

PAUL J. SANDER

Alternate Delimitations
in the Hebrew and Greek
Psalters

Forschungen
zum Alten Testament 2. Reihe
117

Mohr Siebeck

Forschungen zum Alten Testament
2. Reihe

Edited by

Konrad Schmid (Zürich) · Mark S. Smith (Princeton)
Hermann Spieckermann (Göttingen) · Andrew Teeter (Harvard)

117



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Alternate Delimitations
in the Hebrew and Greek
Psalms

A Theological Analysis

Mohr Siebeck

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ISBN 978-3-16-159421-2 / eISBN 978-3-16-159422-9
DOI 10.1628/978-3-16-159422-9

ISSN 1611-4914 / eISSN 2568-8367 (Forschungen zum Alten Testament, 2. Reihe)

The Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliographie; detailed bibliographic data are available at <http://dnb.dnb.de>.

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The book was printed on non-aging paper by Laupp & Göbel in Gomaringen, and bound by Buchbinderei Nädele in Nehren.

Printed in Germany.

Preface

This book is a revised edition of my doctoral dissertation which was accepted by Fordham University in June 2017.

I would first like to express my gratitude for the scholarly support that I received from the Theology Department at Fordham University. The most significant was my dissertation director, Dr. Harry Nasuti, whose guidance throughout the project and the generosity with his time are still greatly appreciated. This book was the development of a paper that I submitted in his Psalms class in 2008 on Psalms 114 and 115. Even more significant would be the underlying theological approach of the paper, which I absorbed from having sat in many of his classes. The other significant faculty members were the two readers of my dissertation. Dr. Mary Callaway, besides providing crucial feedback on my later drafts, taught my first course, Introduction to the Old Testament class, which is the primary reason that I decided to go into Biblical Studies to begin with. She has also been my teaching mentor since I started student teaching in 2009. Dr. Karina Martin Hogan was the other reader of my project, who, in addition to her valuable feedback on my book, also taught one of my favorite classes on Hebrew Reading. Finally, I would like to thank the two executive secretaries who were in the Theology department during this period, Joyce O'Leary and Anne-Marie Sweeney. Their encouragement and guidance were invaluable as they helped me navigate through the many ups and downs of my Masters and Doctorate programs at Fordham.

Next, I would like to express my gratitude to Professors Konrad Schmid, Mark S. Smith, Hermann Spieckermann, and Andrew Teeter for accepting this book for publication in the *Forschungen zum Alten Testament* series. I would also like to thank Ms. Elena Müller, Program Director Theology and Jewish Studies, Mr. Tobias Stäbler, and Ms. Susanne Mang from Mohr Siebeck, for their work in the preparation of this volume.

Finally, I would also like to express my gratitude to my wife Elizabeth, without whose support none of this would ever have happened. Her positivity was the rock that I leaned on most during the most difficult points of the program. But even more important was her encouragement of me to change careers and go after what I wanted to do, trusting that we would make it all

work in the long run. She is also the mother of my two sons, David and Samuel, who were born close to the time that I began my studies at Fordham.

New York, March 2020

Paul J. Sander

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Abbreviations

BNF	Bibliothèque Nationale de France
Eval.	Evaluation of psalm delimitation utilized within the respective manuscripts
Kenn.	Kennicott manuscript
MT	Masoretic Text
TR	Psalms (numbers and verses) according to the textus receptus

Chapter 1

Alternate Delimitations of the Psalms: Critical and Theological Significance

Of the one hundred fifty psalms in the present Psalter, there are a number that have been delimited in different ways, either in the critical reconstructions of modern scholars or in different textual and interpretive traditions. In some cases, individual psalms have been divided into two separate psalms. In others, two psalms have been combined into one. While there are various historical and literary reasons for these different delimitations, these differences also can be seen to have theological significance, both for the psalms' own interpretation and for their contribution to the meaning of the Psalter as a whole.

The main focus of this investigation will be on the different delimitations found in the Hebrew and Greek Psalters. It will, however, be useful to start out with two examples of how modern critical scholars have argued for different delimitations of certain psalms in the Hebrew Psalter. These psalms provide a good way of illustrating the different types of arguments made in favor of these different delimitations (lexical, form-critical, rhetorical/structural, redaction-critical) as well as the theological significance of these delimitation changes.

