

HEARING PSALM 102 WITHIN THE STRUCTURE OF THE HEBREW PSALTER

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Introduction

In 1979, Brevard Childs' *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture*¹ presented scholars with a new approach to the Book of Psalms, one which represented a major shift in psalm studies. Its basic proposition was that "the ordering and placement of the psalms is not entirely random, but that the Book of Psalms has been shaped by the work of editors in order to emphasize the importance of certain theological themes."² Before this point, psalm studies had concentrated principally on how historical settings either gave rise to a psalm, or provided a cultic context in which a psalm could be heard. According to the canonical approach, these "historical settings" have been transcended by a new historical context: a psalm's position in the canonical text.

The implications of this shift for interpreting individual psalms are significant, as Wenham explained, "[If] the psalms have been arranged thematically, by title, and by keywords to form a deliberate sequence, it is imperative to read one psalm in the context of the whole collection and in particular in relationship to its near neighbors."³ The switching of context, away from a psalm's use in history, and towards its position in the text, appreciably changes how one "hears" a particular psalm.⁴ For Childs, the canonical shape of the Psalter served to give

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¹ Brevard Childs, *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979).

² Jamie A. Grant, *The King as Exemplar: The Function of Deuteronomy's Kingship Law in the Shaping of the Book of Psalms* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2004), 13.

³ Wenham, "Towards a Canonical Reading of the Psalms," in Bartholomew, Craig G., and Anthony C. Thiselton, eds., *Canon and Biblical Interpretation* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006), 347. Similarly, Robert Cole wrote, "The ordering and shaping of the collection casts the individual psalms in a new light...from what the individual poem expresses to a meaning implied by the final compilation, the latter becoming a single 'text'," in *The Shape and Message of Book III (Psalms 73-89)*, JSOTSup 307 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 10.

⁴ For instance, see J. P. Brennan, "Psalms 1-8: Some Hidden Harmonies," *BTB* 10 (1980), 25-29.

each psalm a new eschatological and messianic context.⁵ It would not be until 1985, with the publication of Gerald Wilson's *The Editing of the Hebrew Psalter*, that any significant alternative would be offered.⁶

Wilson's contributions to the study of the Psalter have focused on both the structural elements of its final form⁷ and the editorial agenda behind its shaping.⁸ Unlike Childs, Wilson did not detect an agenda which looked toward a Davidic, messianic king, but one much more didactic and sapiential. For him, "though the place of Torah is acknowledged...and David is honored, trust in the power of human kings and kingship is ultimately given up, and hope rests solely on Yhwh."⁹ Thus, in its final form, Wilson understood Books I-III as presenting the reader with the failure of the Davidic house, while, in Books IV-V, urging the reader to trust in Yhwh as King in a future without the house of David.

Though nearly all scholars are dependent on Wilson's work in identifying the evidence of editorial arrangement, not all are excited about his understanding of the Psalter's editorial agenda. For example, David Mitchell has argued for an eschatological and messianic reading of the Psalter, one which mirrors the eschatological program of the prophets.¹⁰

Mitchell began his reading of the Psalter by noting several factors that, at the outset, suggest eschatological concerns lay at the heart of the text in its final form. First, he noted that

⁵ Childs, *Introduction*, 515-517.

⁶ G. H. Wilson, *The Editing of the Hebrew Psalter* (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1985).

⁷ G. H. Wilson, "Evidence of Editorial Divisions in the Hebrew Psalter," *VT* 34 (1984), 336-352.

⁸ *Idem.*, "The Use of Royal Psalms at the 'Seams' of the Hebrew Psalter." *JSOT* 35 (1986), 85-94.

⁹ G. H. Wilson, "The Qumran *Psalms Scroll* (11QPs^a) and the Canonical Psalter: Comparison of Editorial Shaping" (*CBQ* 59, 1997), 464; *Idem.*, "Shaping the Psalter: A Consideration of Editorial Linkage in the Psalms," in J. Clinton McCann, ed., *The Shape and Shaping of the Psalter* (JSOTSup 159; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), 76.

