yahweh's people from the wicked, as the following sentences show: “he delivers them from the hand of the wicked” (מִיַּד רָשָׁעִים יִצִּילֵם) // “he delivered them from the power of the enemy” (יִגְאָלֵם מִיַּד אֹרֵב). However, a difference is perceived between the psalms concerning the use of the word. In Psalm 97

⁴⁷ אל (97:7, 9; 106:14, 21, 47, 48); ארץ (97:1, 4, 5, 9; 106:17, 22, 24, 27, 38); אש (97:3; 106:18); בת (97:8; 106:37, 38); יהוה (97:1, 5, 8, 9, 10, 12; 106:1, 2, 4, 25, 34, 40, 47, 48x2); הלך (97:3; 106:9); הלל (97:7; 106:1, 5, 48); זכר (97:12; 106:4, 7, 45); זרע (97:11; 106:27); יד (97:10; 106:10x2, 26, 41, 42); ידה (97:12; 106:1, 47); להט (97:3; 106:18); נצל (97:10; 106:43); עבד (97:7; 106:36); עם (97:6; 106:4, 34, 40, 48); צדק (97:2, 11, 12; 106:3, 31); צר (97:3; 106:11, 44); קדש (97:12; 106:16, 47); ראה (97:4, 6; 106:5, 44); רב (97:1; 106:43); רע / רעע (97:10; 106:32); רשע (97:10; 106:6, 18); נשחח (97:7; 106:19); שמע (97:8; 106:2, 25, 44); שמר (97:10; 106:3); משפט (97:2; 106:3).

Yahweh's saving his people leads to the consequent message flowing from the whole thought of the psalm, and thus, his people will anticipate such a salvation in future. However, in Psalm 106 Yahweh's saving acts are described in contrast to the disobedience of his people and are used to emphasize that Yahweh faithfully saved his people many times, but they did not obey him. Thus, a contrastive perspective between the psalms is observed. The word **לצל** "deliver" is also worth noting. It is found only three times in Book IV in Psalms 91:3, 97:10 and 106:43, thus it can be regarded as a rare word. In Psalm 97 it is used to speak of the salvation of Yahweh's people from the hands of the wicked and Psalm 106 uses it to emphasize the fact that he delivered (**לצל**) his people frequently, but that they were rebellious. In both the word is used to refer to the deliverance of Yahweh's people, but Psalm 97:10 employs it to emphasize Yahweh's saving acts on behalf of his people, while 106:43 uses it to emphasize the rebellious attitude of his people. Once again the word is used quite differently in the two psalms. The word **הקט** "worship" is notable here. It occurs in five psalms in Book IV,⁴⁸ and all these psalms are, surprisingly, related to one another. Concerning the use of the word, Psalm 97 says that all gods and their worshippers will bow down (**הקט**) before Yahweh, but in Psalm 106 Yahweh's people are charged with having worshipped (**הקט**) idols. Thus, the two psalms form a link by using the rare word, but they use it quite differently.

Strong lexical links may be discerned in Psalms 97:3 and 106:18. These verses have the two words **אש** "fire" and **להקט** "burn

⁴⁸ 95:6; 96:9; 97:7; 99:5, 9 and 106:19.

up” in common. The former word occurs in four psalms (97:3; 104:4; 105:32, 39; 106:18) in Book IV, while the latter occurs three times in Book IV in Psalms 97:3, 104:4; 106:18. Thus, the words are rarely used in Book IV. Concerning the use of the words, Psalm 104, which has both these words, employs them to describe Yahweh’s powerful sovereignty in the heavens, but the verses of Psalms 97 and 106 refer to the object which the flaming fire (אש) should be directed against, something which Psalm 104 does not include. In Psalm 97 the object that the fire should burn up is Yahweh’s adversaries (צר) (i.e. the gods and their worshippers as described in v. 7) and in Psalm 106 it is the wicked (רשע) among his people. The verses form therefore a close link in terms of using the same words and similar ideas, but they seem to be applied quite differently.

