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## PSALM 132 AND ITS COMPOSITIONAL CONTEXT(S)

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### Abstract

*Psalm 132 can be interpreted from various compositional contexts. In every new compositional context different nuances add value to the significance of the text. Psalm 132 can be interpreted as a single psalm, and as part of the *Sîrê Hama'alôt* psalms in smaller (130-134) or larger (120-134) collections. Finally the psalm can be understood as part of the theology and coherence of Book V (107-150) of the Psalter. The combination of Psalmen- and Psalterexegese therefore does not exclude each other, but they function complementarily. Both enrich the exegetical process and together they unveil the multiple theological perspectives connected to the different compositional contexts of a psalm.*

**Key Words:** Psalm 132; Pilgrimage Songs; David/Davidic; *Sîrê Hama'alôt*; Compositional Context; Literary Context

### Introduction

'Complex, dramatic and well-crafted' seems to be an appropriate description for this most unusual psalm among the fifteen Pilgrimage songs (Ps. 120-134). Among these short and concise *Sîrê Hama'alôt* poems (Ps. 120-134), Psalm 132 distinguishes itself as the longest and densest reflective theological text.

The connection between the Davidic dynasty and its everlasting kingship with traditions of the Ark of the Covenant, Zion and the royal ideology belongs to the psalm's most prominent theological features.

<sup>1</sup>In addition, in a dramatic way the poem reflects several changing and alternating voices of different cultic participants when enacted in a liturgy or other festive ritual. Focus is placed foremost on Zion and the temple as spaces of God's presence. With a twofold structure and interplay between earthly and heavenly oaths the psalm grasps its participants and guides them with a didactic aim towards communion with and trust in Yahweh.

Like other poems from the Pilgrimage songs (Ps. 120-134) Ps. 132 most probably originated and functioned in its first phases of development as a single text. Gradually it became part of the so-called *Sîrê Hama'alôt* psalms (Ps. 120-134), which can be subdivided and arranged into smaller sections. To understand Ps. 132 in its different compositional context(s) therefore means that the exegete should engage with both *Psalmenexegese* and *Psalterexegese*. This psalm can thus be interpreted and exposed, first as a single text; then as a concatenated or related text with a smaller group of songs within the group of Pilgrimage songs; furthermore it has taken up its literary place (*Sitz in der Literatur*) within the *Sîrê Hama'alôt* collection as a whole, which ultimately forms part of Book V of the *Psalter* (Ps. 107-150).

To provide a few perspectives on Ps. 132 in its varied compositional contexts a short interpretative outline on the following text group(s) renders different nuances: Book V (107-150); the *Sîrê Hama'alôt* psalms 120-134 (130-134); and Ps. 132 as a single text.

## Book V – Psalms 107-150

Book V is the most extensive section of the five-part divisions in the *Psalter*. Several scholars have contributed to contemplating the composition and theological perspectives of Book V of the *Psalter* (Ps. 107-150).<sup>2</sup> Despite a variety of compositional possibilities a few theological characteristics of this section in the *Psalter* are evident.

With the final doxology (146-150), the Egyptian Hallel (113-118), some hymnic twin psalms (111-112; 135-136) and numerous Hallelujah exclamations, Book V portrays a strong *hymnic character*.<sup>3</sup> The liturgical collections 113-118 and 120-134 bound by Psalm 119 underscore how the central part of Book V is *liturgically orientated* towards the annual festivals, namely *Pešah* (113-118), *Šabūot* (119) and *Sūkkot* (120-134). In this sequence of celebrations the salvation-historical stations of the Egyptian exodus, the Torah at Sinai and the arrival in Jerusalem at Zion are commemorated theologically.

With an *inclusion* Book V is framed by *hymnic praise* and *wisdom* perspectives (107:42-3; 145:19-21): Yahweh's universal reign and providence for all creation are hailed. A challenge to all creation and creatures follows this praise of the gracious and loving Yahweh: the wise should react with insight to Yahweh and his deeds. The final Hallel (Ps. 146-150) is a crescendo that perpetuates the theme of praising Yahweh, by the individual (146), by the community (147) and by the whole of creation (148, 150).<sup>4</sup> In addition to the outside frame, an inside frame puts the *emphasis on David* (Ps. 108-110; 111-112 and 138-144).<sup>5</sup> With a concluding wisdom perspective this people of Yahweh is blessed (Ps. 144:15). Without doubt the theology of Book V is embedded in a *universal* perspective or awareness, which includes all creation and creatures (145:10; 150:6).<sup>6</sup>

In radical contrast to the lifeless idols (115) Yahweh is portrayed in Book V as Creator, Saviour, Deliverer, Provider and the One who is omnipresent. The fate and circumstances of human beings is sketched in antithetic fashion. Apart from descriptions of their righteousness and love (112; 133), fidelity to the Torah (119), praise and trust, as well as pure, unqualified faith (131), people are also depicted with their sufferings and distress (107, 108, 116, 123, 129, 137, 138), experiences of injustice (109, 120, 137:7-8, 139:19-24, 140-142, 149), or sinfulness and need for forgiveness (130, 143).<sup>7</sup>

Both Books IV and V of the *Psalter* compensate for the shattered hope caused by the Babylonian exile, by focusing on God's reign over all powers of destruction and on the importance of righteous conduct in the present.<sup>8</sup> Book V as literary unit offers a meditative pilgrimage through the Israelite history where the afflicted servant of Yahweh travels from a position of distress in the exile through the (second) exodus, guided by careful instruction of the Sinai Torah on the way to Zion. At mount Zion Yahweh is actively present as universal King.<sup>9</sup> There He waits to bless the god-fearing pilgrim who praises him in the company of the whole of creation, as his wise servant.<sup>10</sup>

## *Sîrê Hama'alôt* collection (Pss. 120-134)

Psalm research accepts the so-called *Sîrê Hama'alôt* (120-134) collection as a "single, interrelated collection" for special use in the post-exilic Israelite community.<sup>11</sup> Like the Egyptian Hallel (113-118) the *Sîrê Hama'alôt* psalms are thought to be composed as a liturgy or its composition is considered to have been inspired by a liturgy.<sup>12</sup> The single psalms probably had their own origins and development, but they grew into a unit with its own profile mainly during the Second Temple period.<sup>13</sup>

The collection reflects an artistic literary composition, consisting of three parts with five psalms each: 120-124, 125-129, 130-134.<sup>14</sup> Each part contributes to the coherent

theological concept of a *royal and Zion theology*, in which Zion is celebrated as place of blessing and salvation. Emphases on Jerusalem (122), the temple (127) and David (132) are evident. Zion draws focal attention, since this collection reflects a pilgrimage from their position in exile (120) to Zion, place of Yahweh's election. Zion is His abode where He is present and from where His blessings emanate (134).<sup>15</sup>

Three theological concepts arise from the focus on Zion in the Pilgrimage songs: firstly Yahweh's blessing that goes out from Zion, secondly Yahweh who is at work on Zion and thirdly Zion as a paradigm of trust.<sup>16</sup> Furthermore, the spatial story of the *Sîrê Hama'alôt* moves from a 'place' of distress and danger 'below' and ascends to somewhere 'above' to be close to Yahweh on Zion in order to experience life, wholeness, peace, protection and blessedness.<sup>17</sup>

The hymnic twin Psalms 135-136 were probably a redactional addition to the existing collection and can be read as response to Psalm 134, which proclaims a call to praise Yahweh. These two psalms conclude the group of psalms starting from Ps. 120-136 and express the praise for Yahweh on Zion as universal king.<sup>18</sup> As a later postscript to this collection (120-136), Psalm 137 sets the context of the (Babylonian) 'exile' on which the *Sîrê Hama'alôt* psalms find special reflection.