¹⁰ David C. Mitchell, *The Message of the Psalter: An Eschatological Programme in the Book of Psalms* (JSOTSup 252; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 166; *Idem.*, "God Will Redeem My Soul From Sheol: The Psalms of the Sons of Korah," *JSOT* 30 (2006), 365-384; *Idem.*, "Lord, Remember David: G. H. Wilson and the Message of the Psalter," *VT* 56 (2006), 526-548.

many psalms in the collection are intrinsically eschatological (e.g. Ps. 80; 83).¹¹ Second, he observed that the prominent position of the royal psalms is hard to explain given the Psalter's post-exilic context, a time when the Davidic monarchy had been eclipsed. Last, many of the psalms have been ascribed to authors considered prophets in biblical times (e.g. David, Asaph, Moses, etc.). These factors, among other external concerns, provided a foundation upon which Mitchell built his eschatological program.¹²

That program shows how the royal psalms, placed at prominent positions in the Psalter, correlate with the event-sequence in Zechariah 9-14.¹³ Here, the Messiah appears to Israel (Ps. 45; Zech 9.9), establishes an initial kingdom (Ps. 72; Zech 9.10), is slain in a battle with enemy nations (Pss. 83-89; Zech 9.13-16; 11.17; 12.10), reappears to destroy rebellious nations (Ps. 110; Zech 14.3-8), and establishes his eschatological kingdom in Zion (Ps. 132; Zech. 14.16-19). Within this general framework, he also noted how the psalms of Asaph (50, 73-83) are primarily concerned with the ingathering of Israel,¹⁴ the psalms of the sons of Korah (42-49, 84-85, 87-89) with redemption from Sheol,¹⁵ and the Songs of Ascent (120-134) with the celebration of Sukkoth in the latter-days.

This paper was written to give Psalm 102 a hearing within such an eschatological program.¹⁶ Before that proposal, some groundwork will be laid in view of Mitchell's conception of the editorial purpose which lies behind the shaping of Book IV.

¹¹ Mitchell, "Remember David," 528-529.

¹² These external concerns include: (1) Messianic expectation dominated the literature of the second Temple period, increasing the likelihood for eschatological concerns; and, (2) An eschatological interpretation of the Psalter was normative from late biblical times through the nineteenth century.

¹³ Mitchell, *Message*, 243-271.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 90-107. See Appendix A for a more complete picture on how Books III-V fill in this framework.

¹⁵ Mitchell, "God Will Redeem."

¹⁶ Mitchell, *Message*, 108-127.

The Eschatological Program in Book IV

The eschatological program of Zechariah 9-14 describes a latter-day exile (13.7-14.2) between the affliction of the king (11.17; 12.10) and the divine deliverance (14.3-8). Mitchell saw a parallel with this exile in Book IV (Pss. 90-106), itself falling between the affliction of the king (Pss 88-89) and the divine deliverance (110).¹⁷ Throughout Book IV he found allusions to Moses and the wilderness wanderings, and aptly summarized the progression of thought in Book IV as moving “from sin through repentance to forgiveness, from despair to expectation of a new world order, from exile to ingathering.”¹⁸ This section will further trace that movement.

Book IV begins by considering the delay of Yhwh in implementing his plans for the future (Pss. 90-94). In Book III, the reader learned that Yhwh had become angry with Israel because of its wickedness (Psa. 73; 80-81), and had brought judgment upon Zion (74).¹⁹ Though hope remained for a restored city (87), the apparent death of the King (88) put in question the state of the Davidic house: had David been forsaken forever (89.49)? How long would Yhwh delay (89.46-47)? Why is he still angry with Israel (85.5-7)?

In considering Yhwh’s delay, Book IV turns back to listen to Moses (Psa. 90; 104-106), only to look again upon David with a renewed vision of Yhwh’s sovereignty and a future messianic kingdom (93-103). This movement suggests that in order to find answers in its latter-day exile, Israel would have to learn from its former wilderness experiences. Here, Psalms 90 and 91 evoke the language of Exodus 15, showing not only man’s transience under Yhwh’s wrath (90.3-11), but also, in spite of this, how he would defend his righteous servants (91.1ff).

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 272-296.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 295.

¹⁹ Cole, *Shape and Message*, 28-36, 231-235; Mitchell, *Message*, 101-107.