As between the end of Psalm 97 and the beginning of Psalm 105, lexical links are found at the end of Psalm 97 and the beginning of Psalm 106. There are five common words, and they occur in the second stanza of Psalm 97, vv. 10-12, and in the first stanza of Psalm 106, vv. 1-5, which comprise an introduction to the whole psalm: יהוה “Yahweh” (97:10, 12; 106:1, 2, 4); זכר “remember” (97:12; 106:4); ידה “thank” (97:12; 106:1); צדק “righteous” (97:11, 12; 106:3); שמר “preserve” (97:10; 106:3). The correspondences of these words between the end and the beginning of the psalms likewise suggest certain links between them. Finally, both psalms have the word בת “daughter” in Psalm 97:8 and 106:37-38, which is not found in other psalms in Book IV, but its use in the psalms seems incidental, since there is no correspondence of theme.

Thematic links

The general thematic links between the psalms should be noted. In both psalms, the heavens (97:3-4; cf. 106:18), the earth (97:4-5; 106:22) and nations (97:6; 106:47) are under Yahweh's sovereignty, and in both he appears as the one who can care for his people (97:10ff; 106:4, 47). He is a saviour (97:10ff; 106:10, 21, 47) as well as a judge against gods or the wicked (97:7-8; cf. 106:8-10), but Psalm 106 mentions him as the one who judged his people (vv. 41ff). The reference to idols is found in both (97:7, 9; 106:28, 36ff) and both are concerned with the praise of Yahweh's name, as the following parallel phrases show: קִדְּוֹתָיִךְ "his holy name" (97:12) // קִדְּוֹתָיִךְ אֱלֹהִים "your holy name" (106:47). In addition, in Psalm 97:3 Yahweh's throne is based on righteousness and justice, but Psalm 106:3 describes these qualities as needed by his people.

Structural links

The psalms start with a call to the praise of Yahweh and end with a similar perspective: as Psalm 97 closes the psalm by anticipating the salvation of the righteous people (v. 10-12), so Psalm 106 end with a prayer asking Yahweh to save his people from the nations (v. 47). In addition, as noted, the end of the former has many similarities to the beginning of Psalm 106 in that they share many common words.

As has been seen, Psalm 97 forms close connections with Psalms 105 and 106. The ties between the end of Psalm 97 and the beginning of Psalms 105 and 106 illustrate this. Lexical and thematic connections are apparent between Psalms 97 and 106. For example, the words נִצַּל "deliver," אֵשׁ "fire," and לֶהֲטוּ "burn up,"

contribute strong links between the psalms. However, most of the links found between these psalms are used in contrastive concepts, except for the links between the end section of Psalm 97 and the beginning section of Psalm 106. This may arise from the different intent of the messages of the two psalms. Psalm 97:1-9 mainly deal with the messages directed against gods and their worshippers, while Psalm 97:10-12 focus on the righteous who enjoy the result of the messages described in vv. 1-9. Similarly, the beginning section of Psalm 106 deals with Yahweh's praise in favour of the people of Israel, but the body section of the psalm charges them with having erred. Thus, the end section of Psalm 97 forms certain links with the beginning section of Psalm 106 without contrastive concepts, but the thematic links found between Psalm 97:1-9 and the body section of Psalm 106 are largely contrastive.

On the other hand, Psalm 97 forms close ties with Psalm 105. Strong lexical links are, for example, ענן "cloud," אש "fire," and אור "light," and the end section of Psalm 97 and the beginning section of Psalm 105 also display close links. What is important is that concerning the use of certain words they reveal considerable correspondence of themes. All these considerations seem to suggest to us that Psalm 97 has much stronger connections with Psalm 105 than with Psalm 106.

3.3.4.4.1 Psalms 98 and 105

There are noticeable lexical and thematic links between the psalms, though they are not strong. The psalms have 18 words in

common,⁴⁹ but most of these are incidental.

