“David” in Consultation with the Prophets: The Intertextual Relationship of Psalm 31 with the Books of Jonah and Jeremiah

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ABSTRACT

Psalm 31 seems to be a late post-exilic text. It displays numerous similarities with other psalms, and also with the prophetic books of Jonah and Jeremiah. This paper proposes to investigate the nature of the literary relationship with the prophetic books in an attempt to establish the direction of influence and to determine the reasons why the psalm seems to have been composed as a kind of literary anthology. It would seem that the group of people who were responsible for composing Ps 31 also contributed towards the insertion of the confessions of Jeremiah and the prayers of Jonah.

1 INTRODUCTION

In Hossfeld and Zenger’s 1993 commentary on Psalm 1-50, Hossfeld summarised the problems the exegete faces in Ps 31:1 There is no clear development in the psalm and no clear poetic structure. It creates the impression of being a compilation from heterogeneous parts of the Hebrew Scriptures with groups of words, sentences, and whole verses corresponding to other contexts such as Ps 71:1-3, Jonah 2, and Ps 69. Its metrical pattern is completely irregular, except for vv. 11-17 where the Qinah metre dominates. It is notoriously difficult to determine the type of psalm: It seems to be a mixture of a song of thanksgiving and a lament, but the two types are strongly diffused. The centre (vv. 10-19) consists mostly of elements of a lament; with thanksgiving dominating at the beginning (vv. 2-9) and end (vv. 20-25). Declarations of trust (vv. 2-7 and 15) are found throughout the psalm. It is also not clear what the cause of the distress of the suppliant is – political enemies or social opponents (vv. 9, 12-13, 14, and 16); illness (vv. 10-11); or accusations against an innocent person (vv. 19, 21, and 24).

I will attend to the poetic structure of the psalm and investigate its relationship with Jeremiah and Jonah in this article. This is part of a combined investigation with my colleague, Phil Botha, who attended to the relationship of the psalm with Samuel. In his contribution, he has shown how the psalm was

1 The following summary is a free rendition of the notes by Frank-Lothar Hossfeld, “Psalm 31. Bitte, Klage und Dank eines Geretteten,” in Frank-Lothar Hossfeld & Erich Zenger, Psalm 1-50 (vol. 1 of Die Psalmen; NEchtB 29; Würzburg: Echter Verlag, 1993), 191-192.
composed or edited specifically to form connections with the history of David as it is described in the books of Samuel. He has shown that there are numerous connections between the psalm and the “Song of Hannah” in 1 Sam 2, and also between the psalm and the “Song of David” in 2 Sam 22. His contribution was published in the book of Walter Dietrich, *Seitenblicke*, in 2011.²

In working together on this, we hope to bring some clarification on some of the other matters mentioned by Hossfeld. The “poetic structure” and the “development” within the psalm, as Hossfeld calls it, are interdependent. It is my intention to demonstrate, apart from a clear poetic structure, also a development within the psalm. I will then focus on the intertextual relationship of the psalm and try to determine the role and function of the connections with passages and phrases from Jonah 2 and Jeremiah.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stroke</th>
<th>Hebrew Text</th>
<th>Greek Translation</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I A 2a</td>
<td>בְּכָל הַנַּחַת</td>
<td>ἐν πάση ὑπερθέν</td>
<td>In you, YHWH, I sought refuge, let me never be put to shame;</td>
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<tr>
<td>I B 3a</td>
<td>ἤκοψέ μοι Ἡσαΐας</td>
<td>ἡγηκόται μου:</td>
<td>Incline your ear towards me, rescue me speedily!</td>
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<tr>
<td>II C 6a</td>
<td>πρὸς τὸν δρόμον</td>
<td>ἐν εἰρήνῃ λατρεύεις</td>
<td>Into your hand I commit my spirit; you have redeemed me, YHWH, O true God.</td>
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<td>II D 8a</td>
<td>ἐν κρίσει σαρᾶς</td>
<td>ἐν κρίσεις κατανείλατε</td>
<td>I will shout with joy and be glad in your constant love,</td>
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<tr>
<td>III E</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>הָעָבָדָה בַּעֲבוֹדָה מִלָּהּ</td>
<td>you have set my foot in a broad place.</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>כִּי כִּי בָּנָהְיוֹן וְתָמוֹם</td>
<td>my strength fails through my transgression</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>בִּלְעַם עָבָדָה</td>
<td>and my bones waste away.</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>נֶשָׁבָתָם בַּקָּתָן מֶלֶךְ</td>
<td>flee from me.</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>יַעֲשָׂה בִּי מִצְלָחָה</td>
<td>they plotted to take my life.</td>
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<td>G</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>אָנוּ אֶלְדוֹת בְּשַׁחַת יְהוָה</td>
<td>I am forgotten, removed from the heart like a dead person.</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>בִּדְרֵךְ צְיוֹנִי</td>
<td>I have become like a broken vessel.</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>בֵּית הָאָבוֹת מִדֶּרֶךְ</td>
<td>they plotted to take my life.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>18</td>
<td>לִשְׂמַחְתְּנָה שְׁפָתֶיךָ</td>
<td>you have set my foot in a broad place.</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>יִהְבוּךְ בְּעָלַי</td>
<td>with pride and contempt.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>כְּזֶה עַמָּה</td>
<td>O how abundant is your goodness which you treasure up for those who fear you;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>21</td>
<td>בָּשְׂמֵיהֶם בַּמְּפֹרְשָׁה</td>
<td>You hide them in the hiding place of your face from the mob of people;</td>
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THE STICHTOMETRY AND POETIC STRUCTURE OF PSALM 31