Within Book IV's eschatological program, Psalm 91 might be a clue that the psalmist is not just speaking of any righteous Israelite, but in particular to the afflicted king (Psa. 86; 88-89), who will "trample underfoot" the serpent (91.13; c.f. Gen. 3.15). Psalm 92 continues this vision by rehearsing the praises of an anointed king whose horn has been exalted (92.10; 89.38, 51). Connected with Psalms 88-91, this psalm suggests a future for the Davidic monarchy, and may even anticipate the king's resurrection from the dead (86.13; 89.48).²⁰

Within Psalms 93-100, the main declaration is that "Yhwh reigns" (93.1; 96.10; 97.1; 99.1)! Two eschatological themes are pervasive. First, the divine kingdom praised in this section is described in nearly the same terms as the ideal messianic kingdom of Psalm 72, 87, and 89. This conflation of divine and messianic kingdoms suggests that both Yhwh and his Anointed reign together over the same kingdom.²¹ Second, Israel is urged to sing a "new" song (96.1; 98.1).²² This song anticipates the fulfillment of Israel's promised rest (95.11) and the restoration of Zion with Yhwh as King over all nations (97.8-9; 98.2; 99.2).

Psalms 101-103 represent another literary turning point in Book IV, accompanied by a change in authorship (101, 103), much like Psalm 90.²³ Psalm 101 is the pledge of a future David to his responsibilities as king (72.1-4), yet it also asks when Yhwh would come to him (101.2).²⁴ This can be seen as a response to Psalm 89, indicating that the monarchy will be restored when Yhwh comes to the king (possibly supplying aid). This eschatological reading is

²⁰ Mitchell, *Message*, 253-258, 282-284. *Idem.*, "God Will Redeem," 382-383.

²¹ Robert Cole wrote, "Yahweh's rule and throne is portrayed in terms closely parallel to both the divine and Davidic kingdoms of Psalm 89. Consequently, Yahweh's long-awaited kingdom, proclaimed triumphantly in Book IV, is the same as that promised to David's descendant in answer to the repeated laments of Book III," in Cole, *Shape and Message*, 235. This is precisely the picture of their dual reign in Psalm 2. See Mitchell, *Message*, 258-267, for a cogent argument concerning the conflation of Yhwh and the heavenly David in Psalm 110.

²² J. Clinton McCann, *Psalms*, New Interpreter's Bible IV (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996), 1065.

²³ See Wilson, "Shaping," in McCann, *Shape and Shaping*, 72ff.; For an alternative view, see Jinkyu Kim, "The Strategic Arrangement of Royal Psalms in Book IV-V," *WTJ* 70 (2008), 143-157.

²⁴ F. Delitzsch, *Psalms*. Commentary on the Old Testament, Vol. 5 (Peabody: Hendrickson, 2006), 638.

further enhanced by Psalm 102, whose “afflicted” speaker anticipates a future where Yhwh’s pity on Zion results in the security of the children of Israel and the ingathering of the nations.²⁵ Psalm 103 is largely a meditation on how Yhwh made known his ways to Israel after the Golden Calf incident (Exod 34), emphasizing Yhwh’s steadfast love. It begins a series of psalms which have a strong connection to the message of the Pentateuch, providing an appropriate Mosaic conclusion to Book IV.

Like 103, Psalms 104-106 offer an example of how close meditation on Torah results in a clear understanding of how one should respond to Yhwh. Here, Psalm 104 is a reflection on Genesis 1-2 and Yhwh as the Creator, Psalm 105 on his faithfulness throughout Israel’s history in upholding the Abrahamic covenant, and Psalm 106 on how the people of Israel, time and again, refused to take refuge in him. Within the eschatological program, in order to be gathered back into Zion, they must cry out for Yhwh’s pity (106.44-45; 90.13), remembering his mercy (103.13), and giving thanks to his great name and glory (106.47).

In sum, the psalms of Book IV fit well within the eschatological program envisaged by Mitchell. While in their own latter-day exile following the slaying of their king and the removal of the monarchy, the Israelites were to meditate on former wilderness experiences. Book IV shows them that Yhwh continues to reign despite the current hiatus of the monarchy (93-100), and that the time is right for him to have pity on Zion and his people (102-103). They must join with their king (101-102) in pleading for Yhwh’s mercy (104-106).

