

The Hermeneutical Import of the Structural and Thematic Correspondences at the End of the Korahite Pss 42–49 and the Davidic Pss 51–71 in Book II

Bearing in mind the various similarities evident between the final psalms of the first two Davidic groups (Pss 3–41 and 51–71), this paper explores the probability that the redactors of Book II intended the conclusion of the second Davidic group to reverberate that of the first Korahite group. The transition from a rym cluster (Pss 65–68) to the lament genre of Ps 69 is what signals the reader that such a shift is comparable to that already seen in the movement from Pss 45–48 to Ps 49. Given the strong similarities of these two rym clusters, it is not surprising to discover that despite substantial differences, the lament Pss 49 on the one hand and Pss 69–71 on the other have hermeneutically relevant correspondences.

In both sections the theology of the poor is significantly pronounced, in contrast to the rest of their respective groups. There is a shift from discourse on God's dwelling, namely the temple, in the rym clusters, to that of man. But with regards to the latter, the differences between the Korahite and Davidic group constitute a build-up that is not only consonant with their respective exposition of the exilic predicament but is also a clarification of it. The riddle of Ps 49 therefore more fully comes to light in concrete, historical terms at the end of the second Davidic group. Whilst this psalm constitutes a form of public protest against the (unfair?) possession of the land, Ps 69 focuses on the rebuilding and repopulating of the cities.

The relevance of such an inquiry obtains even more in the light of the fact that, being at the end of their respective groups, the psalms examined have a defining hermeneutical relevance within the second book of the Psalter.