The psalm seems to consist of six stanzas, rather than three main sections as proposed by Hossfeld and Zenger. Hossfeld and Zenger demarcate units on the basis of what they see as the literary growth of the psalm from a “basis psalm” to the present composite unit. According to them, there are at least two distinct layers: vv. 10-19 comprise the Grundpsalm, a late pre-exilic or early exilic individual lament, designed to serve as formulary prayer or agenda for distressed suppliants. This “basis psalm” was then inserted into a frame of supplicatory and thanksgiving parts (vv. 2-9; 20-25) by the exilic and formative redaction. The three parts were also integrated by the editors: Vv. 2-9 were made to reflect the prayers and confessions of confidence of the Grundpsalm,

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3 With the exception of v. 6, which he groups with vv. 4-5, the demarcation of strophes is the same as that of Beat Weber, Die Psalmen 1 bis 72 (vol. 1 of Werkbuch Psalmen; Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2001), 153-154. Pierre Auffret, “Que se rassure votre cœur! Étude structurelle du Psaume 31,” SEL 19 (2002): 59-76, demarcates the following units in the psalm: 2-7, 8-9, 10-11, 12-14, 15-19, 20-22, 23, 24-25, and 20-25. This coincides with most of the strophes demarcated here.

4 Frank-Lothar Hossfeld & Erich Zenger, Psalm 1-50 (vol. 1 of Die Psalmen; NEchtB 29; Würzburg: Echter Verlag, 1993), 192. See the almost exactly same explanation of Klaus Seybold, Die Psalmen (HAT I/15; Tübingen: Mohr (Siebeck): 1996), 129.

5 It also takes up the motif of handing oneself over into the hand of YHWH; the descriptions of YHWH in vv. 6 and 15, and the distress and suffering of the suppliant (vv. 8 and 10-11).
while the concluding section 20-25 takes up themes from the Grundpsalm\(^6\) but also looks back to the introductory part.\(^7\)

The segmentation proposed here, is done on the basis of the presence of poetic devices, the modes of verbs, the switch between subjects and semantic fields, and the repetition of key words. The first stanza (I), comprising vv. 2-5,\(^8\) contains an urgent supplication (strophe A),\(^9\) supported by statements of confidence (strophe B). The transition to indicatives demarcates strophe B, but the semantic field of taking refuge and finding safety unite the two into one the three nouns, rock, refuge and fortress which occur in 3b, are repeated and also commented on in vv. 4 and 5. In addition to that, the four cola of strophe B form a chiastic pattern which binds it together closely. The same is true of the four cola of strophe C, so that there is a clear break between v. 5 and v. 6.

Stanza II is demarcated by the declarations, as a form of thanksgiving, for the fact that YHWH has already or in another situation, saved the suppliant (cf. the perfect forms in vv. 6b, 8bc, 9ab). In strophe C, the focus is on the suppliant’s trust in YHWH as the true God in contrast to worthless idols (the antithesis between “true God” and “worthless idols” and the two declarations of trust by the suppliant create chiasmus); while strophe D is held together through the fourfold parallel which describes YHWH’s acts of rescue in the past.

