

Chapter IV

A. Introduction

This chapter comprises a summary of the findings of Chapter III. However, it entails more than that. In summarizing the statements made in the previous chapter in order to illuminate the links between psalms, this chapter discusses the structure of the whole of Book IV and some important themes are highlighted.¹ Brief statements about the contents, which have already been dealt with in Chapter III, are repeated for the sake of discussion, and the contours of the psalms being compared are drawn in order to describe the whole content of Book IV. This chapter follows the same order as Chapter III in that the first part compares Psalms 89 with 90-103, then each psalm in Book IV with the subsequent one, and finally attention is paid to the groups of the psalms comprising cross-structural units. The last part of this chapter constitutes a conclusion not only to this chapter, but also to the whole thesis. The conclusion highlights the findings about the contents of Book IV of the Psalter.

4.1 Psalms 89 and 90-103

¹ Though our main purpose in this dissertation is to analyze the structure of the psalms under discussion, we have pointed out brief theological ideas regarding the discussions of the psalms. Theological ideas need more detailed explanations and they merit close attention. The theological ideas, which will be noted in this chapter and in the conclusion section of this dissertation as deriving from Chapter III, are in need of further study.

As has been demonstrated in Chapter III, Psalm 89 forms certain links with each of Psalms 90-103 in various ways, and these links likewise seem to suggest that the psalms in Book IV reflect the thoughts of Psalm 89. Indeed, various themes and motifs found in the psalms in Book IV are very similar to those in Psalm 89, and in many ways the psalms in Book IV bear echoes of Psalm 89. A probable reason for this may be that Book IV answers the questions raised in Psalm 89, as Wilson (1985a: 215) has suggested.

4.1.1 Psalms 89 and 90

The links between Psalms 89 and 90 are established on many points. The roots חמה “wrath” (89:47; 90:7), עבר “wrath” (89:39; 90:9), עלם “sin” (89:46; 90:8) and עון “iniquity” (89:33; 90:8) are unique to these psalms, and the themes represented by these words are also decisive in suggesting the existence of links between the psalms. The link between Psalms 89:48 and 90:3 is established not only by the phrase בְּגִי־אֶרֶץ, but also by corresponding themes found within these verses as well as within adjacent verses. In addition, Psalm 90 has many echoes from the lament section of Psalm 89 and the close links between these suggest that the former psalm can be interpreted as a continuation of the latter.

Psalm 89 closes Book III, while Psalm 90 forms the beginning of Book IV. The former ends without an answer to the questions caused by the fall of the Davidic dynasty, but Psalm 90 begins with a prayer to overcome the situation described in Psalm 89, picking up themes and thoughts from the former. This prayer

is not of a general character, but it is the prayer of Moses who persuaded God not to punish his people (see the analysis of Psalm 90). The prayer reflects the dilemma which the psalmist was struggling with, namely the exilic or post-exilic situation. The reference to sins in Psalm 90 serves to remind one of the cause of the present suffering, and as Book IV begins with a reference to sins, so the end of the book, namely Psalm 106, closes it with a reference to sins (i.e. “we have sinned with our fathers” in 106:6). Thus, the beginning and the end of Book IV seem to frame the whole of Book IV by reminding the readers or listeners that the cause of the present suffering is sin.

4.1.2 Psalms 89 and 91

The links between Psalms 89 and 91 are established by the use of the words נגע “plague” (89:33; 91:10) and נגף “strike” (89:24; 91:12) as well as עליון “Most High (89:28; 91:1, 9). In addition, the word ישועה “salvation” (89:27; 91:15), the theme relative to it, and the oracles found in both psalms serve to link these two psalms.

While in Psalms 89 and 90 we have descriptions of desperate situations caused by the destruction of the Davidic dynasty, Psalm 91 proclaims a promise of salvation, a perspective which Psalms 89 and 90 lack (for the discussion of Psalm 90, see below). After two lament psalms (Pss 89 and 90), the promise of salvation (Ps 91) is seen as a natural consequence constituting an answer to the previous psalms. In Psalm 91 the description of Yahweh as a refuge and of the divine oracle from his mouth constitute hopeful messages to those who are anguished. In Psalm

89 it is described how the divine oracle of promise addressed to David and his descendants was disregarded; but in Psalm 91 the oracle is renewed to be effective for the present congregation.

4.1.3 Psalms 89 and 92

The links between Psalms 89 and 92 are very strong and are established in significant ways. The words **רָם** “exalted” (89:14, 17, 18, 20, 25, 43; 92:9, 11), **קַרְן** “horn” (89:18, 25; 92:11), and **שֶׁמֶן** “oil” (89:21; 92:11), and the theme associated with these words, highlight the relationship between these psalms. In addition, other words suggestive of links are **אֹיִב** “enemies” (89:11, 23, 43, 52; 92:10) and **צֶרֶר** “rock” (89:27; 92:16), and strikingly enough, Psalm 92:5-16 correspond to Psalm 89:11-27 in terms of the arrangement of words and themes.

What the links between Psalms 89 and 92 mean, is that the promise of victory which was once given to David in support of his kingship seems to be applied to the psalmist in Psalm 92: the exaltation of David’s horn in Psalm 89 (which means his victory over enemies) becomes the victory of the psalmist’s in Psalm 92. Despite the promise of victory, David was defeated by enemies, but Psalm 92 takes up the promise in anticipating the completion of the promise in the future (i.e. the Sabbath; see the discussion of Psalms 92 and 104). In Psalm 92 the defeat of the wicked and the prosperity of the righteous are projected into the future² (see the discussion of Psalms 92 and 104).

² Kraus (1989:229) points out an eschatological perspective in Psalm 92.

4.1.4 Psalms 89 and 93

The chaos motif in Psalm 93 has a strong echo in Psalm 89: both have the word גאון “majesty” which is found only in these psalms in Book II-V of the Psalter, and the related rare roots כרס (89:11) and כרס (93:3) correlated with the meaning “to crush” also appear in these psalms. In addition, the words ים “sea” (89:10; 93:4) and רם “rise” (89:10; 93:3) and common themes associated with the chaos motif support the strong links between the psalms. The contents of Psalm 89:10-11, where the chaos motif is dealt with, are very similar to those of Psalm 93:1-4, and the similarities between them leave no doubt that Psalm 93 repeats the thought of Psalm 89:10-11.

Psalm 93 repeats the chaos motif of Psalm 89 in order to emphasize Yahweh’s kingship. In Psalm 89, the chaotic force representing the power of Yahweh’s enemies is described as being under his total control, that is, Yahweh crushed and scattered them (v. 11), and this illustrates the firmness of Yahweh’s sovereignty and cosmic rule which becomes the foundation for the Davidic dynasty. However, in Psalm 93 the chaos motif is mentioned as threatening element, though Yahweh ultimately defeats it. If the chaotic force represents the wicked or the enemies in history, Psalm 93 may reflect the disordered situation prevailing after the destruction of the Davidic dynasty which to Psalm 89:10-11 do not allude,³ in which the wicked had dominated. Psalms 92 and 94, preceding and following Psalm 93,

³ The lament section in Psalm 89:39-52 mentions the destruction of the Davidic dynasty, but the hymnic-oracle section in Psalm 89 (vv.2-38) does not allude to.

speak of the current existence of the wicked, which in Psalm 93 is represented by the chaos motif. Psalm 93 speaks of the sureness of Yahweh's sovereignty over chaos (v. 5), a theme which becomes a hopeful message to the congregation in Psalms 92 and 93 (see the discussions of Psalms 92-93 and 104).

4.1.5 Psalms 89 and 94

Numerous lexical and thematic links are found between Psalms 89 and 94. The roots גבר "man" (89:49; 94:12), עזר "help" (89:20; 94:17), גאה "rise up" (89:10; 94:2) and דכא "crush" (89:11; 94:5) serve to link Psalm 89 with Psalm 94 in significant ways. A striking link is found between Psalms 89:27 and 94:22 on the one hand, and between Psalms 89:49 and 94:16-17 on the other. The word כסא "throne" (89:5, 15, 30, 37, 45; 94:20) is also an important key term linking Psalm 89 to Psalm 94, and the words תורה "law" (89:31; 94:12) and חק "statute" (89:32; 94:12) also serve to link the two psalms. In addition, a large number of lexical and thematic links suggest a close relationship between Psalms 89 and 94.

Psalm 89 refers to the fall of the Davidic dynasty, while Psalm 94 describes the situation caused by the destruction of the dynasty (Tate 1990:492). Taking up and re-using the words and themes from Psalm 89, Psalm 94 appeals to Yahweh to intervene in a situation fraught with injustice.