Lexical links

Conspicuous links are found in the repetition of words at the beginning of both psalms. There are 7 words in common: יהוה “Yahweh” (98:1x2; 105:1, 3); זכר “remember” (98:3; 105:5); ידע “know” (98:2; 105:1); עשה “make” (98:1; 105:5); פלא “wonderful works” (98:1; 105:2, 5); קדש “holy” (98:1; 105:3); שיר “sing” (98:1x2; 105:2), all of them occurring in the first segment of each psalm, that is, the first strophe (vv. 1-3) in Psalm 98 and the first strophe (vv. 1-6) of the first stanza in Psalm 105. The occurrence of the seven common words at the beginning among a total of eighteen common words in these psalms mark a high percentage which does not seem accidental.⁵⁰ This observation leads one to infer that the motive of praise at the beginning of the psalms may be the same. Indeed, the word פלא “wonderful work,” rarely found in Book IV, as noted, occurs in Psalms 98:1 and 105:2 and 5, and it is mentioned as a motive to praise Yahweh in both.

Further links between the beginnings of the psalms are also

⁴⁹ אל (98:3; 105:7); ארץ (98:3, 4, 9; 105:7, 11, 16, 23, 27, 30, 32, 35, 36, 44); ב (98:9; 105:18, 19, 23, 31, 34, 40); בית (98:3; 105:21); ג (98:2; 105:13, 13, 44); יהוה (98:1x2, 4, 5, 6, 9; 105:1, 3, 4, 7, 19, 45); זכר (98:3; 105:5, 8, 42); זמר (98:4, 5; 105:2); ידע (98:2; 105:1); מלך (98:6; 105:14, 20, 30); נהר (98:8; 105:41); עשה (98:1; 105:5); פלא (98:1; 105:2, 5); קדש (98:1; 105:3, 42); רנן (98:4, 8; 105:43); ישראל (98:3; 105:10, 23); שיר (98:1x2; 105:2); משקט / שפט (98:9x2; 105:5, 7).

⁵⁰ Only the following psalms in Book IV have the following words at their beginning, namely in the first segment: זכר (98:3; 105:5; 106:4); ידע (98:2; 100:3; 105:1); עשה (98:1; 100:3; 105:5; 106:3); קדש (98:1; 103:1; 105:3); שיר (101:1; 96:1; 98:1; 105:2). These data illustrate close links between Psalms 95-100 and 105-106.

found in Psalms 98:1 and 105:5, since the expression “wonderful works he has done” (נִפְלְאוֹתָיִךְ אֱלֹהֵינוּ) in Psalm 98:1 is almost identical with “his wonderful works that he has done” (נִפְלְאוֹתָיִךְ אֱלֹהֵינוּ) in Psalm 105:5, with both the words פלא and עשה being repeated. In addition, the name ישראל “Israel” marks a further link between the psalms. It is found only in these psalms (98:3; 105:10, 23) in Book IV, except for Psalm 106:48, though other psalms implicitly mention the contents associated with the name.

Thematic links

Thematic links are not strong, but general links should be noted. Both present Yahweh as a covenant God remembering his promises given to Israel (98:3; 105:8) and in both Yahweh’s judgement is mentioned (98:9; 105:7). Also, the close relationship between Yahweh and his people is emphasized in the reference to “our God” (98:3; 105:7) and both describe Yahweh as one who has done his marvelous works on behalf of his people. In Psalm 98 Yahweh’s remembering his love and faithfulness promised to Israel (v. 3) brought about his wonderful works on behalf of his people, while Psalm 105:5 summons all worshippers to remember the wonderful works he has done. Still further, Yahweh’s sovereignty over the world is confirmed in both (98:6ff; 105:14ff). Psalm 98:6ff refer to Yahweh as a king over the world and all the peoples and in Psalm 105:14ff his sovereignty is over all kings of the world. In addition, as noted in the analysis of Psalm 98, since Psalm 98:1-3 may reflect the historical events behind the Exodus and since Psalm 105 (cf. vv. 5 and 27) also has a reference to the event of the

Exodus, a thematic link can be identified concerning this matter.

Structural links

Structural similarities are very weak. Both psalms begin the summons for worshipping Yahweh with imperative verb forms. The beginnings of the psalms have many similar words and motifs of praise in common. The whole of Psalm 98 concerns the praise of Yahweh, while Psalm 105 has a hymnic section and a historical section.