Stanza III (vv. 10-14) is taken up by a description of the suffering of the suppliant – bodily suffering in strophe E, social ostracism in strophe F, and attempts to take his life in strophe G. There is an abrupt transition from stanza II to III – no more mention of trust, only the slight similarity with stanza I of a supplication right at the beginning of III, but this is then abandoned for a description of suffering in various dimensions.

Stanza IV displays a strong similarity with stanzas I and II, but in reverse order: This reverse order can clearly be seen in the rendering of the set of five elements. The following diagram depicts the links between the different elements in strophes A, H, and I. Strophe H begins with the renewed declarations of trust in YHWH, phrased in more or less the same words as in v.

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6 Such as the face of YHWH (vv. 17, 21) and his mercy (vv. 17, 22).
7 E.g. the “mercy” of YHWH (vv. 8, 22) and “taking refuge” in YHWH (vv. 2, 20).
8 Craigie’s demarcation of vv. 2-6 as the first section ignores the antithesis between YHWH, the “true God” (v. 6) and the “worthless idols” (v. 7), and also the inclusio of “your hand” (v.6) with “the hand of the enemy” (v.9). Cf. Peter C. Craigie, Psalms 1-50 with 2004 Supplement by Marvin E. Tate (WBC 19; 2nd ed.; Nelson Reference & Electronic, 1983 [2004], 259. The other segments are more or less identified correctly by Craigie.
9 It contains six requests, beginning with a jussive, progressing to four imperatives, and ending with an infinitive construct: “Do not let me ever be shamed; save me; listen to me; rescue me, be to me a rock and a fortress to save me!”
7b, the conclusion of strophe C. This is then supplemented by renewed requests (again as imperatives, three of them, and one negative command) for help.

A 2a
נסǖק עד חותם
אל אלוהים שלמה
concatenated elements:
A 16a
נַשֵׁךְ עַל צָלָה
E 16b
E 17a
A 18a
B 2b
C c
D 3a
E b
C 19
B 20

The two A-elements, both beginning with the preposition be and a second person masculine suffix, are the only two in the series/set of five elements that have a direct congruency. The other four (BCDE) are represented in reverse order. The repetition of the set of five elements can be interpreted as an extended inclusio which acts as a very strong link between the first and fourth stanza.

Strophe I takes up the theme of shame introduced in strophe A, and once again asks (in the form of jussives) for protection against being shamed and for shame upon the arrogant wicked instead. There is a complete turnaround in v. 19. In vv. 2 to 18, the people responsible for the suppliant’s distress, are vaguely described as enemies (יָוֵית and עַבְרִי) and persecutors (רָדְפֵי). Now they are called the wicked (רָשָׁעים) and a hoard of four negative attributes are heaped on them. Nowhere else in the OT do these four negative attributes, which clearly originate from wisdom circles, occur together.

The mood changes completely in stanza V. Instead of supplication and complaint, one encounters thanksgiving and praise – first in a general sense for YHWH’s help to those who fear him and put their trust in him in strophe J, and then for YHWH’s personal help to the suppliant in strophe K. The distress is mentioned one last time in v. 23, but this serves only to emphasize the wonder of YHWH’s intervention. Finally, stanza VI draws a lesson from the experience of the suppliant for the in-group: the devout and faithful people who wait for YHWH. They are to love YHWH and wait for him patiently, since he will preserve them, but he will shame the arrogant.
Important themes which run through the psalm and unite the various parts, are, in the first place, the physical (vv. 5, 9, 10-11, 14, 16) and social difficulties which beset the suppliant, especially the possibility of being ostracized and shamed (vv. 2, 12-13, 18, 23). Then there is the motif of trust in YHWH and of taking refuge in him for protection against physical and social threats (vv. 2-7, 15, 21, and 25). Apart from the physical threat the enemies pose, their attitude is particularly disturbing, for they are “arrogant,” (תועה) full of “pride” (позה) and “contempt” (חר) and act “haughtily” (עשנ גאזה) (vv. 19 and 24). In this regard they transgress especially with their “lips” (שמפ שם) (v. 19) and their “tongue” (ריב לשון, v. 21).