In Book V reflection on the Israelite history commences with Israel's pilgrimage starting at the Egyptian exodus (113-118); then they sojourn at Sinai to receive the Torah (119) after which they arrive at Zion (120-134), where Yahweh is hailed as world ruler and king (135-136). Yahweh's deeds of redemption and deliverance as well as His covenant promises throughout the Israelite history function to revive hope for the future, especially in distressful and life-endangering (post-exilic) contexts where life is threatened by danger and death.

The final redactional composition of the *Sîrê Hama'alôt* psalms as a unit represents a specific *Sitz in der Literatur*, most probably during the post-exilic period. The origin, development and clustering of every individual psalm into smaller groups. presuppose a variety of different historical *Sitze im Leben* behind every psalm. But, apart from this history of text development and growth the incorporation of this liturgical unit into the larger corpus of texts, such as the Egyptian Hallel (113-118), the Torah psalm (119), and the liturgical frame (111-112; 135-136) gives Book V a 'post-cultic' character.<sup>19</sup>

In very late post-exilic times, when it was impossible for every person to pay a visit to the Jerusalem temple, Yahweh-believers undertook a 'meditative pilgrimage' through their salvation history by means of reading or contemplating the *Sîrê Hama'alôt* psalms. This meditation or reading of these songs (or Book V at large) substituted the real physical pilgrimage experience, and was replacing it with a 'meditative' pilgrimage.<sup>20</sup>

A variety of means contribute to the multiple perspectives which determine the significance and meaning of every single psalm. This includes the heading of the *Psalter* (*T<sup>h</sup>illim*), where every psalm can be interpreted as a hymn (or song of praise); or with the five-part division of the *Psalter*, where every psalm can be understood as part of the Torah of David.<sup>21</sup> Apart from these factors which determine the psalms' significance, there are also various world(s) behind a single psalm, which determine its meaning. This includes the multiple historical context(s) of the single text as well as the larger collections to which it belongs. The challenge is now set to provide some perspectives on the different literary contexts of Ps. 132. The psalm represents the first compositional context as a single text.

**Psalm 132**

*Introduction*

Due to its length, theme and content Ps. 132 is an unusual, complex poem among the corpus of *Sirē Hama ‘alōt* psalms. The Hebrew text of the song is intelligible and needs no major text-critical emendation or alterations.

The psalm is artistically well-composed and comprises a variety of style figures, which includes *inter alia* inclusion (*David* - 1, 10; *Mighty One of Jacob* - 2, 5), parallelism (2), ballast variant (4), hendiadys (12), repetition, chiasm (1b, 10), anacrusis (6), ellipsis (4), synecdoche (7 *rgl* for Yahweh), delayed identification (ark in 7-8), semantic sonant chiasm<sup>22</sup> (3-4, 15-16), antithetic parallelism (18). Ten words (eg. oath, anointed one, turn away, sit, throne, priests, faithful, son) occur twice in the poem, while two words (clothe - 9, 16, 18; shout for joy - 9, 16 [twice]) occur three times. The name of David appears four times at strategic locations in the text (1, 10, 11, 17) and has strategic significance. Seven times the temple is depicted with synonymous terms. Unusual phrases similarly appear and include *‘abir ja ‘akob* (2, 5), *s<sup>e</sup>nat* (4), *zō* (12a) and *poh* (14).

The text and translation read as follows:

*Text and Translation*

| <b>Psalm 132 (Translation)</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <b>Psalm 132 (Hebrew)</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
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| <p><b>132:1</b> A Song of ascents.<br/>Remember, O Yahweh, David and all the hardships he endured.</p> <p><sup>2</sup> He swore an oath to Yahweh and made a vow to the Mighty One of Jacob:</p> <p><sup>3</sup> “I will not enter my house or go to my bed couch;</p> <p><sup>4</sup> I will allow no sleep to my eyes, no slumber to my eyelids,</p> <p><sup>5</sup> till I find a place for the LORD, a dwelling for the Mighty One of Jacob.”</p> <p><sup>6</sup> Alas, we heard it in Ephrathah, we came upon it in the fields of Jaar:</p> <p><sup>7</sup> “Let us go to his dwelling place; let us worship at his footstool.</p> <p><sup>8</sup> Arise, O Yahweh, and come to your resting place, you and the ark of your strength.</p> <p><sup>9</sup> May your priests be clothed with righteousness; and (may) your faithful ones sing for joy.”</p> <p><sup>10</sup> For the sake of David your servant, do not reject your anointed one.</p> | <p><b>132:1</b> שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת</p> <p>זְכוֹר־יְהוָה לְדָוִד אֵת כָּל־עֲנֹתָיו:</p> <p><sup>2</sup> אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע לַיהוָה נְדָר לְאַבְרָם יַעֲקֹב:</p> <p><sup>3</sup> אִם־אָבָא בְּאֵהָל בֵּיתִי אִם־אֶעֱלֶה עַל־עַרְשׂ יְצוּעַי:</p> <p><sup>4</sup> אִם־אֶתֵּן שְׁנַת לַעֲיִי לְעַפְעַפִּי תִנּוּמָה:</p> <p><sup>5</sup> עַד־אֶמְצָא מָקוֹם לַיהוָה מִשְׁכְּנֹת לְאַבְרָם יַעֲקֹב:</p> <p><sup>6</sup> הִנֵּה־שָׁמַעְנוּהָ בְּאַפְרָתָה מִצְּאֲנֹה בְּשַׁד־יַעֲר:</p> <p><sup>7</sup> נְבוֹאָה לְמִשְׁכְּנֹתָיו נִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה לְהַדָּם רַגְלָיו:</p> <p><sup>8</sup> קוּמָה יְהוָה לְמִנוּחֶיךָ אֲתָהּ וְאֶרְוֹן עֲגֹד:</p> <p><sup>9</sup> כְּהַנִּיד יִלְבְּשׁוּ־צִדֶּךָ וְחִסִּידֶיךָ יִרְנְנוּ:</p> <p><sup>10</sup> בְּעִבּוֹר דָּוִד עַבְדְּךָ אֶל־תִּשָׁב פְּנֵי מְשִׁיחֶךָ:</p> |