4.1.6 Psalms 89 and 95

The links between Psalms 89 and 95 are not strong, but are nevertheless present. The strongest link is the verbatim repetition

of the phrase “the rock of *our* [or *his*] salvation” found in Psalms 89:27b and 95:1b, while the word רוע “raise a shout” (89:16; 95:1, 2) also serves as a significant link. In both psalms Yahweh is described as the one being surrounded by divine beings in heaven (89:8-9; 95:3), and Yahweh’s divine warning in Psalm 95:7ff also has an echo in Psalm 89:31ff.

4.1.7 Psalms 89 and 96

The links between Psalms 89 and 96 are much stronger than those between Psalms 89 and 95. A strong link was found between Psalms 89:15 and 96:13: these verses have three roots in common; משפט // שפט (“justice” and “judge”), צדק (“righteousness”) and אמה // אמונה (“faithfulness”), and both are concerned with Yahweh’s kingship. Psalms 89:18 and 96:6 have two words in common עז “strength” and תפארה “beauty,” thus serving as an important link, and the words מלא “fulness” (89:12; 96:11), גיל “rejoice” (89:17; 96:11), and ירא “fear” (89:8; 96:4) also function in linking the psalms together. On the whole, Psalm 89:6-11 correspond to Psalm 96 in the terms of the arrangement of words.

4.1.8 Psalms 89 and 97

A striking link is found between Psalms 89:15 and 97:2 in that an almost identical sentence appears in both: צדק ומשפט מְכוֹן כִּסֵּאוֹ (“righteousness and justice are the foundation of his [your] throne”). The use of the words צר “foe” (89:24, 43; 97:3), גיל “rejoice” (89:17; 97:1, 8), and עליון “Most High” (89:28; 97:9) strengthens the links between these psalms, and the

similarity between Psalm 89:49b and 97:10 also confirms such a link.

4.1.9 Psalms 89 and 98

The combination of the word חסד “love” with אמונה “faithfulness” found in Psalms 89 and 98 serves as a significant link (89:15, 25; 98:3), and the psalms are also linked by the use of the words זרוע “arm” (89:11, 14, 22; 98:1) and ימין “right hand” (89:14; 98:1). In addition, Psalm 98:8 has an echo in Psalm 89:15 in that these verses have two roots in common; “judge” // “justice” and “righteousness,” and both also deal with the theme of Yahweh-kingship. The theme of Yahweh-kingship in Psalm 89 is strongly echoed in Psalm 98.

4.1.10 Psalms 89 and 99

The links between Psalms 89 and 99 are established in significant ways. Psalm 89:15 is linked not only to each of Psalms 96-98, but also to Psalm 99. Psalm 99:4 is a very strong echo of Psalm 89:15 in that these verses repeat three common roots: צדק “righteousness,” משפט “justice,” and כון // מכון (“foundation” and “establish”), while the word מלך “king” in Psalm 99:4 may also correspond to the phrase פסאך “your throne” in Psalm 89:15. Psalms 89:8 and 99:3 have the words קדש “holy” and ירא “terrible,” describing Yahweh as being great and awesome. In addition, interestingly enough, these two psalms use the words גום “exalt” and קדש “holy” more than three times, a frequency which is not found in any other psalm in the Psalter.

4.1.11 Psalms 89 and 100

The links between Psalms 89 and 100 are very weak. There are only two lexical links. The psalms have the words **אהבה** “love” and **אמונה** “faithfulness” in common (89:15, 25; 100:5), while the occurrence of the word **הנהל** “raise a shout” (89:16; 100:1) also serves as a connection.

4.1.12 Psalms 89 and 95-100

As has been noted, there are clear connections between Psalm 89 and each psalm in the group of Psalms 95-100, especially between these psalms and the hymnic-oracle section of Psalm 89 mentioning Yahweh’s cosmic kingship. Psalm 89:15 in particular, where the foundation of Yahweh’s kingship is mentioned, forms certain links with each of Psalms 96-99, and the links between Psalms 89 and 95-100 likewise seem to suggest that the theme of Yahweh-kingship in Psalms 96-99 may reflect that in Psalm 89. Since Psalm 89 forms close links with each of Psalms 90-94 and also in turn with each one of Psalms 95-100, the theme of Yahweh-kingship in Psalms 96-99 should be seen in the association with Psalm 89. Wilson (1992:140) aptly notes this as follows:

Psalm 90, and the remainder of the fourth book, begin to point Israel away from reliance on the inadequacies of human kings and kingdoms to the adequacy of Yahweh himself....The central psalms of book four (93; 95-99) celebrate the kingship of Yahweh who, unlike human princes, rules forever.

4.1.13 Psalms 89 and 101

Psalm 101 begins with the words חסד “love” and משפט “justice” which are used as keyterms in Psalm 89. Psalms 89 and 101 belong to a type of royal psalm and in both the Davidic king is mentioned. The links between Psalms 89 and 101 are largely established by the use of the same genre and thematic aspects. These psalms are the only royal psalms among the group of Psalms 89-106. Psalm 101 is the first Davidic psalm after the description of the breakdown of the Davidic kingship and it expresses the reaction of the king to such an experience. In Psalm 89 his enemies humiliated him and the experience of the king’s failure seems to remind him of his sins, but in Psalm 101 he undertakes to follow the “way of blamelessness” and to take responsibility for the righteous.

4.1.14 Psalms 89 and 102

Psalms 89 and 102 have much in common. The word קצר “be short” is found only in these two psalms (89:46; 102:24) in the Psalter, and Psalms 89:52 and 102:9 are linked by the use of the words איב “enemy” and חרף “mock” and by a common theme, namely the mocking by the enemies. The words סתר “hide” (89:47; 102:3), זרע “descendant” (89:5, 30, 37; 102:29), עבד “servant” (89:4, 21, 40, 51; 102:15, 29) and שבע “swear” (89:4, 36, 50; 102:9) also serve as links, and Psalms 89:12 and 102:26 establish a close link through a similar theme: Yahweh’s creation of the earth and the heavens. In addition, both psalms have many significant thematic elements in common, for example, Yahweh’s wrath (89:39, 47; 102:12), his rejection (89:39, 40; 102:11, 24), and an appeal for his pity (89:51; 102:14-17). On the other hand,

just as Psalm 89 laments the situation of anguish caused by the failure of the Davidic covenant, so Psalm 102, alluding to the loss of the Davidic dynasty and the absence of a king, laments the situations caused by a long period of suffering. Psalm 102 presupposes the circumstances described in Psalm 89, though it adopts new themes from adjacent psalms (see below).

4.1.15 Psalms 89 and 103

Psalms 89 and 103 have strong links. The terms פשע “transgression” (89:33; 103:12), עון “iniquity” (89:33; 103:3, 10), צבא “host” (89:9), and משל “rule” (89:10; 103:19, 22) are significant lexemes binding the psalms together, and Psalm 89:49b is similar to 103:4a in that they share words and themes. The words כסא “throne,” אב “father,” and ברית “covenant” also serve as important links. In addition, several common themes confirm the close links between these psalms.

In the light of the links between the psalms, Psalm 103 seems to function as a response to Psalm 89. For example, Psalm 89 speaks of the punishment of sins, but Psalm 103 mentions the abundance of Yahweh’s forgiveness. Indeed, a number of questions on human problems raised in Psalm 89 are answered in Psalm 103. Psalm 103 demonstrates to the dismayed congregation of Psalm 89 the abundance of Yahweh’s love and mercy and that he does not punish us according to our sins.

4.2. Psalms 90-106

The existence of links between adjacent psalms has been

illustrated in Chapter III. A certain psalm forms close links with what precedes it and what follows it. This may mean that psalms are designed to be read or used in association with other psalms. The psalms provide significant theological or functional interpretational insights to one another through their own arrangement.

On the whole, the psalms in Book IV can be divided into two large sections: Psalms 90-100 and 102-106, and within each of these sections there are three smaller units which form parallels to each other: Psalms 90-91 and 102-103; 92-93 and 104; 95-100 and 105-106. However, there is another unusual small unit: Psalm 94 in connection with Psalm 101. The parallel between Psalms 94 and 101 is somewhat anomalous, since Psalm 94 has no parallel counterpart from the second section, but from Psalm 101, in-between the two sections.

On the whole, the themes within the psalms move forward logically and progressively. Each psalm continues the theme of the previous psalm(s), and the following psalm develops the theme further. For example, Psalm 93 continues the theme of the defeat of the wicked in Psalm 92 through using the chaos motif (see below) and at the same time it introduces the theme of Yahweh-kingship, which is again explored in the following psalms (i.e. Psalms 96-99). This illustrates that the psalms are connected, forming a coherent structure which makes it possible to read them together.

4.2.1 Psalms 90 and 91

The links between Psalms 90 and 91 are established by the

word מַעוֹן “refuge” (90:1; 91:9) and by the theme associated with the word שָׂבַע “satisfy” (90:14; 91:16), as well as by various thematic links like the reference to Yahweh as a refuge in both psalms. As many scholars have noted, Psalms 90 and 91 are closely connected to each other.