3.3.4.4.2 Psalms 98 and 106

Certain ties are observed between Psalms 98 and 106. They have 16 words in common,⁵¹ and some of them contribute to the links. The links between the psalms seem much stronger than those between Psalms 98 and 105.

Lexical links

The root שׁע occurs once in Psalm 98 (v. 1) and four times in Psalm 106 (vv. 8, 10, 21, 47), while the root שׁעַה , derived from the שׁע , is found twice in the former (vv. 2, 3) and once in the latter (v. 4). The former word is not found in other psalms in Book

⁵¹ אל (98:3; 106:14, 21, 47, 48); ארץ (98:3, 4, 9; 106:17, 22, 24, 27, 38); גוי (98:2; 106:5, 27, 35, 41, 47); יהוה (98:1x2, 4, 5, 6, 9; 106:1, 2, 4, 25, 34, 40, 47, 48); זכר (98:3; 106:4, 7, 45); חסד (98:3; 106:1, 7, 45); ישע (98:1, 2, 3; 106:4, 8, 10, 21, 47); עם (98:9; 106:4, 34, 40, 48); עשה (98:1; 106:3, 13, 19, 21, 35, 39); פלא (98:1; 106:7, 22); צדקה (98:2; 106:3, 31); קול (98:5, 6; 106:25); ראה (98:3; 106:5, 44); ישראל (98:3; 106:48); שיר (98:1x1; 106:12); משפט / שפט (98:9x2; 106:3).

IV, though the latter also occurs in Psalms 91:16 and 96:2 and the root עֲשֵׂה , derived from עָשָׂה , is also found in Psalm 95:1. Since the four psalms, 95, 96, 98, and 106, containing the roots noted above—apart from Psalm 91—form certain links to one another, it is not surprising that the occurrences of the cognate roots are concentrated only in these psalms. Psalms 98 and 106 refer to Yahweh’s salvation of his people in the past or in the future through the repetition of the roots. With regard to this, Clark’s (1993) investigation of the meaning of רָצוּן in the Hebrew Bible sheds a further light on a close link between Psalms 98 and 106. He (1993:156-158) notes that רָצוּן and $\text{הִשְׁפִּיעַ$ share a common semantic field and points out Psalms 98:2-3 and 106:1 and 4 as containing a similar thought: in both psalms “ הִשְׁפִּיעַ is a manifestation of Yahweh’s רָצוּן ; and while his people experience and are aware of his רָצוּן and הִשְׁפִּיעַ , the latter alone is evident to the people of other nations” (1993:157-158). Clark lists 2 Sam 22:51; Pss 13:6; 18:51; 98; 106; and 118 in the Hebrew Bible as having the words רָצוּן and הִשְׁפִּיעַ in parallel, and he categorizes only three psalms (98; 106 and 118) as having a similar idea. This can also be regarded as a significant link.

As has already been noted several times, the word פִּלְא “wonderful works” in Psalm 98:1 and 106:7 and 22 is very rare in Book IV, and can also be regarded as a significant link between the psalms. The historical background reflected in Psalm 106:7 and 22 (cf. the references to Egypt in v. 7 and to the land of Ham in 22) might be the event of the Exodus. Psalm 98:1 may also have that event as a historical background (see the analysis of the psalm). This perspective may further enhance the link made between the psalms by the word פִּלְא .

The repetition of the words at the beginning of Psalms 98 and 106 also suggest close links between them. These beginnings have 8 words in common: גוֹי (98:2; 106:5); יְהוָה (98:1x2; 106:1, 2, 4); זָכַר (98:3; 106:4); חָסַד (98:3; 106:1); יִשַׁע (98:1, 2, 3; cf. 106:3); עָשָׂה (98:1; 106:3); צַדִּיקָה (98:2; 106:3); רָאָה (98:3; 106:5). If Psalm 106:6-7 are regarded as the introduction (i.e. first stanza) of the psalm, as some exegetes do, the word פִּלְאָ in 98:1 and 106:7 may also be included. Among a total of sixteen common words between the psalms, fifty percent of the words occurs at the beginning of the psalms which constitute a very limited number of verses (e.g. within vv. 1-3 among the nine verses in Psalm 98 and within vv. 1-5 among the forty eight verses in Psalm 106). These data suggest that the repetition of the words at the beginning of the psalms can hardly be coincidental.⁵²