One should probably also mention the important semantic field of characteristics of YHWH and the possible interventions he is able to provide: his “righteousness” (צדק, v. 2b) and “constant love” (חסד, v. 8a) which can “save” one (מל, v. 2b) and “rescue” one (נצל, vv. 3a, 3b, 16b, 17b) since he “sees” (ראה) the affliction of the suppliant (v. 8b) and “takes notice” (ビュー, v. 8c) of his distress and “hears” his cries (שמט, v. 23c); his ability to “lead” (נהד) and “guide” (הלך) the suppliant (v. 4b) and “set” (עבר) his “foot” in “a broad place” (בר, v. 9b), and to “redeem” him (חרם, v. 6b), to “bring out” (אף hip’il) the suppliant from the “hidden net” (v. 5a). This enables the suppliant to “commit” ( phúc hip’il) his “spirit” into the hand of YHWH (v. 6a), since his “times” are in any case in the hand of God (v. 16a). YHWH can make his face “shine” (ër עזר hip’il) on his servant (v. 17a), and he possesses “abundant goodness” (רבת שמח) which he “treasures up” (סמל) and “prepares” (寮) for those who worship him (v.20) in order to “preserve” (너) them (v.24b). He “hides” (חר hip’il) them in the “hiding place” (חסד) of his face (v.21a) and “keeps them safe” (שפ in a “hut” (סוכ, v. 21). YHWH is “wondrously gracious” (מדהアク תרד) to the suppliant (v. 22b) and other worshippers, but he can put the wicked to shame (בוש) and “silence” (דום) them

The threats are described with the images of a “net” (תחישה, v. 5a), the “hand” of the enemy (vv. 9a, 16b), “distress” (חר, v. 10a), “grief” (כאב, v. 10a), “sorrow” (סער, v. 11a) and “sighing” (הגה, v. 11a), “wasting away” ( נותש, vv. 10b and 11c), “terror” (מגור, v. 14a), “taking counsel” (טש, v. 14b), and “plotting” to take his life (מות, v. 14c).

The vocabulary includes “be shamed” (בוש, vv. 2a, 18a), to become a “disgrace” ( сторо, v. 12a), a “dread” (פחד, v. 12a), being “forgotten” (shall nip’al, v. 13a), being like a “dead person” (נפש, v. 13a), becoming like a “broken vessel” (آن אליל, v. 13b), and being “cut off” from YHWH (חור nip’al, v. 23b).

The vocabulary includes “to seek refuge” (חסד, vv. 2a, 20b), a “rock of refuge” (סrvine, v. 3b, cf. also v. 5b), a “strong fortress” (מוגד, vv. 3b, 4a), a “rock” (סלע, v. 4a), the “hand” of YHWH (vv. 6a, 16a), “trust” (בטח, vv. 7b, 15a), a “hiding place” (סוכ, v. 21a), a “hut” (סוכ, v. 21b), a fortified city (עיר מגור, v. 22b), and to “fear” (v. 20a) and “wait” for YHWH (לתי תר’ל, v. 25b).
in Sheol (v. 18b) and also “silence” (נִפְּאֵל nip’al) the lying lips (v. 19a), thereby “requiting” (שָׁלֹם pi’el) them “abundantly” (עַל, v. 24c).

3 THE PASSAGES FROM JONAH 2:3-10 IN PSALM 31

As is the case with numerous other contexts in the Hebrew Bible, there are some notable similarities between Jonah 2 and Ps 31. Two such instances of similarity with Jonah 2 will interest us here. On face value, it seems that there are two citations from the prayer of Jonah in Jonah 2:3-10 taken up in Ps 31. If one can prove a literary connection, the question of course remains what the direction of influence would have been. Did the editors of Jonah borrow something from Ps 31, or did the author or editors of Ps 31 borrow something from Jonah? In view of the many contexts with which Ps 31 shows connections, it would seem that it is more probable that Ps 31 made use of the prayer of Jonah. A third possibility which should be kept in mind is that both texts were composed by the same group of people, or that both made use of a third, unknown source. As a working hypothesis, we assume that Jonah 2:9 is quoted in Ps 31:7a while a combination of Jonah 2:3 and 5 is quoted in Ps 31:23.