A. Delimitation and Meaning: Lessons from Modern Biblical Scholarship

Modern scholars have wrestled with the possibility that Psalms 19, 42, and 43 were originally delimited differently but were later redacted into the delimitations we have today in the Hebrew Psalter. So Psalm 19 is sometimes divided into what are believed to be two, previously independent, hymns, while Psalms 42 and 43, on the other hand, are believed to have originally existed as a single combined psalm. As I hope to demonstrate, these delimitation differences ultimately stem from alternative possibilities of meaning contained within the respective texts themselves. Furthermore, I believe that these alternate delimitations have theological impact and are related to the larger shaping of the Psalter.

I. Psalm 19

The differences between vv. 2–7 and vv. 8–15 are so significant that the majority of modern scholars are forced to conclude that they must have come from different sources and thus should be delimited separately. The two differ in divine name (אל – יהוה), subject (creation – Torah), and poetic technique (freely crafted parallels – tightly crafted series of lines).¹ This led early historical critics to debate the original unity of Psalm 19. Alexander Kirkpatrick argues that the two halves have stronger parallels with other psalms than with each other (Psalm 19A with Psalm 8 – Psalm 19B with Psalm 119), which leads him to conclude that the two halves were written by different authors.² Other scholars such as Franz Delitzsch still maintained the original unity of the work, arguing that to view Psalm 19 as “two torsi blown together from some quarter or another” misses the intended plan of the full psalm: praise of the glory of God the creator leads to praise of God the giver of the Law.³

Early form-critical scholars Hermann Gunkel and Sigmund Mowinckel viewed Psalm 19 as an intentional, mixed form composition in which the addition of the material of Psalm 19B reinterprets that found in Psalm 19A. Gunkel argues that Psalm 19 is comprised of two originally distinct hymns,⁴ whose unwieldy mixture of forms is due to the restriction of the acrostic structure.⁵ In the final composition, the Law (vv. 8–11) is praised more highly than all of creation, including the sun itself (vv. 2–7). After this the pious person (the psalmist) considers how he stands in relationship to the commands of the Law (vv. 12–15).⁶ Mowinckel argues that Psalms 19A and 19B were not

¹ Frank-Lothar Hossfeld and Erich Zenger, *Die Psalmen I: Psalm 1–50* (Würzburg: Echter, 1993), 128–129.

² Kirkpatrick does, however, see a clear line of development linking the two sections. He argues that each half contains its own “special lessons” that never conflict. The first is of the universal revelation of God in nature, wherein the heavens praise God’s power and majesty. The second praises the beauty and power of God’s moral Law (the Torah). The subsequent contemplation of the latter leads the psalmist to express his own personal need for its guidance. See Alexander F. Kirkpatrick, *The Book of Psalms*, 3 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1903–1906), 1:101, 105.

³ Franz Delitzsch, *Biblical Commentary on the Psalms*, trans. David Eaton and James E. Duguid, 3 vols. (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1883), 1:279–280.

⁴ The first hymn (vv. 2–7) contains mythological elements which he believes indicate a pre-exilic date with great certainty. The glorification of the Law found in the second hymn (vv. 8–15) is assigned to a later post-exilic time frame. See Hermann Gunkel, *Introduction to Psalms: The Genres of the Religious Lyric of Israel*, trans. James D. Nogalski (Macon, Ga.: Mercer University Press, 1998), 62–63, 197.

⁵ Gunkel classifies Psalm 19 as a mixed genre psalm, more specifically an example of antiphonal poetry indicating a liturgical context. In this psalm, elements taken from the individual lament form (vv. 12–15) are appended to hymnic elements (vv. 2–7, 8–11). *Ibid.*, 306–307, 309–311.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 306–307.

two originally independent works; rather, he sees Psalm 19B as an intentionally composed sequel to the ancient hymn in praise of creation and the sun found in Psalm 19A. The key to the construction of the composite psalm is the Ancient Near Eastern linkage between ‘sun’ and ‘justice.’ The addition of hymn in praise of the Law in Psalm 19B allows one to reinterpret Psalm 19A, whereby the sun and other celestial beings in the firmament now proclaim God’s glory through their obedience to the laws of nature to which they have been subjected.⁷