²⁵ McCann, *Psalms*, 1081.

The Function of Psalm 102 within the Eschatological Program

Psalm 102 is a “complex psalm” with “a bewildering multiplicity of interpretations.”²⁶ Its unwavering ability in to elude historical critics is related to the psalm’s division into two parts. The first fits the mold of an individual lament (102.1-12, 24-25a), while the second is composed of an assertion of trust (13-18), a vow of praise (19-23), and concluding praise (25b-29), all related to the future restoration of Zion.²⁷ Critical scholars have explained the combination of these two parts in several ways, none of which hear Psalm 102 within an eschatological context.²⁸ Yet, if Childs was right in noting how the Psalter provides a new context for the psalms, then how might the psalm’s new canonical context provide an alternative hearing? The following section seeks after such a hearing by first attempting to identify the “afflicted” suppliant, and second, by suggesting how Psalm 102 might be read eschatologically.

The Identity of the “Afflicted”

In this section an attempt will be made to determine the identity of the afflicted suppliant given Psalm 102’s situation in the text. Here, one must note that Psalms 101 and 103 are Davidic, while 102 is anonymous. For many canonical critics, this suggests that the voice of a royal figure, speaking in 101 and 103, could also be speaking in 102.²⁹ The argument below will show the likelihood of such a reading.

First, Psalm 102 shares an abundance of lexical and thematic links with Psalm 103.³⁰ Their collocation suggests that 103 should be seen as “a response to the lamentation in Psalm

²⁶ Leslie C. Allen, *Psalms 101-150*, Word Biblical Commentary 21 (Waco: Word Book, 1983), 11.

²⁷ James L. Mays, *Psalms*, Interpretation (Louisville: John Knox Press, 1994), 323.

²⁸ Allen, *Psalms 101-150*, 11-14.

²⁹ Mitchell, *Message*, 291-292; McCann, *Psalms*, 1088;

³⁰ Hyung Jun Kim, *The Structure and Coherence of Psalms 89-106* (Dissertation; University of Pretoria, 1998), 290ff., lists 19 lexical connections between 102 and 103. Of these, כֹּחַ (“strength”; 102.24; 103.20), שִׁכְחָה

102,” as if 103 theologically explained 102 in a kind of question and answer dialogue.³¹ The lack of lexical and thematic connections between 101 and 102 raise the question of their juxtaposition. However, given their similar structure and themes, as noted above, McCann is right to suggest that the voice of the king in 101 may also be heard in the prayer of 102.³²

Second, the psalm shares many lexical and thematic links with the end of Book III, particularly Psalms 86, 88, and 89.³³ For instance, Psalm 102’s opening invocation (102.1-3) shares six lexical terms with Psalm 86, the only Davidic psalm in Book III. Significantly, both are identified as “prayers” (תפלה) of “afflicted” (עני) psalmists, and ask for Yhwh to “incline” (נטה) his ear and “answer” (ענה) him. Psalm 88 begins similarly, with the phrase “for the piercing of the afflicted one” in its superscription.³⁴ “Affliction” (עני) is common theme in Psalm 88, occurring four times (88.1, 8, 10, 16). Its close connection with Psalm 86 suggests that “the lament of 88 is an extended description of the affliction in 86,” such that each should be interpreted as coming from the same Davidic figure.³⁵ Psalm 102, as a “prayer of an afflicted,”

(“forget”; 102.5; 103.2), עפר (“dust”; 102.15; 103.14), רחם (“pity/mercy”; 102.14; 103.4, 13), and זכר (“remember”; 102.13; 103.15) seem to be significant. Of the nine links between 101 and 102, none are significant.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 393. Likewise, McCann, *Psalms*, 1091.

³² McCann, *Psalms*, 1081. J. Alexander, *The Psalms* (Edinburgh, 1864), 409, makes this connection, “This psalm [102] forms the connecting link between the pious resolutions of Ps. ci. And the joyful acknowledgments of Ps. ciii., and was composed in prophetic foresight of the straits to which the theocratical state should be reduced, and in which the sufferings of David, here immediately described, should, as it were, be realized anew.”