3.1 Concerning Psalm 31:7a

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jonah 2:9</th>
<th>Psalm 31:7</th>
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<tr>
<td>נִפְּאֵלָה חֹדֶסָה נִפְּאֵלָה חֹדֶסָה</td>
<td>נְשַׁעַתָּה לִשְׁמֵרָה הַבְּלִיזָהָה יָגִילוּהָה יָגִילוּהָה</td>
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Jonah 2:9 and Ps 31:7 contain the only two occurrences of the combination of the two words נִפְּאֵל חֹדֶס in the Hebrew Bible. It is remarkable that the phrase functions in both instances in the same way. In the Jonah prayer it forms part of an antithesis where the conduct of the idol worshippers is described in stark contrast to the conduct of Jonah. In Ps 31, on the other hand, the comparison and antithesis is between trust in the worthless idols and YHWH, the true God. Only the first hemistich (three words in the Hebrew text) of Jonah 2:9 is reflected in Ps 31:7a, and some significant changes were made to the wording. The pi’el participle of the Jonah verse appears as a qal participle in Ps 31. The reason for this is that a finite verb is used in the beginning of the phrase in Ps 31, and the function of the participle thus changes from subject to object. The similarity between the two contexts is found in the fact that idol worshippers are denounced as a way to confirm the attitude of trust of the suppliant.

The two words are used in a parallelism in Zech 2:10 to describe the worthlessness of diviners’ dreams and words, but not as a tautological description of idols.
3.2 Concerning Psalm 31:23

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Jonah 2</th>
<th>Psalm 31</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5a</td>
<td>23a</td>
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<tr>
<td>3c</td>
<td>3d</td>
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<td>b</td>
<td>b</td>
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<td>c</td>
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But I said 5a
I was expelled from before your eyes b
You heard my voice 3d
From the belly of Sheol I cried 3c

Yes, I have said to myself in my alarm: 23a
I am cut off from your eyes. b
Yet, you heard the sound of my supplication c
When I cried to you for help, d

In both the prayer of Jonah and in the psalm, the motif of being “cut off” from before the eyes of YHWH function as a form of thanksgiving for the fact that YHWH listened to the voice of the suppliant in a moment of crisis. But there are four major differences in the way that the wording of Jonah 2:3 and 5 functions in Ps 31. To begin with, the words אָלִיךָ and לִשָּׁהוּ are additions in the psalm. Furthermore, the words נִקְרָאת עֵינֶיךָ and the first person singular suffixes which occur in the prayer, are omitted in the psalm. A third and important difference can be detected in the word order. In the Jonah prayer the words of v. 3 obviously precede v. 5 while in the psalm it is placed after the corresponding phrases. The last difference is the occurrence of the verbal form נָשָׁה instead of נָשָׁה. As the word in the psalm is a hapax which occurs nowhere else, this is a clear case of a hearing error where the sounds of the נ and the ש were confused. This, taken together with the numerous connections between Ps 31 and the rest of the Hebrew Bible, seem to point in the direction of a dependency of Ps 31 on Jonah 2.

And yet, the prayer of Jonah displays similar traits as the psalm. It seems to be a composition which does not quite fit the context or the character of Jonah the reader encounters in the narrative parts. Other “prayers” in narrative contexts also display similarities to the prayer of Jonah. So, for instance, is there a similarity between Jonah 2:2 (where Jonah begins by thanking YHWH for a positive answer to his prayer) and the prayer of Hannah in 1 Sam 2 (cf. 1

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Sam 2:1 where Hannah does the same).\textsuperscript{15} It is possible that the theology of these poetic prayers of figures such as Jonah, Hannah, Hezekiah, Jeremiah, and others, is very similar to that of the authors of this psalm. The same people who wrote Ps 31 might have been responsible for the insertion of these prayers in order to portray the characters of the historical books and prophetic literature as being good examples of their own kind of piety.