Psalm 90 seems to function as a prayer of Moses for help to overcome the problems of the suffering community in the exilic or post-exilic period, problems that were caused by the destruction of the Davidic dynasty, while Psalm 91 is Yahweh’s promise that he will save the people seeking help from him.

4.2.2.1 Psalms 92 and 90

Psalm 90:14-17 form certain links with Psalm 92:3-5 by the arrangement of words and phrases, and these links are found between the plea section of Psalm 90 and the beginning section of Psalm 92. What these links mean is that Psalm 92 seems to express thanks to God: Psalm 90 constitutes a prayer, to which Psalm 91 responds with a promise of salvation, while Psalm 92 thanks Yahweh for Yahweh’s response, thus for Psalms 90 and 91 (Zenger 1991b:238-239; Krüger 1994:213; Whybray 1995:156; cf. Reindl 1981:350-356).

4.2.2.2 Psalms 92 and 91

The links between these psalms are weak and there are only a few of them. Both psalms begin with the titles עֲלִיוֹן “Most High” and יְהוָה “Yahweh,” and Psalms 91:8 and 92:12 form close links by sharing the word רָא “see” and by including a reference to the wicked. In addition, the reference to צוֹר “rock” in Psalm

92:12 has an echo in Psalm 91 where the words “refuge” (vv. 1, 4, 9), “fortress” (v. 2), and “deliver” (v. 14), reminiscent of the term “rock,” are found.

Psalm 92 picks up some ideas which were briefly touched on in Psalm 91 and develops them further. For example, the short reference to the wicked in Psalm 91 is expanded in Psalm 92 through an explanation of the destiny of the wicked and of the righteous within the theme of creation. Thus, it seems that these two psalms were positioned logically.

Regarding the structural division of Psalms 90-94, scholars generally take two different views. For example, Kirkpatrick (1903:553), Reindle (1980:350-356), Zenger (1991b:239-239, 1994b:156-157) and Krüger (1994:213-214) point out close links between Psalms 90-92 and see these three psalms as a group. By contrast, Howard (1993b:108-123) regards Psalms 90-94 as a unit. Indeed, these five psalms seem to be closely linked to one another, and it is not easy to make a definite decision regarding the demarcation between the psalms. The first position, which most scholars have adopted, seems to interrupt the close connections between Psalms 92 and 93, while Howard’s position does not explain loose connections between Psalms 91 and 92, since Psalm 92 has much stronger connections with Psalms 93 and 94 than with Psalm 91 (see the discussions of these psalms in Chapter III). When these features are considered together, a more likely view is that Psalms 90-94 may be divided into two small groups: 90-91 and 92-94. This view has merit in several points. First of all, the presence of a title in Psalm 92 seems to distinguish Psalm 91 from Psalm 92, though as adjacent psalms

there are certain links between them. Indeed, Psalm 92 introduces a new theme, the destruction of the wicked and the prosperity of the righteous associated with the theme of creation (as the title implies), a theme which is absent in Psalm 91 (also in Psalm 90). This may lead one to connect Psalms 90-91 into a small unit and to see 92 in the light of the relationship with the following psalms. In addition, as noted above, in the relationship of cross-structural units, Psalms 90-91 form close links with Psalms 102-103, but Psalms 92-93 have strong connections not only with Psalms 102-103, but with Psalm 104. Thus, the demarcation between Psalms 90-91 and 92-93 (-94) seems natural, though all these psalms form certain connections to one another.

4.2.3 Psalms 93 and 92

These two psalms display close links. An important key-word is מָרוֹם, occurring in Psalms 92:9 and 93:4, and in both it is used to refer to Yahweh's exalted position which emphasizes the defeat of the wicked. This is the only concept shared by these adjacent psalms. In addition, in these psalms Yahweh's power is contrasted to that of the wicked, and both employ poetic devices like emphatic anadiplosis and the prominent use of tricolons, while the anticipation in Psalm 92 of the destruction of the wicked is answered in Psalm 93 which introduces Yahweh as a king who can overcome the problems which the psalmist in Psalm 92 was facing. Psalm 92 describes the conflict between the wicked and the righteous in terms of Yahweh's ultimate victory, while Psalm 93, expressing such a conflict through the chaos motif, illustrates the sureness of Yahweh's sovereignty over the present threatening

elements (v. 5).

4.2.4.1 Psalms 94 and 92

As noted, the links between Psalms 92 and 94 are strong. The links between the psalms are established by the words בער “dull” (92:6; 94:8), כסיל “stupid” (92:7; 94:8), מחשבה “thought” (92:6; 94:4, 16), צור “rock” (92:16; 94:22), ישר “upright” (92:16; 94:15), as well as by the phrase און פעלי “all workers of evil” (92:8, 10; 94:4, 16) and by the word שחל “plant” (92:14) which is synonymous with נטע “plant” (94:9). Most of the words occur in the wisdom section within each of the psalms (92:6-8; 94:8-15), and the word צור “rock” occurs at the end of the psalms which may function as a kind of inclusio connecting Psalm 92 with Psalm 94. Most of the words which establish links between the psalms refer to the wicked. While Psalm 92 anticipates the destruction of the wicked and the victory of the righteous in future, Psalm 94 refers to the wicked and their behaviours, describing the suffering of the righteous, and appealing to Yahweh’s judgement over the wicked and to his reward for the righteous.

4.2.4.2 Psalms 94 and 93

The links between Psalms 93 and 94 are established in unique ways. The roots גאה “rise up” (93:1; 94:2), דכי “pounding” (93:3) and דכא “crush” (94:5), as well as נשא “lift up” (93:3; 94:2), - all these serve to link the psalms. The most striking link is that the proud and the wicked in Psalm 94 are

contrasted with the rebellious waters rising against Yahweh in Psalm 93. In addition, the words and motifs found in Psalms 93 and 94 are also found in Isaiah 59:15b-20, as Gosse (1994:303-306) has illustrated, and the links between the psalms and Isaiah indirectly support those between the psalms.

Psalms 93 and 94 refer to a situation of disorder: in Psalm 93 it is symbolized by the rebellious waters, while in Psalm 94 it is caused by the wicked uprising against Yahweh and his people. Yet Psalm 93 refers to Yahweh's total sovereignty over rebellious forces⁴ (see the discussions of Psalms 93 and 104), and this provides the reader of Psalm 94 with the assurance that Yahweh will defeat the wicked and render to the righteous their due reward.

As noted, Psalms 92-94 are closely connected. They are all concerned with the demise of the wicked, and lexical and thematic links are unique and very strong. This provides a reason why these psalms should be seen as comprising a unit.

4.2.5 Psalms 95 and 94

The word צור "rock" occurring at the end of Psalm 94 (v.22) and at the beginning of Psalm 95 serves to link these two psalms. In addition, the psalms include a reference to the people who rebel against Yahweh, and the description of Yahweh as a

⁴ The links between Psalms 93 and 104 reveal that the chaotic forces in the former are still threatening elements, but in the latter they are totally subjugated by the power of Yahweh. What is meant by the links between the psalms is that the psalmist in Psalm 93 seems to anticipate a world without disorder (i.e. Ps 104) where there is no room for the wicked. In a final analysis, the psalmist anticipates Yahweh's coming in judgement, as the following psalms, 96-99, illustrate.

king in Psalm 95:3 is strongly reminiscent of Psalm 94:1-2 which describes Yahweh's status as judge and kingship.

Psalm 94 is a lament, while Psalm 95 is a hymn, but these two adjacent psalms correspond to each other. Psalm 94 anticipates Yahweh's intervention in the circumstances of disorder and injustice, while Psalm 95 introduces Yahweh as a king, the theme found in Psalms 96-99. Thus, Psalm 94's anticipation is expressed in the theme of Yahweh-kingship in Psalms 96-99, and Psalm 95 serves to link the former psalm to the latter group.

The links Psalm 94 has with what precedes (i.e. Psalms 92-93) and what follows (i.e. Psalm 95) are noteworthy. As a lament psalm, Psalm 94 interrupts the flow of a natural theme, that is to say, Psalm 93 constitutes a theme of Yahweh-kingship which is continued in Psalms 96-99 (or perhaps in Psalm 95). The position of Psalm 94 between psalms using the theme of Yahweh-kingship seems to carry a certain meaning. Wilson (1993b:75) notes that --- "the interchange of Psalms 93 and 94 provides an interlocking mechanism by which the YHWH-mālak group (with its 'frame') is bound together with the preceding group of Psalms 90-92 and 94."