³³ Beyond those listed above, 13 more lexical links between 102 and 86 include: day (יום; 86.3, 7; 102.3, 4, 9, 12, 24, 25), to call (קרא; 86.3, 5, 7; 102.3), voice (קול; 86.6; 102.6), to lift (נשא; 86.4; 102.11), to arise (קום; 86.14; 102.14), to show favor (חנן; 86.3, 16; 102.14, 15), to serve or servant (עבד; 86.2, 4, 16; 102.15, 23, 29), to fear (רא; 86.11; 102.16), nation (גוי; 86.9; 102.16), name (שם; 86.9, 11, 12; 102.16, 22), to see (ראה; 86.17; 102.17), way (דרך; 86.11; 102.24), and deed (מעשה; 86.8; 102.26). Personal research found 14 common words between 88 and 102, seven of which are important: prayer (תפלה; 88.3, 14; 102.1, 2, 14), to hide (סתר; 88.15; 102.3), day (יום; 88.2, 10, 18; 102.3, 4, 9, 12, 24, 25), to incline (נטה; 88.3; 102.3, 12), to call (קרא; 88.10; 102.3), to remember (זכר; 88.6; 102.13, 14, 18), and to recount (ספר; 88.12; 102.22). Kim, *Structure*, 234ff., noted 35 common words between 90 and 102. These are listed in a later footnote.

³⁴ Mitchell, *Message*, 258. Cole, *Shaping and Message*, 167.

³⁵ Cole, *Shape and Message*, 168, 169-170.

might also be extending this dialogue. Its lexical links with Psalm 89 seem to affirm this possibility.

The most important lexical link between Psalms 89 and 102 is the use of קצר (89.46; 102.24) to describe how Yhwh has “cut short” the “days” of the speaker.³⁶ Both psalms also share a concern with “mocking enemies” (תרה and איב; 89.52; 102.9), Yhwh “hiding” his face (סתר; 89.47; 102.3), the destiny of “descendants” (זרע; 89.5, 30, 37; 102.29), and suffering “servants” (עבד; 89.4, 21, 40, 51; 102. 15, 29). If one takes seriously the placement of these psalms, then the lexical and thematic connections between 102 and 86, 88, 89, 101, and 103 are enough to suggest that (1) a Davidic figure speaks in Psalm 102, and (2) Psalm 102 is likely an extension of the dialogue between Psalms 86, 88, and 89, via the Davidic figure of Psalm 101.

An Eschatological Reading of Psalm 102

When the voice of a future Davidic figure is heard in Psalm 102, other elements of the psalm begin to take shape, developing and extending terminology from Books III and IV into Book V.

The State of the King. Psalm 102 opens up with an invocation of the afflicted (v. 2-3), as well as a lament over that affliction (v. 4-12). The invocation contains familiar expressions of distressed prayer, which are typical of David.³⁷ The suppliant’s distress is described in vv. 4-8 in terms of his affliction, while in vv. 9-12 with reference to those who cause it. In the former, several key metaphors paint the picture of one who is suffering both inwardly and outwardly. He is like a lonely bird of the wilderness, without rest and keeping watch throughout the night (102.7-8). In the latter, as in Psalm 101, the royal figure is waiting for Yhwh to come to him, for

³⁶ McCann, *Psalms*, 1088. This link is all the more remarkable given that these are the only two occurrences of קצר in the Psalter referencing “cutting short.”

³⁷ See 18.7; 27.9; 31.3; 39.13; 56.10; 59.17; and 69.18. More significant is 86.1ff, as noted above.

it is Yhwh who has lifted him up and thrown him back to the ground (102.11).³⁸ The familiar taunts of his enemies are also heard (102.9), and he sees death on the horizon (102.12, 23-24). In the final line of the lament, the suppliant repeats that he “withers like grass” (102.4, 12), a phrase linked in Psalm 90 with man’s transience in relation to the wrath of God.³⁹ Within the eschatological program, this is an appropriate description of the king given the above discussion concerning the end of Book III, and the psalm’s juxtaposition with Psalm 101.