Other scholars have approached the alternate delimitation of Psalm 19 in light of the psalm’s strong connections with Psalm 8, which reinforce the alternate delimitation of Psalms 19A and B. For example, Arthur Weiser argues that Psalm 19A was inspired by a similar experience of God in nature as that described in Psalm 8, to which Psalm 19A acts as a “kind of supplement.” In this manner, Psalm 8, which praises the relationship between creator and creature, is supplemented by Psalm 19A, which praises the revelation of God in nature.⁸ Alternately, Julian Morgenstern argues that Psalms 8 and 19A are linked, not to each other, but by references to a particular biblical creation tradition also found in the Sabbath motif of the Priestly creation account (Gen. 1:1–2:4a).⁹ This tradition emphasizes divine creation as “work” (Creation B) as opposed to creation merely by divine fiat (Creation A).¹⁰

⁷ See Sigmund Mowinckel, *The Psalms in Israel’s Worship: In Two Volumes*, trans. D. R. Ap-Thomas (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2004), 2:267. As Erhard Gerstenberger notes, it is only through the addition of Psalm 19B that the hymn to *El* in Psalm 19A can function as a Yahweh hymn to begin with. See Erhard S. Gerstenberger, *Psalms: Part I with an Introduction to Cultic Poetry*, The Forms of the Old Testament Literature 14 (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1988), 101. Additionally, as Rolf Knierim notes, the revelation of God’s glory in creation is described as being not discernable to humans (v. 4). The addition of Psalm 19B can be seen as a corrective to – or distancing from – the view that humans can discern the revelation of God in the universe without the aid of God’s Torah. See Rolf P. Knierim, “On the Theology of Psalm 19,” in *Ernten, was man sät: Festschrift für Klaus Koch zu seinem 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Dwight R. Daniels, Uwe Glessmer, and Martin Rösel (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1991), 444–445.

⁸ Arthur Weiser, *The Psalms*, trans. Herbert Hartwell (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1962), 197.

⁹ Julian Morgenstern, “Psalms 8 and 19a,” *Hebrew Union College Annual* 19 (1945–1946): 491.

¹⁰ The P creation account contains two main strata: the first, the major one of the narrative, describes the creation of the universe by divine fiat, without any physical action or “work” on behalf of Yahweh (Creation A). The second creation strand is built on the “Sabbath motif.” Here creation is depicted as six days of “work” for God. After which God must rest on the seventh day (Creation B). Morgenstern argues that Psalm 8 and Psalm 19A (vv. 2, 5b–7) correspond well with the Creation B tradition: Psalm 8, through its praise of the work of God’s hands and feet (vv. 3, 6), Psalm 19A, in v. 2, which praises the heavens, the work of *El*’s hands (*ibid.*, 514). (I would add v. 5b, which describes God as “pitching a tent” in the heavens.) *Ibid.*, 501–504, 514.

David Clines utilizes an intertextual approach to the issue of the alternate delimitation of Psalm 19. He argues that the psalm is best seen as a reflection upon Genesis 1–3. The strongest allusions to the Genesis text are found in Psalm 19B, more specifically in vv. 8–10a, which contain five allusions to the Tree of Knowledge in Genesis 2–3 that are used to demonstrate the superiority of the Law to the Tree of Knowledge.¹¹ Once this is seen, the basic structure of the psalm begins to emerge. The praise of creation found in Psalm 19A can be seen as an allusion to the creation account of Genesis 1. The five allusions to the Tree of Knowledge in vv. 8–10a shift the focus of Psalm 19B to the story of Adam and Eve (Genesis 2–3). In light of this, the ending prayer for deliverance from unknown sins can be seen as an allusion to the sin of Adam and Eve in Genesis 3.¹²