4.2.6 Psalms 95-100

Psalms 95-100 have been treated as a group. In contrast to Howard's (1986) conclusion that Psalms 96-99 should be divided into two parallel parts, Psalms 96 and 98; and 97 and 99, we have illustrated that they should rather be divided into two pairs, Psalms 96-97 and 98-99, representative of two different perspectives: Psalms 96-97 focus on Yahweh's reign over nations and their gods, while Psalms 98-99 are concerned with Yahweh as

the king of his people. Psalm 95 can also be divided into two sections, vv. 1-5 and 6-11, the first of which serves as an introduction to Psalms 96-97 and the second as an introduction to Psalms 98-99. In addition, Psalm 100 functions as a conclusion to Psalms 95-99, with the result that Psalms 95 and 100 frame Psalms 96-99. All these psalms, 95-100, reveal a coherent structural unity and form close links to one another lexically and thematically as well as in contents.

The links between Psalms 95:1-5 and 96-97 are evident. Only these psalms and the relevant section of Psalm 95 have a reference to “gods” (95:3; 96:4-5 and 97:7-9) and to שמים “heavens” among Psalms 96-99,⁵ and the word אלילים “worthless idols”, which is found only in Psalms 96:5 and 97:7 in the entire Psalter, also has an echo in the reference to the gods in Psalm 95:3. Also, Psalm 95:3 is very similar to Psalm 96:4 in that they share common words like “because” (כי) and “great” (גדול), as well as an identical phrase “above all gods” (על-כל-אלהים), and Psalm 96:4 in turn forms a close link with Psalm 97:7. In addition, Psalms 95:1-5 and 96-97 are all focused on the universal scope of Yahweh’s reign, as noted earlier.

Psalm 95:6-11 form close links with Psalms 98-99. This section of Psalm 95 is largely concerned with the relationship of Yahweh with his people, and the links between this section and Psalms 98-99 are also established by this perspective. The reference to “our God” (אלהינו) (95:7; 98:3; 99:5, 8, 9x2) and the

⁵ The word “heavens” does not appear in Psalm 95:1-5, but the heavens can be regarded as the active sphere of gods. The reference to the gods in Psalm 95:3 may include the word “heavens.”

covenant relationship between Yahweh and his people in these psalms distinguish them from Psalms 96-97 and 95:1-5 which do not contain any clear allusion to these links in Psalms 95:6-11 and 98-99. In addition, the exodus motif binds the psalms under our discussion together; especially Psalm 95:7c-11 have strong echoes in Psalm 99:6-8, and Psalms 95:6-11 and 98-99 reveal a domestic outlook which Psalms 95:1-5 and 96-97 lack.

As has been seen, the links between Psalms 96 and 97 are well established. The terms אֱלִילִים “worthless idols” (96:5; 97:7); שָׁמַיִם “heavens” (96:5, 11; 97:6); כְּבוֹד “glory” (96:3, 7, 8; 97:6); גִּיל “rejoice” (96:11; 97:1, 8) and חוֹל “tremble” (96:9; 97:4) serve as significant link-words binding these two psalms together.

Psalm 98 forms strong thematic links with Psalm 99. As noted above, the reference to “our God” is unique in these psalms and both psalms are largely concerned with Yahweh’s relationship with his covenant people.

Within this group of Yahweh-kingship psalms, certain principles of concatenation working between adjacent psalms were observed. For example, the phrase “let the earth rejoice” at the end of Psalm 96 (v. 11a) is repeated at the beginning of Psalm 97, and both the end of Psalm 96 and the beginning of Psalm 97 are concerned with Yahweh’s praise. The links between the end of Psalm 97 and the beginning of Psalm 98 are also clearly noticeable. These sections repeat three common words קֹדֶשׁ “holy” (97:12; 98:1), זָכַר “remember” (97:12; 98:3) and חָסַד “love” (97:10; 98:3), and they are more focused on Yahweh’s people. The beginning of Psalm 99 is also strongly reminiscent of the end of Psalm 98 in its repetition of five words: אֶרֶץ “earth” (98:9;

99:10), עמים “people” (98:9; 99:1, 2), שפט “judge” (98:9; 99:4), צדק (98:9; 99:4), as well as מִישָׁר “equity” (98:9; 99:4). These examples of concatenation may further illustrate that these psalms can be understood in the light of forming a coherent structural unit.

Psalms 95 and 99 each have a special section dealing with the early history of Israel, focusing on the theme of sin and apostasy (Psalms 95:7c-11 and 99:6-8). These sections, positioned at the beginning and end of Psalms 95-99, seem to serve as a kind of inclusio framing Psalms 95-99, thus emphasizing the sins of the forefathers in the past which may also reflect those of the current generation. In the perspective of concatenation, the divine oracle in Psalm 95:7c-11 carrying the message of Yahweh’s judgement may function as a warning not only to the wicked mentioned in the previous psalms (i.e. Psalms 92-94), but also to his people listening to the messages of Psalms 96-99. Psalm 95:7c-11, taking examples from the history of apostasy, explain the matter of the Israelites’ not entering into Yahweh’s rest (v. 11), that is to say, sins have caused the current problem, while Psalm 99:6-8 seem to contain a message of warning and of forgiveness by contrasting a forgiving God with a punishing God. The reference to the intercessors, “Moses,” “Aaron” and “Samuel” in 99, seems to bear the theological message which the psalm intends: repentance of sins and a possibility of forgiveness (see below). Indeed, Psalms 95:7c-11 and 99 form strong links with Psalm 106 which contains the reason for the suffering of the Israelites and a hope of salvation coming from Yahweh.

As noted, Psalm 100 has many links with each of Psalms

95-99 and likewise functions as a conclusion to Psalms 95-99.

4.2.7 Psalms 101 and 100

Psalm 101 does not display close links with Psalm 100, but its position as a royal psalm is noteworthy: its proper place can be identified within the Yahweh-kingship psalms. By being placed after the Yahweh-kingship psalms, Psalm 101 is effectively linked with them.

As noted, the links between Psalms 100 and 101 are weak. The words אהב "love" and אמן "faithful" at the end of Psalm 100 (v. 5) are again found at the beginning and in the body of Psalm 101 respectively, and the links between the psalms are established by these link-words. However, Psalm 101 has many echoes from the preceding psalms. The function of the king as a judge in Psalm 101 is reminiscent of the same function of Yahweh in Psalms 96-99, and the confession of sins in Psalm 101 reminds one of Psalms 95:7c-11 and 99:6-8 where the sins of the past generation, reflecting those of the present generation, are mentioned. As a representative of the nation, the king in Psalm 101 confesses his people's sins and his sins and swears to discharge the responsibility of his royal duties and prerogatives.

4.2.8 Psalms 102 and 101

The links between the psalms are weak. Only one clear thematic link is found in the reference to places, for example, "city of Yahweh" (101:8) // Zion (102:14, 17, 22). This may indicate the function of Psalm 101 itself within Book IV: by being positioned in the middle between the two large sections and by

not displaying close links with the adjacent Psalms 100 and 102, Psalm 101 as a royal psalm stands as an independent unit, but as some suggest, it may have been placed here to give hope for the future. McCann (1992:122) notes as follows: “...because the Psalms were collected largely in the post-exilic era when a monarchy no longer existed, the effect of royal psalms scattered throughout the Psalter is to give the collection an orientation to the future. Hope was then, and is now, an essential element of faith” (see Westermann 1981:258).

4.2.9 Psalms 103 and 102

The links between these psalms are very strong. The strongest link is found between Psalms 102:13-15 and 103:13-14. These verses have three words in common: עפר “dust” (102:15; 103:14), רחם “pity” (102:14; 103:13) and זכר “remember” (102:13; 103:15), and the fate of Zion in Psalm 102:13-15 seems to correspond to the transient life of man in Psalm 103:13-14. Psalm 102:26 also forms a strong link with Psalm 103:19 through the occurrence of three common words ארץ “earth,” מעשה “work,” and שמים “heavens” in both, and the words כח “strength” (102:24; 103:20), שכח “forget” (102:5; 103:2), and רחם “pity” (102:14; 103:13) also serve as significant links. In addition, strong thematic links also support the relationship between them.

Psalm 103 is seen as a response to the lamentation in Psalm 102. For example, the reference to “the healing of illness” and “the forgiveness of sins,” or to “satisfaction” in Psalm 103:3-5 has its counterpart in Psalm 102 where the psalmist’s sufferings like illness, sins, and loneliness, are mentioned. Psalm 103

theologically explains matters like the destruction of Zion, the suffering of the poor, the destiny of the future generation, which Psalm 102 has raised. Thus, the psalms can be understood as constituting a question-answer dialogue.