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| <p><sup>11</sup> Yahweh swore an oath to David, a sure oath that he will not revoke: “One of your own descendants I will place on your throne--<br/> <sup>12</sup> if your sons keep my covenant and the statutes I teach them, then their sons will sit on your throne for ever and ever.”</p> <p><sup>13</sup> Indeed, Yahweh has chosen Zion, he has desired it for his dwelling:<br/> <sup>14</sup> “This is my resting place for ever and ever; here I will sit enthroned, for I have desired it--<br/> <sup>15</sup> I will bless her with abundant provisions; her poor will I satisfy with food.<br/> <sup>16</sup> I will clothe her priests with salvation, and her faithful ones will ever sing for joy.<br/> <sup>17</sup> “There I will make a horn grow for David; I will prepare a lamp for my anointed one.<br/> <sup>18</sup> His enemies I will clothe with shame, but on his head his crown will blossom.”</p> | <p><sup>11</sup> נִשְׁבַּע יְהוָה   לְדָוִד אִמְתָּ לֹא יִשׁוּב מִמֶּנָּה<br/> מִפְרֵי בִטְנָה אֲשֵׁית לְכִסֵּא לְדָוִד:<br/> <sup>12</sup> אִם יִשְׁמְרוּ בְנֵי דָוִד   בְּרִיתִי וְעֵדוּתִי זֹו אֶלְמָדָם<br/> גַּם־בְּנֵיהֶם עַד־יָעֵד יִשְׁבוּ לְכִסֵּא לְדָוִד:<br/> <sup>13</sup> כִּי־בָחַר יְהוָה בְּצִיּוֹן אֵזָוָה לְמוֹשָׁב לּוֹ:<br/> <sup>14</sup> זֹאת־מְנוּחָתִי עַד־יָעֵד פֶּה־אֲשַׁב כִּי אֹתִיהָ:<br/> <sup>15</sup> צִידָה בְּרָד אֶבְרָד אֲבִיוֹנֶיהָ אֲשַׁבֵּעַ לְחֶם:<br/> <sup>16</sup> וְכֹהֲנֶיהָ אֶלְבִּישׁ יִשַׁע וְחַסִּידֶיהָ רַגְלֵי יִרְגְּנוּ:<br/> <sup>17</sup> שָׁם אֶצְמִיחַ קַרְנֵי לְדָוִד עֲרֹכְתִי גֵר לְמִשְׁחִי:<br/> <sup>18</sup> אֹיְבָיו אֶלְבִּישׁ בְּשֵׁת וְעַלֵּיו יִצְיַץ נֹזֶר:</p> |
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The poem mirrors a two-fold structure. This structure is determined by the two oaths described in it, namely the oath of David (1b-10) and the oath of Yahweh (11-18). A structural analysis reveals how these two parts correspond in a symmetrical way with each other.<sup>23</sup> A form of dialogue is apparent between these two textual parts. The two Yahweh oracles in the second part (11-12; 13-18) seem to provide a response and answer to the plea that Yahweh should ‘remember’ David, and not turn the face of his anointed one away (1, 10). In its large frame Ps. 132 thus confirms that the election of the Davidic dynasty (11-18) is the direct result of David’s establishment of the ark-cult in Jerusalem (1-10).<sup>24</sup> The two divine oracles provide promises of everlasting descendants on the throne, active reign and prosperous blessings from Zion for the community, the cultic officials and the Davidic dynasty.

The two stanzas (1-10; 11-18) can be divided into four strophes, namely A (2-5); B (6-9); C (11-12) and D (13-18).

In the first stanza (1-10) Psalm 132 commences with an opening prayer for David (1b), which introduces David’s vow (2-5), followed by the self-presentation of a follower (we) group (6-7) and a communal prayer (8-9). The stanza concludes again with a prayer for David (10).

Verses 1b and 10 provide a frame for the first stanza with an *inclusion* by means of a prayer for David. Not only the name ‘David’, but also the chiasmic-patterned-petition<sup>25</sup> characterizes the first and last verse lines of this stanza. Yahweh is requested to ‘remember’ David and not to ‘turn away the face of your anointed one’ (10b). Both phrases remind of the language of lament. Descriptions like the ‘hardships’ (1b) or ‘his burden’ which David endured as well as the notion of ‘his enemies’ (18), all contribute to a possible scenario where it seems as if this ‘David’ and his followers experienced hardship and affliction. To

'remember' means not only 'to recall' specific positive deeds, but it expresses an urge for Yahweh to intervene in a situation of distress (Ps. 25:6ff; 74:2, 18, 20; 89:48, 51; 137:7 ea).

Nonetheless, David made a vow to the 'Mighty One of Jacob' (Gn. 49:24; Is 49:26; 60:16). This patriarchal divine title 'Mighty One of Jacob' not only creates an *inclusion* for the strophe (2-5), but it confirms that the God of the patriarchs and the God whom David addresses, is the same deity, namely Yahweh. In the first person David undertakes that he will neither go into his tent home, nor go up to his couch bed, and not allow his eyes sleep and his eyelids slumber (Prov. 6:4), until he has found a place/habitation for Yahweh, i.e. a permanent dwelling place for the ark of Yahweh.

Verses 2-5 portray an imaginative, poetic picture of events which are also described in 2 Samuel 6-7. The relationship between these two texts shows a disparate character with significant differences between them.<sup>26</sup> These differences underscore the own theological emphases of the poet of Ps. 132, namely to depict the relationship between the establishment of the cult in Zion and the election of the Davidic dynasty.

Verse 6 introduces the second strophe with an anacrusis, while the first person singular speaker (2-5) simultaneously changes to the first person plural (6-7). These latter verses allude to historical narratives, where the ark was returned from Philistine territory to Kirjat Je'arim (1 Sm 6-7:1) and later taken to Jerusalem (2 Sm 6:1-19). Here a group of Davidic followers initiated a 'we' discourse and processional chant. In a cultic enactment of the poem these voices would probably have been dramatized by a choir.<sup>27</sup> This servant-group relates strongly with events that connected them to Ephrathah<sup>28</sup> and the fields of Jaar.<sup>29</sup> But, the description of the object they 'heard of' and 'found' in these two locations is oblique and therefore elusive. Is this object ('it') a message, an object (like a 'place', an 'oath', or the 'ark') or deeds of the past or the present? Most probably what they 'heard of' and 'found' was the dwelling place for Yahweh.<sup>30</sup> This interpretation possibility is confirmed by verse 5a ('Let us go to his dwelling place...') and is therefore convincing.

With these described actions in verses 6-7 the Davidides or applicable contextual community confirm their relationship, identity and solidarity with the monarchical David. In their processional chant (7) they encourage themselves to go to Yahweh's dwelling place and to prostrate themselves before his footstool'. In view of the Royal Psalms 99:5 and 110:1 (1 Chr. 28:2) their worship at 'his footstool' (7b) illustrates their faithfulness and recognition of Yahweh's kingship. Verses 6-7 thus combine historical commemoration with contextual actualization in order to bridge the gap between past memories and present experience in the cult.