4 THE PASSAGES FROM JEREMIAH IN PSALM 31

There are more contexts that display similarities, but one context from Jeremiah will be compared to Ps 31: Jer 20:7-13. The two texts share a number of significant words, of which the most important seem to be: \(\text{הֵמֶשׁ, הָשָׁם, גְּדַל, בּוֹשׁ, רָאָה, כָּבָד, זָרִיָּה, עֵצָה, סוּכֵי, נָצָל, בְּלּוֹ, מַגְּרוּ, לַקָּח, בְּנֵי, בַּעַר, רְוֵץ, רָבָּה, שַׁמְּרָה, שֶׁמֶט, שֶׁבֶט, רֵיחַ, רְחַבָּה, וְאָסֵף.}\textsuperscript{16} It is obvious that Ps 31:14a and Jer 20:10a ("I have heard the rumour of many: 'Terror all around'") have the same origin, or that the author of Ps 31 borrowed the phrase from Jeremiah or vice versa.\textsuperscript{16} This connection would then account for the presence of further words, such as סְבִכָּה, בְּכֵי, רַבָּה, and סְבִכָּה in both texts. It is the only two places where הבּוֹשָׁה occurs in the Psalms and in the whole book of Jeremiah, so that an allusion seems indisputable. This is confirmed by the presence of other similarities: Like Jeremiah, the suppliant of the psalm experiences shame and insults (cf. Ps 31:12 “Because of all my enemies, I have become a reproach” and Jer 20:8, “The word of YHWH has become a reproach and a mockery to me all my days”). While the refusal to speak in the name of YHWH becomes like fire in the בְּכֵי for Jeremiah (20:9), the הבּוֹשָׁה of the suppliant in Ps 31:11 “waste away.” Jeremiah is confident that his opponents will be shamed (בֵּית, Jer 20:11), while the suppliant of the psalm prays that he will not be shamed (Ps 31:2 and 18). Jeremiah confesses that he has entrusted his lawsuit (רְוֵץ) to YHWH (Jer 20:12), and the suppliant of the psalm thanks YHWH for hiding his protégés in a hut from the "strife" (רְבָּה) of tongues.

It seems clear that the author of Ps 31 has used the prayer of Jeremiah, or that the author of the Jeremiah text has consulted Ps 31. Both these texts display a complex intertextual relationship with the rest of the Hebrew Bible.\textsuperscript{17} It is possible that the author of the psalm chose to portray Jeremiah as a good example of piety in the face of internal opposition (as he seems to have done

\textsuperscript{15} Cf. the remark of Wolff in this regard, Hans Walter Wolff, \textit{Dodekapropheton 3: Obadja und Jona} (BKAT 14/3; Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 1977), 105. He also refers to the introduction to the prayer of Hezekiah, Isa 38:9.

\textsuperscript{16} Bernard Gosse, \textit{L'influence du livre des Proverbes sur les rédactions bibliques à l'époque Perse} (Supplément no 14 à Transeuphratène; Paris: Gabalda, 2008), 176, argues that Jer 20:10 rests on Ps 31:14. He also points out the similarity of Jer 20:10 with Ps 35:15.

\textsuperscript{17} Cf. the many instances which Gosse, \textit{L'influence du livre des Proverbes}, 175-178, points out proving dependency of Jer 20 on Ezek, Ps 22, Ps 79, Ps 71, etc.
with other contexts and characters in the scriptures). But it is equally possible that the authors of the psalm were also responsible for outlining the profile of Jeremiah in the confessions, showing him to be a typical example of the persecuted pious of post-exilic times. The presence of the “poor” in Jer 20:13, who are “saved” (יהלמ hip’il) by YHWH from the evildoers, points in the direction of the editorial work of the post-exilic Wisdom editors. The suppliant of the psalm also has a problem with those who “pursue” (התפס) him, and asks YHWH repeatedly to “save” (יהלמ hip’il, vv. 3 and 16) him from them (cf. the “pursuers” in Jer 20:11).

5 Conclusion

There seems to be little doubt that the author of Ps 31 made use of a variety of contexts in the Hebrew Bible to compose the psalm, and that he prominently displays his indebtedness to, inter alia, one of the confessions of Jeremiah and the prayer of Jonah. These prayers of Jonah and Jeremiah were in turn composed to display similar intertextual connections with other psalms and other parts of the Hebrew Canon. There is also a similarity of theological disposition visible between the psalm and the supposed view of the authors of Jonah 2 and Jer 20. It therefore seems feasible to conclude this paper with the remark that Ps 31 was written by exponents of the same group of people who were responsible for inserting the confessions of Jeremiah and the prayer of Jonah, and their purpose seems to have been to portray such prophetic figures as pious followers of YHWH who possessed the same religious qualities that they (the authors) had, and which are also found in the book of Psalms.

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