4.2.10 Psalms 104 and 103

Psalms 103 and 104 have a large number of lexical and thematic links in common. A striking link is established by the phrase “Bless Yahweh O my soul” occurring at the beginning and at the end of both Psalms 103 (vv. 2, 22) and 104 (vv. 1, 35), and two words at the end of Psalm 103 (vv. 20-21), שָׂרָה “ministers” and מַלְאָךְ “messengers” are repeated at the beginning of Psalm 104 (v. 4). The psalms also contain a common theme concerning the use of the words, namely Yahweh’s cosmic kingship. Moreover, Psalms 103:5 and 104:24 have an almost identical phrase “he satisfies [“they are satisfied” in Psalm 104] with good things” (103:5), and Psalm 103:19 is also similar to 104:2 in dealing with Yahweh’s kingship in the heavens. In addition, there are numerous lexical links (as well as thematic links) suggestive of the relationship between the psalms, for example, עֶפֶר “dust” (103:14; 104:29); רוּחַ “wind” (103:16; 104:29); חֲדָשׁ “renew” (103:5; 104:30); מְקוֹם “place” (103:22; 104:8).

Psalm 102 presents us with the anguished cry and suffering of the psalmist, and Psalm 103 illustrates God’s grace and sovereignty in heaven which would vitalize the hope of the psalmist. By contrast, Psalm 104 seems to portray a world without suffering, a world in which the expectation of the psalmist will be

fulfilled. This world will be full of satisfaction and abundance, and there will be no sinners or wicked people.⁶

4.2.11 Psalms 105 and 104

Psalm 104 speaks of Yahweh's greatness which is revealed in nature, while Psalm 105 sets forth his greatness which is illustrated in history. These two perspectives, creation and history, are interwoven here, and the psalms praise Yahweh from different angles.

These adjacent psalms display strong links. The beginning of Psalm 105 (vv. 1-5) repeats six words from the end of Psalm 104 (vv. 31-35): זמר "praise" (104:33; 105:2); יהוה "Yahweh" (104:31, 33, 34; 105:1, 3, 4); עשה "work" (104:31; 105:5); שׁיח "meditation" (104:34; 105:2); שמח "rejoice" (104:31, 34; 105:3); שׁיר "sing" (104:33; 105:2), and there are also numerous other words linking these two psalms. Psalm 104:27-28 are very similar to 105:40-41 in that they share the two words שׁבע "satisfy" and פתח "open" and deal with the theme of Yahweh's abundant gift of food and water to man.⁷

4.2.12 Psalms 106 and 105

These two psalms can be described as a twin-psalm, since two opposite themes are juxtaposed in them: a faithful God (105)

⁶ See Cook (1992:82-99) for the eschatological perspective in Psalm 104; and for the eschatological perspective in Psalm 93, see Feuillet (1951:253-255) and Koenen (1995:65).

⁷ Lemche (1985:351) notes that "...Psalms 104-105-106 comprise a triad which traces the history of the world from the creation to the time of the Exile."

and unfaithful people (106). There are numerous lexical and thematic links between these psalms and most of them constitute a contrast.

4.3 Cross-structural units

Psalm 90 begins the first section within Book IV, namely Psalms 90-100, while Psalm 102 begins the second section, namely Psalms 102-106. As noted, there are four parallel units within these two larger sections.

4.3.1 Psalms 90-91 and 102-103

4.3.1.1 Psalms 90 and 102

These psalms have much in common. They are the only two psalms within Book IV which are designated as a prayer in the title, and being lament psalms they have themes in common, such as the transient nature of human life and a concern for the future generation. Psalm 90 reflects the exilic or post-exilic situation after the destruction of the Davidic dynasty, as does Psalm 102. The lexical and thematic links between these two psalms are also very strong, and there is a distinct correspondence between them. The words יבש “wither” (90:6; 102:5, 12), כלה “consume” (90:7, 9; 102:4), תפלה “prayer” (90:1; 102:1, 2, 18), יום “day” (90:4, 9; 102:3, 4, 9), שנה “year” (90:4; 102:25, 29), and עבד “servant” (90:13, 16; 102:15, 29) function as the vital elements linking these psalms. In addition, a large number of thematic links confirm the relationship between them.

As noted, each of Psalms 90 and 102 begin a section of

Book IV, and there are many similarities between them. However, despite these similarities, there are also significant differences between them. For example, Psalm 102 has reference to Yahweh's enthronement on Zion (v. 13) and to kings (v. 16) which are echoed in Psalms 96-99 and 101, but not in Psalm 90. Psalm 102 shares many words and themes with Psalms 90 and 89, but nevertheless it has certain echoes from adjacent psalms. This may indicate that Psalm 102, by repeating themes from Psalms 90 or 89, as well as by picking up themes from adjacent psalms, seems to advance them as a special theme that only this psalm can have.

4.3.1.2 Psalms 90 and 103

Strong lexical and thematic elements connect Psalms 90 and 103. The words עֲוֹן “iniquities” (90:8; 103:3, 10), אַף “anger” (90:7, 11; 103:8), חֲצִיר “grass” (90:5; 103:15), צֹרֵעַ “flourish” (90:6; 103:15), and אָנוּשׁ “man” (90:3; 103:15) function as significant connections between the psalms. In addition, there are many common themes suggestive of links between these psalms.

Psalms 90 and 103 form a relationship of question and answer, that is to say, Psalm 103 answers many questions posed in Psalm 90. As will be noted below, Psalm 103 has a similar function to Psalm 91: being placed after the lament psalms (Pss 90 and 102), they respectively serve as an answer to those psalms.

4.3.1.3 Psalms 91 and 103

The psalms have significant lexical and thematic links. The word מַלְאָךְ “messenger” (91:11; 103:20) serves as a significant link between these psalms, and Psalms 91:14b-16a and 103:4-5

correspond to each other by using similar themes and words in parallel. In addition, there are many similarities in theme and structure.

As noted above, these psalms have the same function within each of the two sections in Book IV (90-100 and 102-103). Like Psalms 90 and 91, Psalms 102 and 103 are also parallel to each other, and there are close links between all these psalms.

Though Psalms 91 and 103 have the same function, Psalm 103 makes more concrete statements in comparison with Psalm 91. In the latter the promise of Yahweh's salvation is proclaimed in metaphorical terms, but the former takes examples of Yahweh's acts of salvation from the life of an individual and from the history of Israel and presents detailed examples of Yahweh's love and mercy. In addition, Psalm 103 emphasizes not only the observance of the law (v. 13), something which Psalm 91 does not speak of, but unlike Psalm 91 it has a section dealing with the theme of Yahweh's kingship in heaven (vv. 19-22), which is reminiscent of the previous psalms, 96-99 and 102. Thus, like Psalm 102, Psalm 103, comprising a structure parallel to that of Psalm 91, takes themes from adjacent psalms and advances them further.

4.3.2 Psalms 92-93 and 104

4.3.2.1 Psalms 92 and 104

Both the title, "A psalm: a song for the Sabbath day", and the body (vv. 5-6) of Psalm 92 contain the theme of creation. In the light of this observation one can see the connection between Psalms 92 and 104. These psalms have strong links: "cedar"

(92:13; 104:6); Lebanon (92:12; 104:16) as well as a reference to Yahweh's trees (92:14; 104:16). Psalm 92:13-14 are similar to Psalm 104:16, while Psalm 92:6a corresponds to Psalm 104:24a. In addition, a strong thematic link is found in the reference to the destruction of the wicked (92:10; 104:35).

Psalm 92 describes the destruction of the wicked and the prosperity of the righteous, namely the future victory of the righteous (i.e. in the completion of the Sabbath). The beginning of Psalm 104 addresses the theme of Yahweh's kingship in heaven and the following verses depict a peaceful world without conflict (see the discussion of Psalms 93 and 104). The reference to the destruction of the wicked at the end of the psalm indicates that there is no place for them to live in Yahweh's world of felicity. Thus, Psalm 92's anticipation is concretely realised in Psalm 104. The theme of creation in the latter seems to have an eschatological connotation (see analysis of the psalm), as does Psalm 92. It seems likely that Psalm 104 depicts a new creation.

Like Psalms 102 and 103, Psalm 104 also picks up themes from the previous psalms and from Psalm 92 and develops them further.

4.3.2.2 Psalms 93 and 104

The connections between the psalms are strong. The chaos motif is portrayed clearly only in these two psalms in Book IV. The word **לבש** "to put on" (93:2; 104:1) is a significant link, and the words and phrases relative to the chaos motif also serve as vital links: **מוט** "shake" (93:1; 104:5), **מים** "water" (93:4; 104:6), **קול** "sound" (93:3; 104:7), **נהרות** "floods" // **תהום** "deep" (93:3;

104:6), as well as “mightier than the sounds of waters” // “the sound of your thunder” (93:4; 104:7). In addition, their structure is similar: they begin with a reference to Yahweh’s kingship and the following verses describe the chaos motif.