Psalms 98:3 and 106:7 share common words and ideas. In both the words זָכַר "remember" and חָסַד "love" are present and the covenant relationship is supposed, as the phrase "the house of Israel" in the former and the word "our fathers" in the latter indicate. The words זָכַר and חָסַד are not found elsewhere in the group of Psalms 96-99, apart from Psalm 98:3, though Psalm 97:12 contains the root זָכַר, and the combination of words זָכַר and חָסַד occurs only in Psalms 98:3 and 106:7 in Book IV. Moreover, the word פִּלְאָ in Psalm 106:7 can be compared with the word יְשׁוּעָה

⁵² Only the following psalms in Book IV have the words at their beginnings: גוֹי (96:3; 98:2; 106:5); זָכַר (98:3; 105:5; 106:4); חָסַד (92:3; 98:3; 101:1; 103:4; 106:1); יִשַׁע (98:1; 95:1; 96:2; 98:1, 2, 3; 106:4); עָשָׂה (98:1; 100:3; 105:5); צַדִּיקָה / צַדִּיק (96:3; 97:2; 98:2; 106:3); רָאָה (98:3; 106:5). These data show that there are close links between Psalms 95-100 and 105-106.

“victory” in Psalm 98:3, since the word יְשׁוּעָה in Psalm 98:3, paralleled with the words יְשׁוּעָה in v. 1b and יְשׁוּעָה in v. 2, illustrates and defines the meaning of the פְּלִא in Psalm 98:1b (see the analysis of Psalm 98). Moreover, a similar idea is repeated in Psalms 98:3 and 106:7. In the former Yahweh is depicted as having done his marvelous works (i.e. they are paralleled with the word “victory,” as noted above) on behalf of his people, since he remembered his steadfast love and faithfulness to the house of Israel, while in the latter it is said that Yahweh showed his wonderful works and steadfast love to the fathers of Israel, but they did not consider or remember them. Thus, the verses of the psalms form close connections by repeating common words and themes. However, the only difference between the psalms is that in Psalm 98 Yahweh’s wonderful works are mentioned as the motive for praising him, but in Psalm 106 they are stated to emphasize the unfaithfulness of Yahweh’s people in not remembering his wonderful works. Despite this difference, the close correspondence between Psalms 98:3 and 106:7 implies the possibility that the historical background behind the motive (i.e. marvelous works) of the praise in Psalm 98:3 might be Yahweh’s acts in the history of Israel (see the analysis of Psalm 98) as reflected in Psalm 106:7.

Thematic links

Thematic links are weak. Only a few points are noteworthy. Both psalms are concerned with Yahweh’s deeds in the past (98:1-3; 106:2, 7) and in both Yahweh is portrayed as a covenant God (98:3; 106:4-5, 45-46). He is also the God of Israel (98:3; 106).

Structural links

Structurally, there are a few common elements between the psalms. Both begin with imperative verb forms which constitute calls to the praise of Yahweh and which praise Yahweh's deeds on behalf of his people in the past. Psalm 106 has a hymnic section at the beginning and a historical section in the body, while the whole of Psalm 106 forms only a hymnic section.

As noted, Psalm 98 has connections with Psalms 105 and 106. Psalms 98 and 105 have seven words in common among a total of 18 common terms within the very limited number of verses at their beginning, and they display common terms like "wonderful works" and "Israel." In addition, the historical background behind Psalm 98:1-3 has an echo in the historical contexts described in Psalm 105.

The beginnings of Psalms 98 and 106 have eight words in common among a total of 16 common words respectively. In addition, there are many lexical and thematic connections between the psalms.