Verses 8-9 focus on the movement of the ark to its permanent location as well as on the wishes of 'David' and the community regarding the consequences of this movement to the cult. In imperative style Yahweh is invited in verse 8 to 'rise'. He is called upon with the typical ancient battle cry ('arise') to enter his resting place.<sup>31</sup> In the cultic enactment of Psalm 132 this invitation was probably voiced by a priest, that the ark be lifted and installed in the sanctuary. 'You and the ark of your strength' (8) is an expression that illustrates the strong relationship between the ark and Yahweh. As symbol of Yahweh's presence the ark symbolizes the expression of Yahweh's power, especially his power over other powers of chaos or Israelite enemies (Ps. 78:61). The ark's history with the Philistines proves to be an illustrative example of this power (1 Sm. 5:7; 6:1).

The invitation for the ark to be moved to its permanent 'resting place',<sup>32</sup> is accompanied with wishes that involve the cultic participants. Wishes are directed to Yahweh, that his priests be clothed with righteousness and that the faithful ones (*Hasidim*) may shout with joy. 'Righteousness' refers either to a characteristic of the priests (Is. 11:5; 61:10) as

mediators of God's blessing or it is a synonym for salvation (see verse 16; 2 Chr. 6:41), where priests convey the oracles of salvation and blessing. These foreseen 'dwelling place'-activities by cultic personnel (officials and participants) allude to the well-being and joy in Israel from Zion.

The vow to find a dwelling place for Yahweh (2-5), together with the faithful Davidic community's commitment to come and worship him right there at his footstool (7), and the command that Yahweh must come and occupy his 'place of rest' to fill it with well-being and happiness, are all enclosed by the petitions directed to Yahweh: to 'remember' David and 'not to turn down the face' of his anointed servant (1b, 10). David seems to be under severe pressure or in trouble. This *inclusion* probably anticipates a kind of historical context or theological challenge where 'David' or the 'servant David' finds himself in a crisis. Is the anointed one from David's house rejected? Or is the Davidic throne empty? A crisis is surely looming behind these imperative requests. Yahweh's reaction is awaited. The question is: will Yahweh's oath provide an answer?

In the second stanza (11-18) of Ps. 132 the oath of Yahweh comprises two oracles; of which each is described in a separate strophe, namely 11-12 and 13-18. In a cultic-liturgical enactment of the poem these oracles would probably have been voiced by a cultic prophet.<sup>33</sup>

In correspondence with David's oath Yahweh has also undertaken a binding oath for the sake of David (11-18). In the first oracle (11-12) the oath is described as one, from which He will not turn aside and which He will not revoke. In other words He will not become unfaithful. Yahweh will remain true to his word and He will fulfill his promise surely (Ps. 89:4, 36, 50). This oath emphasizes two issues: Yahweh had *promised to put Davidic descendants*, 'those from the fruit of your womb' (11), *on the throne* (2 Sm. 7:12-16). And secondly, this *promise is conditional*: the covenant and witnesses have to be kept by the Davidic adherents of the Yahweh faith.<sup>34</sup> If the descendants of David observe these covenant statutes, God will keep the throne for them to reign as an everlasting royal house.

There is an interplay between our poem and the texts of 2 Sm. 7, 1 Kg. 8 (:25) and Ps. 89. The poet of Ps. 132 alludes to the Nathan promises (2 Sm. 7) in verses 11-12 with his own poetical formulations, vocabulary and emphasis.<sup>35</sup> On the issue of the disloyalty of the kings to Yahweh and his covenant Ps. 132 does not offer a bold and complete formulation. Nonetheless, the promise remains conditional. Both 2 Samuel 7:14 and Psalm 89:30-31 address the disloyalty of the kings in view of a king's duties (Dt. 17:14-20). They both formulate the insights of the deuteronomistic theology (DtrG) in view of the experience of the rulers during the monarchical period more explicit. In retrospect Psalm 89 perceives a broader picture which includes exilic and post-exilic contexts. Therefore it is more aware of the consequences of the royal sons' disloyalty than Ps. 132. But despite their different styles and formulations, the vocabulary, theological outlook, conceptualizations and communal hopes of both texts Psalms 132 and 89 coincide broadly.<sup>36</sup>

In the second strophe of God's oath to David (14-18) the assurance prevails that *Yahweh has chosen Zion* as his permanent 'resting place' (13-14), because it is the place he has desired for his abode. Because of his desire for it this place will be his permanent divine dwelling place or earthly abode (Is 66:1), where he is enthroned as king.

The divine election of Zion has consequences for the land, the poor, the cultic personnel, the king and the enemies. Zion becomes the abode from where Yahweh's blessings spill over (Ps. 128:5; 133:3; 134:3). According to verses 15-16 Yahweh will bless the produce of the land abundantly (Neh. 13:15), He will satisfy the needy with bread,<sup>37</sup> clothe the priests with salvation (see verse 9) while the faithful ones will shout for joy. At the

climax of the psalm the establishment of the kingship of the Davidic king is described metaphorically.

In Zion Yahweh will establish the power of the Davidic heir permanently. This is portrayed by the following depictions: He will make a horn<sup>38</sup> to sprout<sup>39</sup>; He will prepare a lamp<sup>40</sup> for his anointed one, on whose head his crown will blossom<sup>41</sup>. These are all descriptions and images that support life, fruitfulness and the continuity of the Davidic dynasty. On the contrary Yahweh will clothe David's enemies with disgrace. Conquered enemies in the ancient Near East were often given the clothes of shame (Ps. 36:26; 109:18, 19, 29). Therefore only God's promise can assure the fertility of the land, the happiness and salvation of the people, the power and stability of the kingship and the king's victory over his enemies.<sup>42</sup> This promise was simultaneously the assurance to David that both the Davidic dynasty and Zion had been elected as earthly abode of Yahweh's reign.

In the structure and theology of Psalm 132 the oath of Yahweh (132:11-18) can be interpreted as a response to the oath of David (132:2-9). In the literary context of this independent psalm (read on its own) the response of His oath, such as the election of the Davidic dynasty and the election of Zion as Yahweh's royal abode function as *assurance of the power of Yahweh's word and faithfulness*, as God of the fathers ('Mighty One of Jacob') and the God of David. The frame of the Davidic oath (vv 1 and 10) may provide a clue with regard to a historical setting in which this theology can be realized.

The lament and prayer language 'remember David' (1) and 'do not turn aside the face of your anointed one', 'your servant David' allude to some kind of affliction to be addressed. This may include a situation when the insignia of the Davidic kingship and the temple on Zion disappear; or even when the visible signs of Yahweh's presence (lamp, horn, crown) seem to be absent, because the throne is empty. A despondent exilic, post-exilic community<sup>43</sup> that awaited the hope of divine/Davidic leadership would have found this psalm consoling.<sup>44</sup> Nonetheless, the psalm advocates the celebration of the kingship of Yahweh and the kingship of David. It proclaims the provision and blessing power of Yahweh from Zion. According to the psalm it is He who blesses the land with fertility, provides in abundance for the poor, brings happiness and salvation to people, conquers the enemy and let his king reign.