Psalm 93 refers to Yahweh’s unquestionable sovereignty over chaotic forces (cf. v. 5), while Psalm 104 speaks of the new world which his sovereignty accomplishes. In the former the chaotic forces are mentioned as the elements remain intransigent in their rebellion against Yahweh’s order, but in the latter they are totally subjugated to his sovereignty. It seems likely that both psalms should be interpreted in an eschatological perspective (see the discussions of Psalms 92-93 and 94 in Chapter III).⁸

4.3.3 Psalms 94 and 101

Strong links between the psalms are apparent, and Psalm 101 relates to Psalm 94 by responding to its questions. Significant words connecting the psalms are אָרַב “destroy” associated with the word רָשָׁע “wicked” (94:23; 101:5, 8) and שָׂכַל “be prudent” (94:8; 101:2), and the phrase “all the works of evil” (94:8:4; 101:8) also serves as an important link. In addition, there are thematic links between Psalm 101 and Psalm 94, and most of them are presented in a question-and-answer format. For example, Psalm 94 refers to the corruption of justice (v. 20), while Psalm 101 emphasizes the practice of justice (v. 1).

Psalm 94 laments the dominance of the wicked and appeals

⁸ Terrien (1966:127. n.33) notes as follows: in Psalm 104 “the theme of the glory of Yahweh (vs. 31) leads directly to that of the eradication of sinners from the earth through the last judgment (vs. 35). Both are parts of the form of the theophany at the eschaton.”

to Yahweh to judge them. By contrast, in Psalm 101 the king promises to destroy them. Zenger (1994b:164-165) points out that in Psalm 94 Yahweh is depicted as the protector of widows and orphans through the concept of the ancient king of Israel. In Psalm 101 the king's function of protecting his people and judging the wicked seems to accord with Yahweh's function as described in Psalm 94. If Psalm 101 is seen as a messianic psalm, the hope of a king to rule over a faithful community in the exilic or post-exilic period expressed in Psalm 94 seems to anticipate the future coming of the king. Psalm 101, being placed after a series of psalms of Yahweh-kingship, may be intended to be read along with the psalms of Yahweh-kingship in anticipation of the coming of Yahweh and of a messianic king.

4.3.4 Psalms 95-99 and 105-106

In Chapter III we have seen that these psalms form close links to one another. Psalm 95:1-5 have closer affinities with Psalm 105 than with 106, while Psalm 95:7c-11 has stronger links with Psalm 106 than with 105. On the other hand, Psalms 96-97 are closer to Psalm 105 than to Psalm 106, but Psalms 98-99 have much stronger links with Psalm 106 than with Psalm 105. Because in the sections dealing with Psalms 95-99 and 105-106 brief summaries were provided to emphasize the contents just noted above, here the psalms constituting closer links among Psalms 95-99 and 105-106 are dealt with: Psalms 95:1-5 and 105; 95:7c-11 and 106; 96-97 and 105; and 98-99 and 106.

4.3.4.1 Psalms 95:1-5 and 105

The particular section of Psalm 95:1-5 and Psalm 105 have only a few lexical links: צור “rock” (95:1; 105:41), זמר “praise” (95:2; 105:1, 2), and ידה “thank” (95:2; 105:1, 2), but a further connection between them is established by the reference to gods.

4.3.4.2 Psalms 95:7c-11 and 106

The relevant section of Psalm 95 and Psalm 106 both deal with the history of apostasy in the wilderness and have much in common which makes it possible to read the psalms together. The words אבות “fathers” (95:9; 106:6-7), and נסה “test” (95:9; 106:14) serve as vital links and, in contrast to its treatment in Psalm 105, the incident at מריבה “Meribah” in the wilderness is treated negatively in both (95:8; 106:14). Psalms 95:7c and 106:25c are almost identical, while Psalms 95:9 and 105:14 may also be seen as having shared features. In addition, both refer to the loss of land as well as to Yahweh’s disapprobation of his people.

4.3.4.3 Psalms 96 and 105

Similarities between the beginning of the psalms (96:1-4; 105:1-3) are evident in that they have six words in common, which marks a high frequency. Some of these represent similar themes. The word ישועה “salvation” in 96 may correspond to עלילה “deed” in Psalm 105:1, and the word פלא “wonderful work” (96:3; 105:5) also serves to link the psalms. In addition, both include a reference to gods, and Psalm 96 implies Yahweh’s judgement against them, while Psalm 105 recounts the judgement

visited upon them.

4.3.4.4 Psalms 97 and 105

These psalms are closely related to each other. Psalms 97:2-3 and 105:39 are very similar in content as well as in their sharing the three words עָנַן “cloud,” אֵשׁ “fire,” and אֹרֶךְ “light.” In addition, a theophanic description is found in these verses, and the end of Psalm 97 and the beginning of Psalm 105 have seven roots in common (97:10-12; 105:1-6), a similarity which can hardly be accidental. Moreover, the end and the beginning of the psalms reveal thematic similarities. As noted, Psalm 97 describes Yahweh’s coming judgment of gods and their worshippers, (i.e. an eschatological event), while Psalm 105 illustrates how his judgement was visited upon them in the past.

4.3.4.5 Psalms 98 and 106

The root שָׁמַר “save,” frequently repeated in these psalms (98:1, 2, 3; 106:4, 8, 10, 21, 47), emphasizes Yahweh’s salvation of his people. As Clark (1993:157-158) noted, the words אָהַב “love” and יִשְׁלַח “salvation” occur in parallel in six places in the Hebrew Bible,⁹ but apart from Psalm 118 only Psalms 98 and 106 express a similar idea (98:2-3; 106:1, 4). This is regarded as a significant link. In addition, the beginnings of Psalms 98 and 106 have eight words in common, that is, the psalms have fifty percent out of a total of sixteen words in common, and Psalms 98:3 and 106:7 are related to each other by having the words זָכַר

⁹ 2 Sam 22:51; Pss 13:6; 18:51; 98; 106; and 118.

“remember” and אָהַב “love” in common. A further link is found in Psalms 98:1 and 106:7 and 22 where the word פְּלֵא “wonderful work” is found, and the same historical event, the Exodus, may be the implied subject of both these psalms.

4.3.4.6 Psalms 99 and 106

A comparison of Psalms 99 and 105 reveals that many of their themes are contrastive. However, the themes in Psalms 99 and 106 are very similar and correspond to each other. For example, Aaron and Moses are mentioned as intercessors in Psalms 99 and 106, and in contrast to Psalm 105 where it refers to Yahweh’s deeds, the root עָלַל “deed” is used in both these psalms to refer to the wrongdoings of Yahweh’s people (99:8; 106:29, 39). In addition, only these psalms mention Yahweh in the wilderness experiences, as the one who punished and forgave his people (99:8; 106:40-44), beside which words גָּדוֹל “great” (99:2, 3; 106:21) and אָרָא “terrible” (99:3; 106:22) serve as significant links.

4.3.4.7 Yahweh-kingship psalms and Psalms 105-106¹⁰

We have suggested above that Psalms 96-99 can be divided into two pairs of Psalms 96-97 and 98-99 in virtue of two different perspectives. That is to say, the former psalms focus on the judgment of gods and their worshippers, while the latter are concerned with Yahweh’s people. This observation is also

¹⁰ For the study on the relationship between Psalms 96:1-13, 105:1-2 and 106:1, 47-48 and 1 Chr 16:8-36, see (Butler 1978:142-150; Hill 1983:97-101; Shipp 1993:29-39).

applicable to the division of Psalm 95: Psalm 95:1-5 and 6-11, as well as to Psalms 105 and 106, that is to say, Psalm 105 deals with how Yahweh treated foreign people and their nations (i.e. their gods) during the early history of Israel, while like Psalms 98-99, Psalm 106 focuses on Israel as a people. In other words, all these psalms seem to demonstrate Yahweh's kingship (or his reign over the world) in two different perspectives. Psalms 95:1-5 and 96-97 speak of Yahweh as the king of the nations and their gods and anticipate his coming as the king to rule and judge them, while Psalm 105 illustrate his kingship by taking examples from the history of Israel which showed his preeminence over the nations and their gods.