The Sitting Yhwh. The second half of Psalm 102 begins with a strong contrast between the transience of the suppliant (102.4-12) and the eternity of Yhwh (102.13, 25-29). This is a fit opening to the suppliant’s eschatological vision. The theme of Yhwh’s rule over the earth has already been established in Psalms 93-100, even though יָשָׁב (“to sit”) is only used once (99.1). In 102, Yhwh is sitting in heaven (c.f. 2.4; 123.1), where he looks down to hear the cries of the prisoners (102.20; c.f. 33.14), echoing the Exodus narrative (Exo. 14.24).⁴⁰ This may imply a new exodus for the oppressed people, who will gather at Zion.⁴¹

The Pity of Yhwh. Two of the keywords which bind Book IV together are near synonyms, רָחַם (“to have pity”) and נָחַם (“to have mercy”). Forming an inclusio, נָחַם appears twice in Book IV, the latter (106.45), “he remembered his covenant and had pity,” hearing the former cry of Moses (90.13), “Have pity on your servants!” Together they respond to Psalm 89 that Yhwh’s anger will not last forever; he will one day have pity on Israel. In Psalm 102, the

³⁸ Some find in this language an image of God taking Israel from the land and casting them into exile.

³⁹ HJ Kim, *Structure*, 311ff., found 23 lexical links connecting Psalms 90 and 102, of which eight were significant. Not included those listed above, these also include: prayer (תַּפִּלָּה; 90.1; 102.1, 2, 18), to wither (יָבֵשׁ; 90.6; 102.5, 12), to consume (כִּלָּה; 90.7, 9; 102.4), day (יּוֹם; 90.4, 9, 12, 14, 15; 102.3, 4, 9, 12, 24, 25), year (שָׁנָה; 90.4; 102.25, 29), and the phrase, “the work of your hands” (90.17; 102.26). See also Wilson, *Editing*, 218.

⁴⁰ Elsewhere in the Psalter he is enthroned in Zion (99.2, “Yhwh is great in Zion”; 9.5, 8, 12; 68.17; 132.13-14), which may suggest in the present context that Yhwh’s rebuilding of the Zion is so that he can come to David (101.2) in order to sit with him over an eschatological kingdom (132).

⁴¹ Mitchell, *Message*, 274-276, does not suggest this, his comments on the Wilderness exile are helpful.

“pity” (רַחֵם) of Yhwh (102.14) causes him to arise on behalf of the city of Zion, possibly indicating that the way Yhwh has pity on those who fear him is by arising and having pity on Zion (103.13).

The Appointed Time. One of the more important lexical links Psalm 102 has with Book III is the “appointed time” (מוֹעֵד; 74.4, 8; 75.3; 102.14; 104.19). Delitzsch commented that when used in prophetic texts, this word is a “standing expression for the appointed time of the final judgment.”⁴² Both he and Alexander noted that its use in Psalm 102 is parallel to the use in Psalm 75.3.⁴³ In Psalm 75 it is used to “declare that God will right the pillars of justice in the earth,” rectifying “the humiliating situation of 74” and “upside-down moral world of Psalm 73.”⁴⁴ This indicates that there will be an appointed time when Yhwh himself would reside as judge over all of his enemies. Its use by the royal suppliant in 102 is his reply back to Yhwh that the time for that judgment had come.⁴⁵

The Restoration of Zion. In the Psalter, there is no doubt that Zion is the capital city of Yhwh’s eschatological rule (132.13-14). Whether referenced as the hill (2.6; 15.1; 24.3; etc.) or the city (48.2; 87.3) of God, it is clear from Psalms 1-2 and the Songs of Ascent (120-134) that the goal of the Psalter is to establish the Anointed Son upon Zion (2.7; 132) and gather the righteous there for worship (102.22-23; 120-134). As part of the eschatological program in Book IV, the use of קָבַץ (“to gather”) in 102.23 connects the psalm to the ingathering envisioned in 106.47 and celebrated in 107.3. Such a gathering meant the reversal of fortunes for those who

⁴² Delitzsch, *Psalms*, 504. See also Habakkuk 2.3.

⁴³ Delitzsch, *Psalms*, 643; Alexander, *The Psalms*, 411.

⁴⁴ Cole, *Shape and Message*, 43.