Therefore one can describe Ps. 132 as a royal psalm,<sup>45</sup> decorated with characteristics of the Zion psalms.<sup>46</sup> It has a liturgical character<sup>47</sup> and is fitting for cultic use during a commemorative rite or other festive celebrations.<sup>48</sup> Smaller genre elements of the text include prayer, oracles, statement of trust and hymnic descriptions.<sup>49</sup>

### *Date and Setting*

The search for the psalm's origin and date remains controversial. This debate is characterized by the psalm's use of archaic language and the absence or presence of deuteronomistic terminology and ideology.<sup>50</sup> In its research history the psalm had been dated from pre-exilic to post-exilic time periods. Preferences for pre-exilic dates are given,<sup>51</sup> *inter alia* because of the psalm's language that seems to be pre-deuteronomistic;<sup>52</sup> and also because the poem was composed for the dedication of the temple by Solomon.<sup>53</sup>

Adherents of a late pre-exilic date deserve mention. Arguments which are given include the accumulation of 'deuteronomistic features',<sup>54</sup> such as the description of David as 'servant' (v 10), and terms like 'fruit of the womb' (11) and 'lamp' (17) in connection with *ba'abur* (not *l' ma'an*). Allen<sup>55</sup> therefore does not regard the origin of the psalm "later than the period of Josiah". In this late pre-exilic time there was the situation where the king had



been removed from the throne, despite the promise, namely king Joachim who was imprisoned in Babylon until 561.<sup>56</sup>

Several motivations are rendered for possible exilic or post-exilic datings. The divine title 'Mighty One of Jacob' was associated more with the exilic period (Is 49:26; 60:16). The post-exilic period was the time of disillusionment, when the throne was empty and the anointed one absent. The people had waited for messianic promises to be fulfilled or the communities to be restored.<sup>57</sup> Specific suggestions include the time of the Chronicler,<sup>58</sup> or even a period prior to the books of Chronicles because of the psalm's citation (8-10) in 2 Chronicles (6:40-42). The Persian times also provided ground for expectations of and hope for a new Davidic ruler,<sup>59</sup> while the time of the Hasmoneans<sup>60</sup> was probably too late for the origin of the text. Verses 15-16 possibly reflect the societal structures of the post-exilic Israelite community.

The close relationship between Ps. 132 and Ps. 89 definitely suggests a post-exilic period for its origin, while the theological basis for the election of Zion is probably post-exilic.<sup>61</sup>

In terms of dating it should not be excluded that the psalm grew gradually into the unity it currently exhibits. Here Seybold<sup>62</sup> provides an example, when he suggests that it is a basic *midrash poem* (2-5, 6-9, 11, 17-18), which became a *royal psalm* through the addition of frame verses (1, 10, 12). With the final addition of verses 13-16 the text has assumed the character of a Zion psalm.

Having taken the above argumentation into consideration the choice for a possible post-exilic origin of Ps. 132 seems more convincing. This option does not exclude the psalmist's use of older archaic language, allusions or pre-exilic traditions (ark, David and Zion) in the genesis of the text.

## **Part of *Sirē Hama'alôt* Collection**

### *Introduction*

The interpretation of Ps. 132 as a single text<sup>63</sup> provides one possible compositional context for the psalm to be understood. This exercise belongs to the category of the now well-known *Psalmexegese*.<sup>64</sup> More difficult would have been to take every possible phase of the psalm's growth into consideration. In this instance every (possible) separate phase of growth would represent a new compositional context, each with an own textual part, historical context and theological emphasis. For example, in the understanding of the psalm, which Seybold provides,<sup>65</sup> the exegete have to take account of and distinguish between the growing text(s) (or textual parts) of the psalm in different compositional contexts: first there was a basis text as *midrash poem* (2-5, 6-9, 11, 17-18) in the initial compositional context, then it could have grown (compositionally) into the so-called *royal psalm* (with verses 1, 10, 11) in a next compositional context; and then finally the identified *Zion psalm* (with verses 13-16 added) exists as the 'final' text in the 'final'<sup>66</sup> compositional context. This dissection of the text and text growth in its different compositional contexts remains a difficult avenue to expose, but in this presentation the process is understood as part of the single psalm exegesis.

On a next level the following compositional context of Ps. 132 would form a frame which the *Sirē Hama'alôt* songs provide for another understanding of the psalm. *Psalterexegese* therefore enables the exegete to read the psalm as part of the smaller composition, namely Ps. 130-134; and then also as part of the whole compositional unit Ps. 120-134.

### *Tri-part Division*

Pierre Auffret<sup>67</sup> proposed a tri-part division of the *Sîrê Hama'alôt* psalms according to linguistic and semantic analyses: Ps. 120-124, 125-129, 130-134. The coherence and composition of this corpus of songs is indeed not fixed or viewed unanimously in the scholarly psalm debate. Being aware of criticism on Auffret's 'perfect' and symmetrical division,<sup>68</sup> I regard this tri-part division nonetheless as a workable, well-proposed thesis to understand and refine the profile of the collection's compositional coherence.

Each of the three parts contributes to the coherent theological concept of a *royal and Zion theology*. In this theological concept, Zion is celebrated as place of blessing and salvation. The central psalm in every unit is salient to emphasise specific theological aspects. As central tower in their smaller units they underscore the roles of Jerusalem (122), the temple (house) (127) and David (132). Zion receives special attention, since the collection reflects a pilgrimage from a position of danger in Ps. 120 to Zion in Ps. 134. Zion is Yahweh's elected abode where He is present and from where He bestows His blessings (134).<sup>69</sup>

The coherence and unity of the distinct sections are built with a network of repetitions and similarities, corresponding expressions, syntax resemblances and figures of speech in the different compositions of the *Sîrê Hama'alôt songs*.<sup>70</sup>

### *Psalms 130-134*

Psalms 130-134 can thus be read from the compositional perspective of Psalms 130-134. Here follows some observations.

From a *genre* perspective both Ps. 130-131 are depicted as individual or communal songs of confidence. They are regarded as twin psalms with a variety of connections and resemblances.<sup>71</sup> Similarly Ps. 133-134 can be described form-critically as songs of praise, where 133 praises the unanimity in Zion, while 134 focuses the praise on Yahweh. Zion seems to be the binding keyword in all three psalms 132-134 (132:13; 133:3 and 134:3).

Obvious repetitions occur further in Ps. 130-131. This includes the root *qwh* ('to wait') in 130:5 and *jhl* ('to hope') in 131:3. Furthermore, both psalms end with the identical expression 'put your hope, Israel, on Yahweh' (130:7; 131:3). Both psalms develop structurally from individual experiences, but conclude with an appeal to the collective group. On the basis of positive individual experiences with Yahweh regarding guilt, forgiveness (130), and security (131), there is an appeal to Israel to trust Yahweh.

A variety of similar stylistic features are utilized in the development of the themes of Psalms 133 and 134.<sup>72</sup> Important, though, is the appearance and function of the verb *brk* ('to praise'/'to bless') (133:3b; 134:1b, 2, 3). On the one hand the servants of Yahweh are praising Him (134:1b, 2), while on the other Yahweh is the blessing subject (133:3b; 134:3). In both instances this bestowing of praise and blessing happen from Zion.