James Durlleser's rhetorical-critical analysis of the psalm argues that Psalm 19A was an originally distinct psalm to which Psalm 19B was later appended. He divides Psalm 19A into two sections that praise the magnificence of El's creation (vv. 2–5a) and the sun (vv. 5b–7). These sections are connected by a common usage of the noun קֶצֶף "edge" (vv. 5a, 7 [2x]). The second part of the Psalm (19B) is comprised of a structured hymn to God's Law (vv. 8–11) and a prayer (vv. 12–14) that are united by an emphasis on the *zayin* sound and usage of the adjective רַב (vv. 11a, 12, and 14). In contrast to the internal rhetorical linkages present within Psalms 19A and B, there is only one rhetorical element that links the two halves to each other, a common emphasis on the *mem* sound. While Durlleser acknowledges that it is possible that Psalm 19A and 19B were two originally distinct psalms which were later combined by a third individual, he argues that it is far more likely that a second author composed a hymn to the Law (Psalm 19B) which conformed to the same internal, two-fold structure and *mem* predominance found in Psalm 19A. The purpose of this was to adapt the earlier Canaanite hymn to the sun (Psalm 19A) for Yahwistic purposes.¹³

¹¹ The terms are all located in the ending phrases of the five stichoi of vv. 8–10a. Clines interprets מְשִׁיבַת נְפֶשׁ (v. 8a) "reviving the life" as an allusion to food, noting that the tree of life was deemed "good for food" in Gen. 2:16–17. He sees מְחַכֵּמַת פְּתִי (v. 8b) "making the simple wise" as a reference to Eve's designation of the tree as לֶהֱשִׁבֵל ... נְחֻמֵּד "to be coveted in order to become wise" in Gen. 3:6. The phrase מְשַׂמְחֵה לֵב "making the heart rejoice" (v. 9a) corresponds to the declaration in Gen. 2:9 that the tree was מְרֻצָּה "desirable to look at." The following phrase מְאִירַת עֵינַיִם "enlightening the eyes" (v. 9b) represents an apt description of the tree's very function which is best expressed in Gen. 3:7 וַתִּפְקְחֶנָּה עֵינֵי שְׁנֵיהֶם "and their eyes were opened." Finally, מְדַתְעוּן לְעַד "enduring forever" (v. 10a) corresponds to the punishment of mortality given to mankind as a result of eating from the tree (Gen. 3:22–23). See David J. A. Clines, "The Tree of Knowledge and the Law of Yahweh (Psalm XIX)," *Vetus Testamentum* 24 (1974): 8–12.

¹² *Ibid.*, 12–13.

¹³ See James A. Durlleser, "A Rhetorical Critical Study of Psalms 19, 42, and 43," *Studia Biblica et Theologica* 10 (1980): 182–186.

Later redaction-critical scholars sought to locate the delimitation issues of Psalm 19 within the larger redactional movements of the Hebrew Psalter. Leslie Allen argues that Psalm 19B represents the work of a later redactor who appended it to the text of Psalm 19A and inserted the new unit into a collection of royal psalms (18, 20, 21) as part of the larger redactional thrust linking the Psalter to the life of David, first espoused by Brevard Childs.¹⁴ He sees the lack of textual linkages between Psalms 18 and 19A in conjunction with the presence of strong linkages between Psalms 18 and 19B as an indication that Psalm 19B was added to create a connection between Psalms 18 and 19.¹⁵ The logic for this becomes clear when we note that the description of David as “Yahweh’s servant” in the inscription to Psalm 18 is matched by the ending self-identification of the psalmist as “thy servant” in Ps. 19:12, 14. In this way, the experiences of the royal role of David in Psalm 18 are provided as an example for the individual believer in Ps. 19:8–15 who seeks guidelines for living from the Torah.¹⁶

James Mays argues that Psalm 19 should be interpreted along with the other two traditional Torah psalms (1 and 119) as a part of a larger redaction of the Psalter that sought to recontextualize it to be read within the *Sitz im Leben* of Torah piety. Mays maintains the traditional delimitation of Psalm 19 as found in the Hebrew Psalter. He sees all three Torah psalms as disparate, “mixed-genre” poems. These intentional compositions were ideally suited for the application of various themes from the Old Testament to the psalmist’s view of the Torah as the fundamental organizing principle in the relationship between God and man.¹⁷ In the case of Psalm 19, the psalmist intentionally juxtaposes three sections based upon the themes of cosmos, Torah, and prayer (vv. 2–7, 8–12, 13–15). By means of the inclusion of Torah in the later sections, the first section indirectly presents the Torah as certain and everlasting, like the daily course of the sun through the eternal heavens. The second part commends the Torah in the way that wisdom is commended in Prov. 8:1–21. The final part presents the Torah as a means of avoiding the dangers of unintended sins described in Leviticus 4–5.¹⁸ Thus, the psalm is to be under-