Psalm 98 has much in common with both Psalms 105 and 106. For example, the beginning of Psalm 98 has certain links with both the beginnings of Psalms 105 and 106, and the historical background in Psalm 98:1-3 has an echo also in both of Psalms 105 and 106. However, in the light of the assumption that Psalm 98 should be linked to Psalm 99 rather than to Psalm 96, as we have suggested, Psalm 98 can have much closer links with Psalm 106 than with Psalm 105. However, a difficulty may arise. Psalm 106 deals with the history of apostasy in Israel, but Psalm 98 has little to do with it. The specific perspective described in Psalm 98 is quite well in accord with that in Psalm 105, but the whole of the former seems to

have a domestic perspective, as we suggested, rather than an universalistic overtone such as is found in the whole of Psalm 105. Indeed, since Psalm 98 has more links with Psalm 106 than with Psalm 105, the argument for the connections of Psalm 98 with Psalm 106 seems possible.

3.3.4.5.1 Psalms 99 and 105

The psalms display 22 words in common,⁵³ and many lexical links occur between these psalms. However, a closer scrutiny marks certain differences between them concerning the use of words.

Lexical links

Two persons are mentioned by name in these psalms: אהרן “Aaron” (99:6; 105:26) and מֹשֶׁה “Moses” (99:6; 105:26). The name “Aaron” occurs only in three psalms (99:6; 105:26; 106:16) in Book IV, all of which form close links to one another, while “Moses” is found eight times in Book IV.⁵⁴ The former name is found nine times in the Psalter and the latter appears once elsewhere in the Psalter (in Psalm 77:20), except for the listed psalms in Book IV. The name “Moses” appears mostly in Book IV and the combination

⁵³ אהרן (99:6; 105:26); אל (99:5, 8x2, 9x2; 105:7); ארץ (99:1; 105:7, 11, 16, 23, 27, 30, 32, 35, 36, 44); יהוה (99:1x2, 5x2, 6, 8, 9x2; 105:1, 3, 4, 7, 19, 45); היה (99:8; 105:12); חֹק (99:7; 105:45); ידה (99:3; 105:1); מֶלֶךְ (99:1, 4; 105:14, 20, 30); מֹשֶׁה (99:6; 105:26); נחן (99:7; 105:32, 44); עֹז (99:4; 105:4); עַם (99:1, 2; 105:1, 13, 20, 24, 25, 45); עֲלִילָה (99:8; 105:1); עֵנַן (99:7; 105:39); יַעֲקֹב (99:4; 105:6, 10, 23); עֲשָׂה (99:4; 105:5); קָדַשׁ (99:3, 5, 9x2; 105:3, 42); רִגְלִי (99:5; 105:18); קָרָא (99:6x2; 105:1, 16); שֵׁם (99:3, 6; 105:1, 3); שָׁמַר (99:7; 105:45); מִשְׁפָּט (99:4x2; 105:5, 7).

⁵⁴ 90:1, 99:6, 103:7, 105:26 and 106:16, 23, 32 and 33.

of the names “Moses-Aaron” is found four times in the Psalter (77:20; 99:6; 105:26 and 106:16). Thus, the occurrence of these names in Book IV is very conspicuous and their occurrence in the combination of names “Moses-Aaron” can especially be considered as a significant link. The occurrences of the two names in Psalms 99:6, 105:26 and 106:16 may be explained by the relationship between them, that is to say, Psalm 99 may be related to Psalms 105 and 106, and the latter two psalms are related to each other. However, a close examination leads us to look at a certain difference between the psalms concerning the use of the names. In Psalm 99 Aaron and Moses play the roles of intercessors (see analysis of the psalm), but in Psalm 105 they are mentioned as Yahweh’s servants who acted on his behalf. Their roles as the intercessors in Psalm 99 are rather reminiscent of Psalm 106:23 where Moses is referred to as an intercessor who mitigated Yahweh’s wrath, though there is no mention of Aaron (cf. in Psalm 106:16 Moses and Aaron are mentioned together in the implicit reference to their roles as intercessors). This observation indicates that the perspective reflected in Psalm 99 concerning the use of the two names is much closer to that in Psalm 106 than that in Psalm 105.