In the broad structure of the final sub-unit 130-134<sup>73</sup> of the *Sîrê Hama'alôt* psalms there is a movement from confidence and trust in Yahweh (Ps. 130-131) to praise and blessing (Ps. 133-134). Yahweh's servants praise Him, while His blessings go forth from Zion. With the emphasis on David and his dynasty in Ps. 132, this central pivot of the small collection (130-134) links with the previous and the following psalms. On the one hand this psalm builds the confidence in Yahweh and appeals for trust in Him<sup>74</sup> when the oracle of Yahweh (132:11-18) confirms the election of the Davidic dynasty and the election of Zion as Yahweh's royal abode. This oracle functions as *assurance or confirmation of the power of*

*Yahweh's word and faithfulness*, because, as God of the fathers ('Mighty One of Jacob') Yahweh is also the God of David.

On the other hand Ps. 132 connects thematically with Ps. 133-134 in as far as Yahweh conveys his blessings from his earthly abode, Zion. Yahweh's election of David and Zion has positive consequences for the land, the poor, the priests, the pious, and the king (but not for his enemies, see 132:18). Yahweh will bless them and they will praise Him as God of the Fathers (Mighty one of Jacob) (132:2, 5), the God of David (132:17-18), and the Creator God (134:3). The blessing God of Zion will be commemorated and celebrated at the applicable cultic festivals.

### *Psalms 120-134*

The complete collection of *Sirē Hama'alôt* psalms serves as another compositional context to enhance the understanding and significance of Ps. 132. To accomplish such an understanding we require the network of relationships and resemblances between the psalm and the rest of the corpus. In the short space available I will definitely not do justice to such a comprehensive undertaking. Here follows only some applicable remarks.

The debate on the structure of the *Sirē Hama'alôt* psalms is by no means unanimous and uncontroversial. Discussions revolve around the issues of whether the collection reflects an artificial unity, an organic unity or no logical internal order at all.<sup>75</sup> Explanatory principles which determine a possible structure for the collection include *inter alia* a schema of pilgrims' 'arrival' (120-122), 'festival celebrations' (123-132) and 'departure' (133-134) from the diaspora; a commentary on the Aaronite blessing (with the elements like: blessing, protection, grace and peace); and a commemorative procession which celebrates the return of the exiles from Babylonian captivity. Apart from these principles scholars have attempted to determine a structure for the collection by means of linguistic, thematic and structural analyses. Both synchronic and diachronic perspectives are important for arguing a convincing structure.

Important structural markers have been identified to constitute a framework for understanding the complete *Sirē Hama'alôt* composition.<sup>76</sup> Both introductory psalms (Ps. 120-121) are individual songs of confidence, and introduce the search for a place of safety and protection amidst a dangerous world. Fulfillment of this need is accomplished in the cultic 'house' and in the living community of Yahweh on Zion. From Zion Yahweh, the God of Zion bestows his blessing upon the Zion community (Ps. 133-134).

In general, the structure of the *Sirē Hama'alôt* collection moves with a trajectory starting with an atmosphere of confidence and trust in Yahweh and moves to an atmosphere of praise and blessing. Lament and trust are two dominant motifs throughout the collection.<sup>77</sup> But in Psalms 120, 121, 123, 124, 125, 126, 129, 130 and 132 trust prevails as dominant motif over and above lament. Lament is present but plays a secondary role. The majority of songs are songs that proclaim confidence in Yahweh.<sup>78</sup> The collection therefore seems to advocate a very strong reliance on Yahweh, which is constantly highlighted.

In the tri-part division of the collection (Ps. 120-124, 125-129, 130-134) there is also a movement from lament (120, 130) to praise / blessing (124, 134). The central psalms of all three smaller units (122, 127, 132) seem to portray a character that can be described as a *historic-theological reflection*.<sup>79</sup> Ps. 122 portrays Jerusalem as centre and meeting place of Israel; Ps. 127 only refers to 'house' and 'city', which might allude to the temple and Jerusalem in view of the other two strategically placed psalms (122, 132). Ps. 132 emphasizes Zion as the place and David as indication of the dynasty through which Yahweh's

presence is concretized. The central psalms of these three smaller compositions therefore place special emphasis on Jerusalem (122), the 'house' (temple) (127), and David (132).

In the relationship between these three central psalms both Ps. 132 and Ps. 122 provide references to David in the text (apart from his name in certain headings).<sup>80</sup> Both psalms thus underscore the role of David in Jerusalem and on Zion. The house of David is earmarked for the 'thrones of judgment' (122:5) and for permanent kingship (132:17).

The relationship between Ps. 132 and Ps. 127 is set by the use of the terms *beten* ('womb') and *p<sup>e</sup>ri* ('fruit') by both. Ps. 127:3b reads 'a reward is the fruit of the womb', while Ps. 132:11 can be translated as 'from the fruit of your womb I will put on your throne'. In their different contexts this resemblance relates the blessing of the children of the pious with the blessing for the Davidic dynasty namely, that their descendants will enjoy perpetual rule in Zion.

Ps. 132 plays a distinctive role in the compositional context of Ps. 120-134. This psalm confirms the function of the *Sirē Hama 'alôt* collection as a book of trust in Yahweh. Trust in Yahweh is constantly emphasized throughout the collection. The psalm creates comfort and hope for situations of chaos or peril where the life of the pious is threatened (verses 1, 10). Furthermore, the psalm emphasizes the role of David (Davidic dynasty) as perpetual ruler in Zion.

### Part of Book V (107-150)

Finally, Book V (107-150) of the *Psalter* serves as another compositional context to understand Ps. 132. Earlier in this presentation an outline was given on the basic features of Book V. There it was sketched that Book V has 'n hymnic character and is liturgically orientated, especially towards major religious festivals in Israel.

Book V is framed by especially the characteristic features, namely *hymnic praise* and *wisdom perspectives* (Ps. 107:42-3; 145:19-21). In addition to the outside frame, an inside frame puts the *emphasis on David* (Ps. 108-110; 111-112 and 138-144).<sup>81</sup> Finally the theology of Book V is embedded in a *universal awareness* of Yahweh and his work. Yahweh is portrayed as universal creator and sustainer of all creation.

It is possible to interpret and understand Psalm 132 against this compositional framework. The psalm's basic prayer was to request Yahweh to 'remember' David and 'not to turn aside the face' from his anointed one. In two oracles (1b-11; 11-18) it is outlined how David intended to find a place for Yahweh and to bring the ark to its 'resting place'. In response to the David oracle (1b-10), a second oracle (11-18) in Ps. 132 confirms that Yahweh will put the Davidic dynasty perpetually on the throne and that He elected Zion as earthly abode of his reign. This reality had consequences for the land, the poor, the priests, the pious ones, the king and the enemies. Except for the enemies of the Davidic ruler ("his enemies", see Ps. 132:18), these people will receive the blessing of Yahweh.