¹⁴ Leslie C. Allen, “David as Exemplar of Spirituality: The Redactional Function of Psalm 19,” *Biblica* 67 (1986): 544–546. See also Brevard S. Childs, “Psalm Titles and Midrashic Exegesis,” *Journal of Semitic Studies* 16 (1971): 137–150.

¹⁵ The linkages between Psalm 18 and 19:8–15 include: Yahweh referred to as “my rock” (18:3, 47; 19:15), Yahweh’s “ordinances” (18:23; 19:10), discussion of personal “blamelessness” (18:24, 26; 19:14), the attribution of the same three terms to Yahweh and the Torah (“pure” 18:27; 19:9, giving “light” 18:28; 19:9, and way as “perfect” 18:31; 19:8).

¹⁶ Allen, “David as Exemplar of Spirituality,” 544–546.

¹⁷ See James L. Mays, “The Place of the Torah-Psalms in the Psalter,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 106 (1987): 3–4, 12.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 5–6. The other two Torah psalms frame the relationship of God and man as follows: In Psalm 1, the requirement that Israel’s leaders recite the scriptures daily (Josh.

stood as a unified psalm that illustrates the many ways in which God gives instruction to mankind.

Patrick Miller interprets the traditionally delimited Psalm 19 within the larger redactional frameworks of Torah and failed Davidic kingship.¹⁹ He considers the emphasis on the Torah found in Psalm 19B to be the central focus of the Davidic redaction of Psalms 15–24. Miller builds upon the work of Gerald Wilson, who argues that the addition of the royal psalms to the Psalter was intended to address the failure of the Davidic kingship.²⁰ At the center of this collection stand three royal psalms (Psalms 18, 20, 21) which encompass Psalm 19, whose focus is on the Torah. Psalms 18 and 19 are connected by an *inclusio* identifying the psalmist as God’s servant (18:1; 19:12, 14), whom Psalm 18 identifies as the king. This connection makes explicit the identification of the speaker of Psalm 19 as God’s servant, the Torah-keeping king.²¹ In light of this, the addition of the Torah Psalm 19 to the collection of Psalms 15–24 can be seen as specifying at the beginning of the Psalter what proper kingship was based on: love of Torah and trust in Yahweh. This stands in sharp contrast with, and is implicitly missing in, the failure of kingship described in Psalm 89.²² Thus Miller’s work provides mixed support for the separate delimitation of Psalm 19. His interpretation of Psalm 19 as a Torah-focused psalm placed within the center of the Psalms 15–24 could be seen as supporting the traditional delimitation of the psalm. However, his emphasis of the Torah theme in the later portion of the psalm (19B) could be seen as supporting the separate delimitation of Psalm 19.

Frank-Lothar Hossfeld takes a different approach, situating the delimitation issue of Psalm 19 within those later redactions of the Hebrew Psalter which emphasized the poor. He disagrees with the typical division of Psalm 19, arguing that the division of the text between earlier exilic (vv. 2–7) and post-exilic (vv. 8–15) thought worlds is incorrect. Instead, he sees the majority of the psalm (vv. 1–11) as a unified composition to which vv. 12–15 were added during a later Hellenistic redaction that emphasized the idea of God as

1:8; Deut. 17:18–20) is now applied to all the faithful. In this way, they shall become blessed like the tree planted by streams of water (Jer. 17:5–8). Psalm 119 by means of its numerous references to phrases used in the Hebrew Scriptures and most notably the Psalter itself situates the Torah as the medium of the relationship between God and the faithful (see Mays, “The Place of the Torah-Psalms in the Psalter,” 6). As a result, all three psalms constitute a “liturgy for those whose concern and delight is the Torah” (*ibid.*, 9).