There are other lexical links that may be noted. The root עֲלִילָה “deed,” derived from עָלַל “act,” is also rarely found in Book IV. It occurs three times in Book IV, in Psalms 99:8, 103:7, 105:1. Regarding the use of the root, Psalm 99 refers to the misdeeds which Yahweh’s people have committed, while Psalm 105 mentions Yahweh’s deeds which should be praised. Thus, though Psalms 99 and 105 share the rare root, its application is quite different. However, when Psalm 99 is compared to Psalm 106 (vv, 29 and 39)

which contains a cognate root מַעַלֵּל, derived from עָלַל, the latter psalm reveals a close affinity with the former concerning the meaning of the roots, since Psalm 106:29 and 39 refer to the wrongdoings (עֲלִילָה) of the Israelites in the same way as in Psalm 99:8. On the other hand, the word עָנָן “cloud” is also to be noted. It is found four times in the Psalter (78:14; 97:2; 99:7; 105:39) and three times in Book IV, thus serving as a rare link between Psalms 99 and 105. Concerning the use of the word, the pillar of cloud in Psalm 99:7 may have an echo in the reference to the cloud of the wilderness in Psalm 105:39. However, there is a slight difference between the psalms: Psalm 105:39 contains the two words אֵשׁ “fire” and אֹרֶךְ “light” which Psalm 99:7 does not include, and additionally, the latter negatively refers to the event of the wilderness associated with the cloud, while the former reports the positive side of the event. The statement in Psalm 105:39 is much closer to the context of Psalm 97:2-3 (see the discussions of the links between them) than that in Psalm 99:7. This may once again illustrate that each of Psalms 96-99 may be linked with Psalms 105-106, but there may be different perspectives on this matter.

Further links should be pointed out. Psalms 99:7 and 105:45 both contain the words שָׁמַר “keep” and חָק “statutes,” the latter of which is found only in three psalms (94:20; 99:7 and 105:10, 45) in Book IV, and both psalms emphasize the importance of Yahweh’s statutes and laws. On the other hand, the name יַעֲקֹב “Jacob” occurs only in three psalms in Book IV (94:7, 99:4 and 105:6, 10, 23), and Psalm 99:4 has a reference to Yahweh’s justice and righteousness in Jacob which is also reminiscent of his covenant with Jacob as expressed in Psalm 105:10, thus implying a link between Psalms 99

and 105.

Thematic links

There are thematic similarities between the psalms. In both Yahweh reigns over the earth (99:1; 105:7, 11, 30, 40), peoples (99:1-2; 105:1, 14ff, 44) and his people (99:4, 6ff; 105:6ff). Psalm 99 mentions Yahweh's greatness (vv. 2-3) and Psalm 105 demonstrates it through the history of Israel (vv. 27ff). In both Yahweh is referred to as a covenant God (99:7-8; 105:5ff, 42), but Psalm 99 is concerned with the Sinai covenant (v. 7), while Psalm 105 focuses on the covenant with Abraham and his descendants (vv. 5ff, 42). In Psalm 99 Yahweh is described as the one who exercised justice and righteousness through the history of his people (vv. 4, 6-8), but Psalm 105 illustrates Yahweh's judgement against foreign nations (vv. 5, 7 and 27ff). The wilderness experiences are described in both, but Psalm 99 pictures them with a somewhat sombre and negative tone, while Psalm 105's tone is more joyful.

3.3.4.5.2 Psalms 99 and 106

These psalms have twenty words in common,⁵⁵ but most of them are coincidental. However, several are suggestive of links and

⁵⁵ אהרן (99:6; 106:16); אל (99:5, 8x2, 9x2; 106:14, 21, 47, 48); ארץ (99:1; 106:17, 22, 24, 27, 28, 38); גדול (99:2, 3; 106:21); יהוה (99:1, 5, 6, 8, 9x2; 106:1, 2, 4, 25, 34, 40, 47, 48x2); היה (99:8; 106:36); ידה (99:3; 106:1, 47); ירא (99:3; 106:22); משה (99:6; 106:16, 23, 32); נשא (99:8; 106:26); נחן (99:7; 106:15, 41, 46); עליה (99:8; 106:29, 39); עם (99:1, 2; 106:4, 34, 40, 48); עשה (99:4; 106:3, 19, 21); צדקה (99:4; 106:3, 31); קדש (99:3, 5, 9x2; 106:16, 47); שחה (99:5, 9; 106:19); שם (99:3, 6; 106:8, 47); שמר (99:7; 106:3); משפט (99:4x2; 106:3).

the thematic ties between the psalms suggest a further connection between them.