With the characteristic elements of hymnic praise, the emphasis on David and the universal awareness of Yahweh and his work, the identity of David needs short reflection. The question is: who is this servant David of Ps. 132, or rather, who can this David be? In accordance with Book V this David tends to be the persecuted servant<sup>82</sup> of the universal king, Yahweh. In the broader context of Book V David (Ps. 144:10) most probably alludes to Yahweh's people as his obedient servant. These people might be an individual, or the Israelite community / Davidic dynasty, or even Yahweh's whole creation. As a subject who experiences affliction, this David not only praises and trusts Yahweh, but also receives his blessings. These various identities of 'David' (Ps. 132:1b and 10) need not exclude each

other. As interchangeable subjects they all qualify in their own distressful circumstances to participate in the faithfulness and blessings of Yahweh.

## Conclusion

The above-mentioned sketch intended to illustrate that Ps. 132 can be interpreted from various compositional contexts. In every new compositional context different nuances add value to the significance of the text. Ps. 132 can be interpreted as a single psalm, and as part of the *Sîrê Hama'alôt* psalms in smaller (130-134) or larger (120-134) collections. Finally the psalm can be understood as part of the theology and coherence of Book V (107-150) of the *Psalter*. The combination of *Psalmen* and *Psalterexegeese* therefore does not exclude each other, but they function complementarily. Both enrich the exegetical process and together they unveil the multiple of theological perspectives connected to the different compositional contexts of a psalm. In this regard Ps. 132 is no exception.

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- . “Psalmenexegese und Psalterexegese: Eine Forschungsskizze.” Pages 17-66 in *The Composition of the Book of Psalms*. BETL. Leuven: Peeters, 2010.
- . “Die Bücher der Weisheit.” In *Einleitung in das Alte Testament* (8. Aufl.). Edited by Erich Zenger & Christian Frevel. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2012.
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## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> See e.g. Bentzen, *The Cultic Use*, 37-53; Porter, *The Interpretation of 2 Samuel vi*; Hillers, *Ritual Procession*, 48-55; Laato, *Jerusalemite/Israelite Royal Ideology*, 49-66.
- <sup>2</sup> Significant work was done by Westermann, *Zur Sammlung des Psalters*, 278-284; Wilson, *Evidence of editorial divisions*, 337-352; Ders, *The editing of the Hebrew Psalter*, 1985; Ders, *The shape of the Book of Psalms*, 129-142; Ders, *Shaping the Psalter*, 72-82; Whybray, *Reading the Psalms*, 1996; KOCH, *Der Psalter und seine Redaktionsgeschichte*, 243-277; Kratz, *Die Gnade des täglichen Brots*, 1-40; DERS, *Die Tora Davids*, 13-28; Janowski, *Ein Tempel aus Worten*, 279-308; Zenger, *Komposition und Theologie*, 97-116; Ders, *Der Psalter als Buch*, 1-58; Ders, *Psalmexegese und Psalterexegese*, 17-66; Goulder, *The Psalms of the return*, 1998 and McFall, *The evidence for a logical arrangement*, 223-256.
- <sup>3</sup> See Koch, *Der Psalter*, 243-277.
- <sup>4</sup> See Kratz, *Die Tora Davids*, 26.
- <sup>5</sup> Zenger, *Komposition und Theologie*, 114, depicts this part of the frame as “eskatologisch messianisch”.
- <sup>6</sup> See Janowski, *Die ‘Kleine Biblia’*, 125-164.
- <sup>7</sup> Ravasi, *Psalms 90-150*, 847.
- <sup>8</sup> See Gillingham, *Studies of the Psalms*, 210.
- <sup>9</sup> In Books IV and V the theme of Yahweh’s kingship finds special emphasis. See Jeremias, *Das Königtum Gottes*, 1987; and Janowski, *Das Königtum Gottes*, in Ders, *Gottes Gegenwart*, 148-213.
- <sup>10</sup> Wilson, *The editing*, 227-228, describes Book V as an answer to the plea of the exiles to be gathered from the diaspora. The answer entails that deliverance and life thereafter are dependent on an attitude of dependence on and trust in Yahweh alone.
- <sup>11</sup> Prinsloo, *The Role of Space*, 457.
- <sup>12</sup> Millard, *Die Komposition*, 38.
- <sup>13</sup> Millard, *Die Komposition*, 41.
- <sup>14</sup> See the thorough analysis of Auffret, *La Sagesse*, 441-453, for detail.
- <sup>15</sup> Explicit references to Zion in the *Sîrê Hama ‘alôt* psalms appear in Ps. 125:1; 126:1; 128:5; 129:5; 132:13, 15; 133:3; 134:3.
- <sup>16</sup> See the detail described by Körting, *Zion in den Psalmen*, 135-145.
- <sup>17</sup> Prinsloo, *The Role of Space*, 461-462.
- <sup>18</sup> Millard, *Die Komposition*, 40.
- <sup>19</sup> Zenger, *Komposition und Theologie*, 115.
- <sup>20</sup> See Millard, *Die Komposition*, 229.
- <sup>21</sup> Kratz, *Die Tora Davids*, 13-28.
- <sup>22</sup> See Viviers, *Klank-inhoud-chiasme*, 72-73, who analyses the appearance of this figure of speech in the whole *Hama ‘alot* collection.
- <sup>23</sup> See Nel, *Psalm 132*, 184-185 and Allen, *Psalms 101-150*, 265-266. In a comparison between the two oaths Nel shows how verses 1-5 correspond with 11-12 (promises of David/Yahweh); verses 6-8 corresponds with 13-14 (foundation of Zion / Election of Zion); and verses 9-10 correspond with 15-18 (consequences: wishes/promises). Allen’s analysis differs slightly from Nel. He illustrates how verses 3-5 correspond with 11-12, while verses 6-9 correspond with 13-16 and verses 1 and 10 correspond with 17-18.
- <sup>24</sup> Nel, *Psalm 132*, 187.
- <sup>25</sup> See Viviers, *Trust and lament*, 73.
- <sup>26</sup> See Clifford, *Psalms 73-150*, 254, for a comparison and evaluation of these differences.
- <sup>27</sup> This seems to be a convincing suggestion made by Kraus, *Psalmen 60-150*, 1062.
- <sup>28</sup> Ephrathah is normally associated with the native town of David, namely Bethlehem (Rt 4:11; Mc 5:1).
- <sup>29</sup> The name Jaar is probably a poetic description of Kirjat Je’arim, see Anderson, *The Book of Psalms*, 882.
- <sup>30</sup> See Gerstenberger, *Psalms Part 2*, 365.
- <sup>31</sup> For the appearance of the battle cry ‘Arise’ or the so-called ‘Ladespruch’, see Nm 10:35 ea.
- <sup>32</sup> In 1 Chr 28:2 the temple on Zion is called the ‘place of rest’ for the ‘Ark of the Covenant’.
- <sup>33</sup> See Anderson, *The Book of Psalms*, 883.
- <sup>34</sup> See Ravasi, *Psalms 90-150*, 854; and Gerstenberger, *Psalms Part 2*, 367.
- <sup>35</sup> The condition is not formulated as strongly in 2 Sam 7:14, as in 1 Kg 8:25, where Solomon speaks at the dedication of the Temple. See 2 Sm 7:14 “I will be his father, and he will be my son. When he does wrong, I



will punish him with the rod of men, with floggings inflicted by men.” And 1 Kg 8:25 reads: “Now LORD, God of Israel, keep for your servant David my father the promises you made to him when you said, ‘You shall never fail to have a man to sit before me on the throne of Israel, if only your sons are careful in all they do to walk before me as you have done.’”