¹⁹ Miller’s article does not address the issue of alternate delimitation in Psalm 19. See Patrick D. Miller, “Kingship, Obedience, and Prayer: The Theology of Psalms 15–24,” in *Neue Wege der Psalmenforschung: Für Walter Beyerlin*, ed. Klaus Seybold and Erich Zenger (Freiburg: Herder, 1994), 127–142.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 140. See Gerald H. Wilson, *The Editing of the Hebrew Psalter* (Chico, Calif.: Scholars Press, 1985), 215.

²¹ Miller, “Kingship, Obedience, and Prayer,” 128.

²² *Ibid.*, 140–141.

the savior of the poor and the weak.²³ Here, the contents of vv. 1–11 are seen as rooted in widespread ancient Near Eastern ideas (the glory of God in creation, the conversation of powers of nature, and the sun’s path) which are crisscrossed with later ideas (later cosmology, transmission of wisdom by the Torah, the identification of the “fear of Yahweh” with the Torah) found in the psalm’s post-exilic context.²⁴

Modern scholarship on Psalm 19 can be summarized as follows: Numerous textual differences between the two halves of the psalm forced early historical critics to question the original delimitation of Psalm 19. However, whether or not they saw the psalm as the work of more than one author, early historical critics still sought to explain the theological plan of the full psalm as delimited in the Hebrew Psalter. The early form critics favored delimiting the psalm as two separate units. They viewed Psalm 19B as a later addition, intended to more fully develop (or interpret) the older creation hymn found in Psalm 19A. Later redaction-critical scholars focused on how the entire psalm functioned within the larger redactional themes that were used to shape the Hebrew Psalter, including those of the Torah, Davidic kingship, and the poor. Their work provides mixed support for the delimitation of Psalm 19 into two separate units, depending upon whether the parts of the psalm that they associated with these larger redactional movements correlated specifically with just Psalm 19A or 19B. Other scholars took a more intertextual approach, exploring similarities between the alternately delimited halves and other Scripture passages, notably between Psalm 19A and Psalm 8, as well as between Psalm 19B and Genesis 2–3, which also supports the delimitation of Psalm 19 into two separate units.

As this analysis of Psalm 19 indicates, there are important differences in the theological interpretation of scholars who delimit this psalm as one psalm and those who delimit it as two psalms. Scholars who delimit Psalm 19 as one psalm focus on the theological connection between the two sections of the

²³ Hossfeld and Zenger envision three main redactional stages in the development of Book I of the Psalter which share a common emphasis on the poor. In the first, late-exilic/early post-exilic redaction, the situation of the poor and the persecuted (“the righteous”) individual is emphasized. During the 5th/4th century, Israel began to see the poor as a religious category, representative of the “true Israel” dealing with its hostile environment, who are nonetheless assured, confident that God and his world order shall prevail (see especially Psalm 19, the extension of Psalm 18 [vv. 26–32] as well as the wisdom psalms 25, 34, 37, and 39). In later Hellenistic times, the concept of the poor was expanded to include the idea of God as the savior of the poor and the weak. (The insertion of Psalm 9/10 comes from this period.) See Hossfeld and Zenger, *Psalm 1–50*, 14–15.

²⁴ Evidence of this later cosmology can be seen in the description of heaven as “firmament” (v. 2) and the idea of the earth as the foundation and the sky as a tent stretched over it (v. 5b). The understanding of the Torah as transmitting wisdom can be found in vv. 8–11. And the idea of the fear of Yahweh’s Torah can be seen in v. 10. See Hossfeld and Zenger, *Psalm 1–50*, 129.

psalm. As such they focus on the psalm's progression from praise of creation to praise of Law (Delitzsch) or the way that the psalm's intentional mixed composition illustrates the many ways God gives instruction to mankind (Mays). Mowinckel interprets Psalm 19 as a single text, even though he believes that the praise of the Law in Psalm 19B was added in order to lead one to reinterpret the proclamation of God's glory by the celestial beings in Psalm 19A as obedience to the laws of nature to which God has subjected them.