Lexical links

As noted in the discussions of Psalms 99 and 105, the names “Aaron” and Moses” occur in Psalms 99 and 106 and these persons are indicated as intercessors in these psalms, a function which is not found in other psalms in Book IV. Thus, this can be regarded as a significant link. By the same token, the roots עֲלִילָה “deed” and מַעֲלָל “deed” can be noted. Both are derived from the cognate root לַעֲלַל, and the root עֲלִילָה occurs in Psalm 99:8, while the word מַעֲלָל appears in 106:29 and 39 respectively. As noted above, the roots similarly refer to the wrongdoings of Yahweh’s people rather than to Yahweh’s deeds as described in Psalms 103:7 and 105:1. Since this is the only case in Book IV where the roots are used in reference to the misdeeds of Yahweh’s people, it can also be considered as an important link.

The term גָּדוֹל “great” occurs in five psalms (95:3; 96:4; 99:2, 3; 104:25x2 and 106:21), but all these psalms are related to one another, except for Psalm 104. In Psalm 104 it is used to refer to the greatness of the sea and living creatures, but its use in the rest of the psalms is associated with the description of the greatness of Yahweh or of his action. With regard to this, the word יָרָא “terrible” is found in close association with the above word to emphasize Yahweh’s power, namely in Psalms 99:3 and 106:21-22. The only instance where the two words are found together in Book IV are Psalms 96:4; 99:3 and 106:21-22. This can also be regarded as a link. In addition, an association of the word “justice” (מִשְׁפָּט)

with the word “righteousness” (צדקה) is found in Psalms 99:4 and 106:3, and the sentence “let them praise (יהיה) thy name” (שם) in Psalm 99:3 may be reflected in the phrase of Psalm 106 “we may praise (יהיה) thy holy name (שם)”, both thus being concerned with the praise of the name of Yahweh.

Thematic links

In both psalms Yahweh’s sovereignty is described as being over the earth (99:1-2; 106:22) and his people (99:4, 6ff; 106:4ff, 41ff), and both describe him as a great God (99:2-3; 106:21-22) and as a covenant God (99:6ff; 106:4-5, 47). In both Yahweh is described as the one who performed justice and righteousness with his people through the history of Israel. In both he appears as a God who punished and forgave his people (99:8; 106:40-44). In addition, both refer to the wilderness experiences and present Moses and Aaron as the intercessors who acted on behalf of his people (99:7-8; 106:16, 23), as noted.

As we have seen above, Psalm 99 has certain connections with Psalms 105 and 106. The combination of Moses-Aaron is found only in these psalms and they similarly deal with the history of Israel.

Psalm 99's links with Psalm 105 have been illustrated in various ways. These psalms have unique words and themes. However, certain differences between them are observed. The role of Moses and Aaron in the psalm is one case and the theme relative to the use of the word עליה is another.

Psalm 99's links with Psalm 106 are confirmed and the thematic links found between the psalms reveal natural correspondences. Both refer to Moses and Aaron as intercessors and

use the same theme signified by the word עלילה.

On the whole, Psalm 99 reveals much closer affinities with Psalm 106 than with Psalm 105. Both psalms deal with the history of apostasy and the corresponding themes relative to history. Psalm 99:7 displays close links with Psalm 105:45, but the latter serves to link itself to the beginning of Psalm 106, and thus it can be understood in the larger context of Psalms 105 and 106 (see the discussions on Psalms 105 and 106): Psalm 105:45 points out the perspective necessary to the readers of this psalm as well as to the readers of Psalm 106.