On the other hand, Psalms 95:7c-11 (cf. vv. 6-7b), 98-99, and 106 all speak of Yahweh as the king of Israel. Thus, these texts state how Yahweh as king demonstrated justice and righteousness to his people. Within this perspective two dimensions may be noted. One is focused on Yahweh's greatness and righteousness. For example, Psalms 98, 99:1-4, and the beginning sections of 106 (vv. 1-5 and 8-12) recount Yahweh's great acts on behalf of his people. This review of Yahweh's great acts provides an appropriate reason for the present suffering of the Israelites: Yahweh is great and just, but they are suffering because they have sinned. Therefore, the second dimension refers to the wrongdoings of the Israelites: Psalms 95:7c-11, 99:6-8, and 106:6-7 and 13-43 deal with the early history of Israel's sins and apostasy which also remind the communities in the exilic or post-exilic

period of their faults.¹¹ The effect of this second dimension, along with the first dimension, emphasizes that the Israelites' present suffering has been caused not by Yahweh, but by their sins, and the effect forces them to repent their sins that they might be restored to their home country.¹² Indeed, these two dimensions are clearly noticeable in the psalms under discussion. For example, Psalm 98:1-3 strongly emphasize Yahweh's great acts and his love for his people. Psalm 99 describes Yahweh as being holy and awesome by using the words "holy" four times (vv. 3, 5, 9x2) and "exalt" three times (vv. 2, 5, 9). Therefore, the psalm emphasizes the superiority and perfection of Yahweh through the repetition of these words on the one hand, and on the other hand it stresses that his people have sinned (v. 8): thus an adequate reason for the repentance of sins, which can give a rationale for the hope of restoration, is given. The reference to Yahweh's justice and righteousness in Jacob (i.e. Israel) in v. 4 may also be interpreted as above, and especially Psalm 106:1-5 and 6-12, where justice and righteousness and Yahweh's great acts are mentioned, seem to support this view.

In the light of the relationships between Psalms 89 and Psalms 95-100 and 105-106 respectively, the psalms dealing with the Yahweh's kingship are closely associated with historical situations and seem to carry the messages for such situations. It is

¹¹ Carroll (1977:198) notes as follows: The negative aspect of the tradition contributed to an understanding of the causes of the exile; the positive aspect became the motive behind the hope for the future.

¹² Psalm 106:47 forms a prayer for the restoration from the exile: "Save us...and gather us from the nations."

likely that as many scholars have pointed out, these psalms bear eschatological overtones that hold out hope to the exilic or post-exilic communities. Indeed, though Psalms 105-106 deal with the historical past, they also reflect the experiences of the faithful communities in the exilic or post-exilic period (cf. Coats 1968:227-229; Beyerlin 1974:56-64; Holm-Nielsen 1978:22-30; Fensham 1981:35-51; Allen 1983:42-43, 53-55). Like the second-third Isaiah, Psalms 95-100 and 105-106 seem to convey the eschatological perspective of looking forward to the second exodus. However, this study is beyond the concern of this dissertation.

In the light of Psalms 89 and 105-106 the messages of Psalms 96-99 can only properly be understood in terms of the relationship between these psalms. They may have originated from a reaction to the failure of the Davidic dynasty as described in Psalm 89, and thus the reputation of Yahweh's honour seems to be the main concern here. Botha's (1998) remark is worth noting:

...the claim to Yahweh's honour is made not only as a challenge to other nations and their gods, but also (and perhaps especially) as a challenge to the convictions of the believing community about the honour of God. To put it in another way: The claim is to the world-wide honour of Yahweh, and not primarily a world-wide claim to the honour of Yahweh (p.32)...It has become clear that the Enthronement Psalms in their present form and arrangement are not psalms about the enthronement of Yahweh, but psalms about his kingship, power and world-wide honour, and consequently about the honour of Israel among the family of nations (p.35).

4.4 Conclusion

We have so far investigated the connections, first, between Psalms 89 and each of Psalms 90-103, secondly, between adjacent psalms in Book IV, and finally between cross-structural units within Book IV by means of lexical, thematic and structural analyses. This investigation has produced the following evidence of the present shape of Book IV: (1) Psalm 89 reveals close links with each of Psalms 90-103 and the evidence seems to suggest that Book IV can be understood as a continuation of Psalm 89. For example, Psalm 90 and the lament section of Psalm 89 are very similar in many ways, and the former begins with the same problems that the psalmist in Psalm 89 was struggling with. Psalms 89 and 92 are unique in that they are connected by a common theme, the exaltation of a horn, as well as by arrangement of similar words and themes (89:11-27 and 92:5-16). This particularity is also found in the connections between Psalms 89 and 93: these psalms are linked by the chaos motif which may be unique only to these psalms in the Psalter (89:10-11; 93:1-4). As scholars have noticed, Psalm 94 seems to reflect the exilic or post-exilic situation, and Psalm 94's connections with Psalm 89 lead us to read the former in association with the situation after the fall of the Davidic dynasty (i.e. Ps 89).

Psalms 95-100 have many echoes from Psalm 89. Especially, Psalm 89:15, which explains the foundation of Yahweh's kingship, is recalled in each of Psalms 96-99, and on the whole many concepts and motifs associated with the description of Yahweh's kingship in Psalm 89 are repeated in Psalms 96-99 in order to

describe not a human king, but the eternal king, Yahweh.¹³

Many links are also found between Psalms 89 and 102, but these psalms refer to the same theme: the destruction of Jerusalem and the absence of a king. In addition, the connections between Psalms 89 and 103 are contrastive: the psalmist in the lament section of Psalm 89 has experienced God without mercy and love, while Psalm 103 proclaims his mercy and love.

(2) Secondly, we have seen that adjacent psalms reveal close lexical and thematic connections to each other, and this likewise suggests that the psalms can be read as one coherent text.

Corresponding themes are found between adjacent psalms and the movement from one theme to another progresses logically. For example, Psalm 90 ends with a plea asking Yahweh for help, but Psalm 91 proclaims a promise of salvation through various metaphors as well as an oracle of Yahweh which is meant for the congregation implied in Psalm 90. There are fewer connections between Psalms 91 and 92 than between Psalms 90 and 91 or 92 and 93, but the principle of concatenation is clearly observed between these psalms. For example, the psalms begin respectively with the divine titles, יהוה י and עליון, and the defeat of the wicked and the salvation of the righteous which are briefly mentioned in Psalm 91, are repeated in Psalm 92.

The presence of a title in Psalm 92 seems to disconnect the psalm from Psalms 90-91. Psalm 92 has as its main theme the

¹³ In the light of the relationship between Psalms 89 and 101, the king in the former should remember his faults which brought about the fall of his dynasty, but in the latter the king seems to resolve to seek the "way that is blameless" and to discharge his duties as a king.

defeat of the wicked and the victory of the righteous. Though Psalms 90-92 display certain links to one another, the strong connections between Psalms 92-94 seem to separate them from Psalms 90-91.

Psalm 92 has strong links with Psalm 93. The former portrays the destruction of the wicked, while the latter, noting their existence through the chaos motif, speaks of Yahweh's unquestionable sovereignty over them.

The close links between Psalms 92-94 may indicate that these psalms can be regarded as a unit. All these psalms are concerned with the existence of the wicked. Psalm 94 appeals to Yahweh for their destruction, while Psalm 93 looks forward to Psalm 94 and proclaims the message that Yahweh's sovereignty over chaotic forces is trustworthy.

Psalm 95 constitutes an introduction to the psalms of Yahweh-kingship, 96-99, but it has certain connections with the previous psalm, 94. Psalm 94 as a lament psalm, being placed after Psalm 93 and before Psalms 95-100 which deal with the theme of Yahweh-kingship, seems to interrupt the natural flow of the theme's development. However, by being positioned between the psalms of Yahweh-kingship, Psalm 94's appeal to Yahweh to intervene in the prevailing circumstances seems to be answered effectively: the theme of Yahweh-kingship functions as an answer to the appeal of the psalm. Within this structure, Psalm 95 serves to link the appeal of Psalm 94 with the theme of Yahweh-kingship.

Psalms 95-100 can be regarded as a unit: Psalm 95 forms an introduction to Psalms 96-99, while Psalm 100 serves as a

conclusion to this group. However, within this whole group, Psalm 95:1-5 comprise an introduction to Psalms 96-97, while Psalm 95:6-11 can be classified as another introduction to Psalms 98-99. This division is made on the assumption that all these psalms can be classified under two different perspectives. That is to say, Psalms 95:1-5 and 96-97 present Yahweh as the king of nations and their gods, while Psalms 95:6-11 and 98-99 represent him as the king of Israel. As we have seen above, these two perspectives are probably present in these psalms.

Unlike the typical links between adjacent psalms in Book IV, Psalm 101, a royal psalm, has only loose connections with what precedes and what follows, namely Psalms 100 and 102. However, after a series of psalms of Yahweh-kingship, the position of Psalm 101 seems to fit logically into the whole: it can have a proper place within the psalms of Yahweh-kingship.

While Psalm 101 stands in the middle between two large sections within Book IV (90-100 and 102-106, see below), Psalm 102 starts the second section of Book IV. The loose connections between Psalms 100 and 101 or between Psalms 101 and 102 seem to explain the position of Psalm 101: it is positioned in the middle between the two large sections. As noted, Psalm 102 describes the suffering of the psalmist, and as the title of the psalm indicates, it forms a prayer. In response to this, Psalm 103 describes Yahweh's love and mercy in the form of a response to the prayer: many questions raised in Psalm 102 are answered in Psalm 103.