⁴⁵ Some may object that this lexical link is too far removed from Psalm 102 to be legitimate. While it is true that the farther removed from each other the apparent links are, the less likely they are to be significant, other factors must also be considered, such as the rarity of the term in question or its occurrence in structurally-prominent points in the text. Here, the only occurrences of מוֹעֵד are in Books III-IV, both of which reference the same event.

pitied Zion (102.15). Like the lament of their king (102.2-12), their prayers would be regarded as Yhwh builds up Zion and appears in his glory (102.17). Thus, even though the suppliant's days were being cut short (102.25), he has great hope for future descendants based on God's eternity and great faithfulness (102.26-29).

Conclusion

Earlier critical approaches to the Psalter may have made important insights concerning an individual psalm's use prior to its placement in the canonical text. However, they largely failed to consider how its juxtaposition with other psalms and its placement within the larger book might affect its meaning.⁴⁶ By recognizing an eschatological agenda in Book IV (as it is construed by Mitchell), this paper has been able to suggest that Psalm 102 functions as a meditative response of the afflicted Davidic king to the question of his own rejection in Psalm 89. He envisions a future which begins with an appointed time of judgment for the enemies of Yhwh and ends with a new exodus: the ingathering of Israel and the nations to a rebuilt Zion. As such, Psalm 102 (alongside Psalm 101) represents an important turning point in the Hebrew Psalter. It prepares the reader not only as a plea for the people of Israel to return to their gracious and merciful God (Pss 103-106), but also for the future ingathering of all nations in order to worship Yhwh in Zion (Ps 120-134).

⁴⁶ Childs, *Introduction*, 508-511.

APPENDIX A:
THE ESCHATOLOGICAL PROGRAM IN THE HEBREW PSALTER

The following chart outlines the general framework and progression of thought in the Psalter hypothesized by Mitchell.⁴⁷

Book	Zechariah Text	Psalms	Notes
I		1-2	An introduction to the Psalter as a whole, laying down an overarching framework where Yhwh's anointed will conquer all opposition and rule the world from Zion. (<i>Message</i> , 245)
		3-41	Mitchell has yet to note anything beyond mere conjecture. Here, he views these Davidic psalms as somehow foundational for the book, possibly related to the trials and triumphs of the house of David as they relate to its eschatological son (<i>Message</i> , 301)
II	9.9	42-43	Israel is in exile; taunted, crying to God, and anticipating deliverance
		44	A rehearsal of the exodus account
		45	A bridegroom comes to Israel, mounted, afflicted, and righteous
	9.10	46-49	Celebrate God's cause (46), kingdom (47), and city (48), looking to Israel's ingathering from exile (49)
		50	Asaph calls for Israel's ingathering
		51	Repentance for the former house of David and prayer for Jerusalem
III	9.13-16	52-70	The king's hardship in establishing his kingdom
		72	An initial, temporary kingdom established by a Davidic son, anticipating the final kingdom (132)
		73-82	In Jerusalem, yet signs of exile (more details in <i>Message</i> , 106-107)
	11.17	83	Eschatological war with a ten-nation alliance
		84	A prayer for assistance in establishing kingdom, built temple
		85	Thanks for ingathering, prayer for God to turn away anger
12.10	86	The plight of the king, he is helpless in battle, related to Ps 83	
	87	Anticipates Zion's future glory; all nations confess joy her joyful	
IV	13.7-14.2	88	Death cry of the suffering messiah
V	14.3-8	89	King is stricken, pierced, mourned, extinguished, cut off, and rejected
		90-106	Israel is in the wilderness of a latter-day exile,
		107	Celebrates the latter-day ingathering of Israel
		108	Perhaps the messiah's petition and sword song
	14.9-16	109	Perhaps a pre-battle curse on his enemies
		110	The Advent and conquest of the heavenly David
		111-118	Hallel grouping which may contain paeans of praise to the conqueror
		119	A prayer of a repentant Israelite, preparing for his journey to Zion
120-121	120-121	All nations pilgrimage to Zion	
	122-134	A latter-day celebration of Sukkoth under the rule of the messiah (132); the vision of Pss. 1-2 has been brought about	

⁴⁷ See footnote 10 above for complete bibliographic information.