Scholars who delimit the text as two separate psalms have taken several differing approaches. Some focus on the intertextual relationships each of the separately delimited psalms has with other parts of the Old Testament, such as the allusions to the Tree of Knowledge in Genesis 2–3 found in Psalm 19B (Clines). Others look at how the separately delimited Psalm 19B²⁵ is tied to larger redactional movements in the Psalter, such as the larger redactional shaping that linked the Psalter to the life of David (Allen) or a later Hellenistic redaction which emphasized the idea of God as the savior of the poor and the weak (Hossfeld).

This examination of how modern scholars approach the issue of alternate delimitations of Psalm 19 highlights the theological significance of delimitation. In the next section, I will look at the various ways that scholars have dealt with the possibility of a combined delimitation of two psalms (42 and 43), along with its theological ramifications. After that, I will move on to an examination of the ancient textual traditions of the Psalter for which we have actual evidence of alternate psalm delimitations instead of hypothetical constructions put forth by modern scholars. As I shall attempt to demonstrate, all these cases of alternate psalm delimitations affect the theological interpretation of the material involved, which, ultimately, is the subject of this study.

II. Psalm 42/43

In contrast to Psalm 19, whose unity was not questioned by early interpreters, the idea that Psalms 42 and 43 could be alternately delimited as a single psalm can be glimpsed in the work of several ancient commentators. Origen notes that the inscription of Ps. 43:1 as $\psi\alpha\lambda\mu\delta\varsigma\ \tau\tilde{\omega}\ \Delta\alpha\upsilon\iota\delta$ is not contained in Theodotion, Aquila, and Symmachus and marks it as dubious.²⁶ Eusebius, in his *Commentary on the Psalms*,²⁷ notes that, based on similarities in words and thought, Psalm 43 would seem to be a part of the previous psalm. Early Jewish interpreters, though they do not discuss the actual delimitation of the

²⁵ Or parts thereof.

²⁶ See Frederick Field, *Origenis Hexaplorum quae Supersunt: Sive Veterum Interpretum Graecorum in Totum Vetus Testamentum Fragmenta*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1875; repr., Hildesheim: G. Olms, 1964), 2:156–157.

²⁷ Jacques-Paul Migne, ed., *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Graeca*, vol. 23 (Paris: Migne, 1857), 380.

two psalms, also treat these two psalms as if they were one: *Midrash Tehillim* interprets Ps. 43:1–2 as a continuation of the discussion of Ps. 42:8–10, where the psalmist questions why God has not delivered him as he delivered the Israelites at the Exodus.²⁸ Rashi, in his *Commentary on the Psalms*, sees the thrice repeated cry in these psalms (“Why so downcast?”) as a unifying thread between the two psalms (42:3b). He interprets these as prophesying the three different kingdoms that will put an end to Temple service in Jerusalem’s future: Babylon, Greece, and Edom (which stands for Rome). This is supported with references to the Babylonian Exile (42:3a), a less specific exile (42:7, 9b),²⁹ and a reference to the ongoing oppression of Edom (Rome) (43:1b).³⁰

Several Kennicott manuscripts (discussed later in this chapter) attest to the combination of Psalms 42–43 in early medieval Hebrew manuscripts. These include four 11th and 12th century manuscripts (Kennicott 4, 210, 224, and 590). The Kennicott 590 manuscript is of particular interest because it is dated, based on its inscription, at 1018 or 1019,³¹ just one decade later than the oldest complete version of the Hebrew Bible, Codex Leningradensis (also known as Codex Petrogradensis).³²

Early historical critics debated the separate delimitation of Psalms 42 and 43 found in the Hebrew Psalter. The absence of an inscription in Psalm 43, along with the existence of a common refrain (42:6, 12; 43:5) and the psalmist’s very similarly worded question about why he should continue mourning because of the oppression of his enemy (42:10; 43:2) were noted by these scholars as compelling reasons in favor of the original unity of the psalm. Delitzsch argued that this, along with similarities in structure and situation indicates that the two psalms were originally united. The resulting three strophe structure (42:1–6, 7–12; 43:1–5) shares the same basic pattern of complaint which is overcome each time by the “admonitory voice” in the closing refrain. The third strophe (Psalm 43) is necessary in order to complete the psalmist’s movement from complaint and resignation to confident hope.³³

²⁸ Allusions to the redemption of the Israelites at the Exodus include: Ps. 42:9: “By day, Yahweh will command his *hesed*, and in the night his song is with me,” which is seen as an allusion to the departure of the Israelites from Egypt after the Passover meal, and Ps. 43:2: “for thou are the God of my strength,” which is seen as a reference to Exod. 15:2: “The Lord is my strength and song ...”.