Psalm 104 also forms close links with Psalm 103. The close connections between the end of the latter and the beginning of the

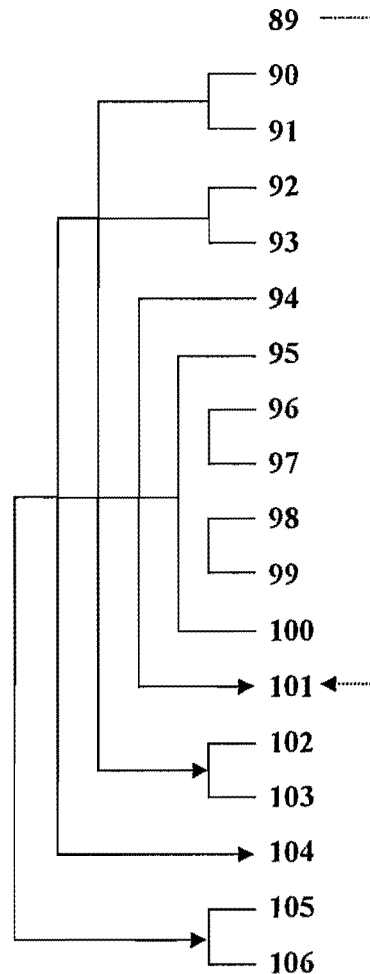
former illustrate a good example of concatenation. Three psalms, 102-104, seem to have certain relationships with each other. Psalm 103 speaks of God's restoration in response to the prayer of the psalmist in Psalm 102 who has experienced the Exile, while Psalm 104 seems to portray the peaceful world that such a restoration will establish in the future.

The connections between the end of Psalm 104 and the beginning of Psalm 105 show another principle of concatenation at work, and here two themes, creation and history, are interwoven: Psalm 104 refers to Yahweh's greatness in nature, while Psalm 105 speaks of Yahweh's greatness in history. Psalms 105 and 106 are closely tied by dealing with the early history of Israel, and the anticipation of salvation in 106 (vv. 47-48) from the Exile seems to refer to the whole message which Book IV of the Psalter directs.

(3) As noted, Psalms 90-100 comprise the first large section within Book IV, while Psalms 102-106 constitute the second large section. As regards cross-structural relationship, within each of these two sections there are three small units which can be paralleled to each other between the sections: 90-91 and 102-103; 92-93 and 104;¹⁴ and 95-100 and 105-106. The connections between Psalms 94 and 101 are unusual, since the former does not have a counterpart in the second section. The structure of Book IV as a

¹⁴ Psalms 92-94 form a unit within the first large section of Book IV, namely Psalms 90-100, but in relation to the second large section of Book IV (102-106), Psalm 94 does not reveal close links with any psalm. Consequently, Psalms 92-93 form a unit with Psalm 104, but Psalm 94 is disconnected from this unit and instead finds its counterpart in Psalm 101.

whole can be schematised as follows:¹⁵



The parallel units are linked together by similar motifs and themes, but the units in the second section make more concrete and advanced statements than the units in the first. Within this structure, Psalm 101 is positioned in the middle between the first

¹⁵ The line of Psalms 89 and 101 in the following chart indicates a generic relationship. When Psalms 89-106 are considered as a whole, Psalm 89 as a royal psalm marks a beginning of the first large section in Book IV, while the second large section begins with another royal psalm, 101. Thus, both sections begin with the same genre and are arranged in a similar generic order (see below).

section and the second, and the effect of this position seems to give Book IV an orientation to the future that implies a messianic expectation. By being placed after a series of Yahweh-kingship psalms, Psalm 101 seems to have taken an important position: the anticipation of Yahweh's coming as king can be correlated with the advent of a human king.

There seems to be a prayer-and-answer relationship between Psalms 94 and 101. The former asks for the demise of the wicked and the reward of the righteous, while in the latter the king responds to these petitions.

Psalm 102-103 reveal many lexical and thematic similarities with Psalms 90-91, and in the cross-structural relationship, Psalms 102-103 as a unit begin the second section. When these four psalms are read together, it is clear that just as Psalm 91 forms the answer to Psalm 90, so Psalm 103 also responds to the questions raised in Psalm 90. Psalms 90 and 102 are prayers in aid of overcoming the situation the community of faith was facing at the time, and thus each section begins with a prayer. In addition, Psalms 91 and 103 are very similar in that there are strong links between them and in that by virtue of their position, they function as answers to the lament psalms (Pss 90 and 102) that follow them respectively.

Psalm 104 is parallel to Psalms 92-93, as noted. Psalm 92 portrays the demise of the wicked and the victory of the righteous and it seems to project such an expectation into the future. Similarly, yet unlike Psalm 92, Psalm 93 describes a current disordered situation by using the chaos motif, asserting Yahweh's sovereignty over the forces of chaos. In contrast to these psalms,

Psalm 104 presents a harmonious world without conflict, a world in which the chaotic forces are totally subjugated by Yahweh's power and in which there is no room for the wicked. Psalm 104 seems to respond to Psalms 92-93 by presenting a new creation, which may be achieved eschatologically.

As noted, Psalms 95-100 are parallel to Psalms 105-106. As with its relation to Psalms 96-99, Psalm 95:1-5 can possibly be connected to Psalm 105, while Psalm 95:7c-11 form close links with Psalm 106. It is interesting that the latter section of Psalm 95 does not display clear links with Psalm 105. As noted, Psalms 96-97 have much stronger links with Psalm 105 than with Psalm 106, while Psalms 98-99 have considerably more affinities with Psalm 106 than with Psalm 105. Thus, all these psalms can be classified into two small groups for the sake of convenience: Psalms 95:1-5, 96-97, and 105; Psalms 95:7c-11, 98-99, and 106. The first group uses the theme of Yahweh as the king of nations and their gods, and the psalms in the group deal with themes associated with the general theme. Psalms 96-97 anticipate Yahweh's judgement over the nations and their gods as well as over their worshippers, but Psalm 105 demonstrates how Yahweh had treated nations and their gods. The second group portrays Yahweh as the king of Israel. Thus, these psalms focus on the covenant relationship between Yahweh and Israel, and much is made of Yahweh's great acts on behalf of Israel and of his righteousness and justice. In contrast to this, a major emphasis is placed on the history of sin and apostasy in Israel and the position is adopted that Yahweh is great and righteous, but that the Israelites have sinned. The review of the negative aspects of

history in these psalms provides an appropriate reason for the dilemma of the faithful community in the exilic or post-exilic period: sins have caused the current disasters, and therefore considerable emphasis is placed on the repentance of sins (e.g. 101; 106:6; cf. 90:7-8; 95) and the observance of laws (e.g. 99:8; 103:18; 105:45)¹⁶ throughout the psalms in Book IV.

On the whole, the psalms in Book IV reveal a coherent structure which can be divided into two large sections. In terms of cross-structural relationship, the small units in the first section (90-91; 92-93 [94]; 95-100) are respectively paralleled to the psalms in the second section (102-103; 104 and 105-106), and Psalms 94 and 101 are seen as exceptional cases. All evidence and detailed investigations indicate that the theological themes of Book IV reflect the contents of Psalm 89, and Book IV starts from the situation which the psalm describes. Accordingly, it is likely that in the present canonical shape of the Psalter, all psalms in Book IV can be understood as a continuation of Psalm 89 and that all of them can be understood to be reflecting the situation of the exilic or post-exilic period.

Theological themes addressed by the small units which form parallels can be noted.

90 and 102: prayer

91 and 103: response to the prayer

92-93 and 104: a new creation

94 and 101: lament and answer

95:1-5, 96-97 and 105: Yahweh as the king of nations:

¹⁶ The emphasis on law is also found in Psalm 95:6ff. The relation of Psalm 95 with Psalm 81 may imply this view. See the discussion of Psalms 95 and 99 in Chapter III.

salvation

95:7c-11, 98-99 and 106: Yahweh as the king of Israel:

salvation

The generic order of the psalms in Book IV in relation to Psalm 89 can be schematized as follows:

89: royal psalm	101: royal psalm
90: communal lament	102: individual lament
91: hymn	103: hymn (thanksgiving) ¹⁷
92-93: hymns	104: hymn
94: lament	-----
95-100: hymns	105-106: hymns

With respect to generic order, an individual psalm or a group of psalms contained in the ambit of Psalms 89-100 generally seems to correspond with Psalms 101-106.

¹⁷ Zenger (1994b:175-177) strongly argues that Psalm 103 is a hymn rather than a song of thanksgiving. Hymn and thanksgiving may be interchanged.