- 36 Steymans, Psalm 89 und der Davidbund, 298-302, gives an elaborate description of the relationship between Ps. 132 and Ps. 89.
- 37 According to Dt 15:4 the poor and needy should be taken care of in Israel.
- 38 The horn is the symbol of a king (Dan 7:7-8) or indicates the strength of the Davidic dynasty (1 Sm 2:10; Ez 29:21; Ps. 89:18, 25).
- 39 The images of a sprouting ‘horn’ alludes to a messianic incumbent or Davidic-messianic tradition; see Ravasi, Psalms 90-150, 854; and Gerstenberger, Psalms Part 2, 367. See Jr 23:5; 33:15, 17; Is 11:1; Ez 29:21).
- 40 In 2 Sm 21:1 David is called a lamp of Israel. A burning lamp was a sign that a house or tent was not without a living occupant (Jb 18:6; 21:17). For the continuation of the dynasty the image is used in 1 Kg 11:36; 15:4; 2 Kg 8:19.
- 41 The crown is a symbol of the royal office, see 1 Sm 1:10 and Ps. 89:40.
- 42 See also Weiser, The Psalms, 782.
- 43 See Prinsloo, Psalms, 428. Also Deissler, Die Psalmen, 517, describes it as combination between “Volkslied” and “Königslid”; Gerstenberger, Psalms Part 2, 368, similarly indicates exilic and post-exilic – the communities or those of early Judaism.
- 44 This can be valid for people in the Persian time period (see Weber, Werkbuch Psalmen II, 319), but also when the psalm was applied in the Hasmonean time period (see Duhm, Die Psalmen, 447).
- 45 See Kraus, Psalmen 60-150, 1056; Allen, Psalms 101-150, 267; and Schuman, Drama van crisis, 143.
- 46 Gunkel, Die Psalmen, 568, depicts the poem as a song of Zion. See also Kraus, Psalmen 60-150, 1056.
- 47 Allen, Psalms 101-150, 269, describes the psalm as “royal and prophetic liturgy”, which incorporates older traditions on transferring the ark to Jerusalem, on the Davidic dynasty and on the importance of Zion.
- 48 A variety of festivals were suggested in the research history of the psalm. This includes *inter alia* the ‘New Year’s or Enthronement festival’ (see Mowinckel, The Psalms in Israel’s Worship, 175); or ‘Covenant Festival’ of Yahweh in autumn (Weiser, The Psalms, 779), which accommodated the elements of the dedication of the temple and the enthronement of the king. Gunkel /Begrich, Einleitung, 145, had proposed an annual festival for the ‘Dedication of the Temple’. Kraus, Psalmen 60-150, 1059, opted for a ‘royal Zion festival’ (“königliche Zionsfest”), which was part of the ‘Feats of the Tabernacles’, where the election of David and Zion, as central sanctuary, was commemorated.
- 49 Gerstenberger, Psalms Part 2, 368, suggests the descriptions of ‘Messianic hymn’ or ‘Zion song’.
- 50 See Allen, Psalms 101-150, 267.
- 51 Terrien, The Psalms, 849.
- 52 See the suggestion of Gese, Der Davidsbund, 16.
- 53 Anderson, The Book of Psalms, 880.
- 54 See Mettinger, King and Messiah, 278.
- 55 Allen, Psalms 101-150, 269.
- 56 Kissane, The Book of Psalms, 270.
- 57 Gerstenberger, Psalms Part 2, 369.
- 58 See Deissler, Die Psalmen, 517.
- 59 Weber, Werkbuch Psalmen II, 319.
- 60 The suggestion for the Hasmonean period was made by Duhm, Die Psalmen, 447.
- 61 Seybold, Die Psalmen, 197.
- 62 Seybold, Die Psalmen, 197.
- 63 To interpret Ps. 132 as a single text also takes account of the different possible developmental stages of growth of textual parts into a text unit by means of a compositional process.
- 64 Zenger, Psalmenexegese, 17-66, summarizes and describes this distinction in current psalm research.
- 65 Seybold, Die Psalmen, 197.
- 66 It is often misleading to use the word ‘final’ in this context, because the current exegete can determine only with great difficulty what is a ‘final’ text is. I understand the term ‘final’ mostly in a very relative and open sense, which means that the text is only relatively final.
- 67 Auffret, La Sagesse, 441-453. See also the analysis of Zenger, Psalmenexegese, 56-57.
- 68 See Viviers, The coherence of, 287, for this criticism. Viviers proposed a different coherent structure of the collection and wants to be understood as less dogmatic regarding a rigid structure for this psalm collection.

- <sup>69</sup> Explicit references to Zion in the *Sîrê Hama'alôt* psalms appear in Ps. 125:1; 126:1; 128:5; 129:5; 132:13, 15; 133:3; 134:3).
- <sup>70</sup> For the detail of this analyses, see Viviers, 'n Teksimmanente ondersoek, Pretoria 1990; Ders., Die opbou van, 11-22; Ders., Klank-inhoud-chiasme, 65-79; Ders., Trust and lament, 64-77; Ders., Why was, 798-811; The coherence of, 275-289.
- <sup>71</sup> My presentation of the relationship and coherence of Ps. 130-134 and 120-134 gives full credit to the analyses of Zenger, Psalmenexegese, 17-66 [55-57], unless other references are given. Both Ps. 130 and 131 focus prominently on Yahweh (Ps. 130:1b; 131:1b) and use the literary techniques of inclusion, chiasm and anadiplosis (Ps. 130:5-6, 7-8; 131:1b-1c).
- <sup>72</sup> This includes the features of anacrusis, inclusion, chiasm, hendiadys and anadiplosis, see Viviers, Die opbou van, 15-16.
- <sup>73</sup> See further some linguistic and thematic similarities between all five psalms, see Viviers, Die opbou van, 16-17.
- <sup>74</sup> The theme of confidence and trust in Yahweh is further evident outside this small collection in Ps. 123, 125, 126, and 129.
- <sup>75</sup> See Viviers, Die opbou van, 11; Ders., The coherence of, 275.
- <sup>76</sup> See Zenger, Psalmenexegese, 56-57.
- <sup>77</sup> See Viviers, Trust and lament, 64-77.
- <sup>78</sup> Burden, Psalms 120-150, 103.
- <sup>79</sup> See Zenger, Psalmenexegese, 56.
- <sup>80</sup> See Pss 122:5; 132:1, 10, 11, 17. Also 122:1; 124:1; 131:1; 133:1. In the Davidic collections his name appears in 108:1; 109:1; 110:1. See also all psalms from Pss 138-145 and 144:10.
- <sup>81</sup> Zenger, Komposition und Theologie, 114, depicts this part of the frame as "eskatologisch messianisch".
- <sup>82</sup> The affliction and distress of this "servant David" are reflected in Ps. 140-143.