²⁹ Presumably, the period of Greek oppression.

³⁰ See Mayer I. Gruber, *Rashi’s Commentary on Psalms* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 2007), 336, 340.

³¹ Giovanni B. De Rossi, *Variae Lectiones Veteris Testamenti*, 4 vols. (Parma: Ex Regio Typographeo, 1784–1788), 4:30. The dates of the Kennicott manuscripts can be found in volume 1:lix–xciv.

³² A discussion of the history of the various names of this manuscript is found later in this chapter (below, p. 14).

³³ Delitzsch, *Biblical Commentary on the Psalms*, 2:54.

Other early historical scholars still maintained the traditional delimitation of the two psalms. Joseph Alexander argues that the factors against the traditional delimitation of the psalm are insufficient to warrant the conclusion that they were previously united. After noting differences in tone between the two psalms³⁴ and the difficulty in explaining why someone would split the psalm with such similarities to begin with, Alexander argues instead that the last two refrains (42:12; 43:5), which have different endings from the first (42:6), serve as fitting conclusions to their respective psalms.³⁵ Ernst Wilhelm Hengstenberg's reasons are similar to Alexander's; however, he also notes an important shift from the foreign enemy in Psalm 42³⁶ to an "unrighteous" domestic enemy who treats the psalmist deceitfully in Ps. 43:2.³⁷

Alexander and Hengstenberg's delimitations both place a great deal of emphasis on the differences in the refrains. In Ps. 42:6, the psalmist declares *יְשׁוּעוֹת פָּנָי אוֹדְנֵנִי יְשׁוּעוֹת פָּנָי* "... I shall yet thank him (for) the salvations of *his face* (or presence)." In the second refrain (42:12), the psalmist thanks God for *יְשׁוּעַת פָּנָי וְאֱלֹהֵי* "the salvations of *my face and my God*." The promise of God's presence in the first refrain now gladdens the countenance of the psalmist in the second refrain. Also, the reference to "my God" (42:12) brings us back to the taunting question of his enemies *אַיֵּה אֱלֹהֶיךָ* "Where is your God" (42:4, 11). Thus, the second refrain forms a fitting conclusion for Psalm 42 as a whole. The end of the third refrain is identical to the second. As such, it functions in the same manner as the second, as a conclusion to Psalm 43.³⁸

Alexander and Hengstenberg's separate delimitation of Psalms 42 and 43 ultimately leads them to similar interpretative conclusions. Alexander sees Psalm 43 as an appendix or continuation of Psalm 42.³⁹ However, he focuses more on the similarities between the two psalms. Thus he interprets Psalm 43 as a separate psalm with the same message and circumstances as the prior one. Hengstenberg interprets Psalm 43 as a compendium of Psalm 42 written in a lighter mood and a simpler style. Here the elements of lamentation and consolation from the prior psalm are expressed in their simplest essence.⁴⁰ However, he too does little more than note the continuation of these themes. Neither interpreter envisions a *development* of themes between the two psalms. In both instances we end up with a second, more concise, version of the prior psalm whose "thunder" is essentially stolen by the prior psalm.

³⁴ Psalm 43 is markedly more optimistic than Psalm 42.

³⁵ Alexander, *Psalms*, 1:362–363.

³⁶ This is demonstrated by the reference to "your (the psalmist's) god" in the enemies' taunts (Ps. 42:4, 11).

³⁷ Ernst Wilhelm Hengstenberg, *Commentary on the Psalms*, 4th ed., trans. John Thomson and Patrick Fairbairn, 3 vols. (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1867–1869), 2:104–105.

³⁸ See Alexander, *Psalms*, 1:362, 366 and Hengstenberg, *Psalms*, 2:85–86, 97, 104.

³⁹ Alexander, *Psalms*, 1:363.

⁴⁰ Hengstenberg, *Psalms*, 2:86.

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