

Recalling David and His Psalms after the Return: Focusing on the Themes of Psalms 57, 60, and 108*

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1. Introduction

Psalm 108 is a composite psalm consisting of parts of the pre-existing Psalms 57 and 60,¹ but it yields not just sums of them but a greater “whole”, as Aristotle says.² Though most of the original sources of

* The idea for this paper originated from my unpublished M.Th. dissertation at the University of Edinburgh.

1 Few scholars dispute that these two psalms precede Psalm 108. For further details of later composition of it, see Reinhard Müller, Juha Pakkala and Bas ter Haar Romeny, “Evidence of Psalm Composition: Psalm 108 as a Secondary Compilation of Other Psalm Texts”, *Evidence of Editing: Growth and Change of Texts in the Hebrew Bible* (Society of Biblical Literature, 2014), 159-177.

2 Aristotle is normally credited with the maxim that “A whole is greater than the sum of its parts”; he does not leave an exact sentence but a similar one somewhere: “πάντων γὰρ ὅσα πλείω μέρη ἔχει καὶ μὴ ἔστιν οἷον σωρὸς τὸ πᾶν ἀλλ’ ἔστι τι τὸ ὅλον παρὰ τὰ μέρη, ἔστι τι αἴτιον ...” (In all things which have a plurality of parts, and which are not a total aggregate but a whole of some sort distinct from the parts ...), Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 8.1045a.

composite psalms hardly remain as written literature, there are a few vivid examples that have their roots in another psalm in the Hebrew Bible, including Psalm 108. However, the methodology of composition in Psalm 108 is distinct. Psalm 108:2-14[1-13] is divided into two parts, traced directly to their own respective sources (57:8-12[7-11]; 60:7-14[5-12]), and there are only slight variations between them at a textual level.³ The composition of Psalm 108 seems to be a simple manner but an unusual way; in fact, there are no other psalms that follow this composite style in the same way. If we consider the creativity in the composition of other psalms — especially in Book Five of the Psalms — it is difficult to understand why Psalm 108 is composed in this style, and how it was then accepted as part of the canon among the post-exilic community.⁴

3 This is why many commentators suggest consulting Psalms 57 and 60 rather than the exegesis Psalm 108. Charles A. Briggs and Emilie Grace Briggs, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Psalms* (ICC; New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1906-1907), 364; Tremper Longman III, *Psalms: An Introduction and Commentary* (TOTC; Nottingham, England: Inter-Varsity Press, 2014), 378; On the other hand, some pay attention to the very theology of Psalm 108 in its canonical placement. For instances, see: John Eaton, *The Psalms: A Historical and Spiritual Commentary with an Introduction and New Translation* (London; New York: T&T Clark, 2003), 379-380; Frank-Lothar Hossfeld and Erich Zenger, *Psalms 3: A Commentary on Psalms 101-150* (trans. Linda M. Maloney), (Hermeneia; Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2011), 113-123; Walter Brueggemann and William H. Bellinger, Jr., *Psalms* (NCBC; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 468-471; Nancy deClaisse-Walford, Rolf A. Jacobson, and Beth LaNeel Tanner, *The Book of Psalms* (NICOT; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2014), 821-826.

4 Approaching the five Books of the Psalms from a compositional view and classifying their redactional periods based on the exile and the return has received much support from psalmic scholars until recently. In particular, it is widely accepted that Book Five was edited — some of it would be newly written — in the post-exilic period. For further details in recent publications, see YoonJong Yoo, "Current Trends in Psalms Study", *KJOTS* 15(2) (2009), 30-62, especially, 35-46; Erich Zenger, "Psalmenexegese und Psalterexegese: Eine Forschungsskizze", idem(ed.), *The Composition of the Book of Psalms* (Leuven: Peeters, 2010), 17-66; Tae-gyeong Kim, "The Psalms research in current Study since the 1990's", *KJOTS* 20(3) (2014), 325-356, especially, 333-338.

For these reasons, the primary concern will be on reproductive meaning in the composition of Psalm 108. In this paper, I will survey what is the central theme (or theology) of Psalm 108 in terms of its composition from Psalms 57:8-12[7-11] and 60:7-14[5-12]. To answer the question why the redactor chooses these two specific psalms, Psalms 57 and 60, I will analyze these psalms and their relationship to the Davidic Psalter (52-71, 72) approaching thematically. A comparative study will follow between the superscriptions of Psalms 57 and 60.

Considering the fact that these psalms both belong to the Davidic Psalter (51-71, 72), we can guess a certain connection between this psalm group and Psalm 108. The research question about this relationship consists of two sub-questions. Firstly, did the redactor of Psalm 108 choose these psalms with the intention of making a thematic connection with the Davidic Psalter, or did he/she simply pick these psalms without considering any connection, focusing instead on their content? Secondly, if these psalms do have a close relationship, what features of Psalms 57 and 60 had caused the redactor of Psalm 108 to choose these two psalms from the Davidic Psalter?

2. Estimated redactional date and historical location of Psalm 108

Scholars have tried to answer the question of the redactional intentions, dates, and historical locations of Books Four and Five of the Psalms. Comparative studies on the other scriptures of the ancient Near

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East, they have established reasonable suggestions.⁵ With textual and extra-textual analysis, we could get closer to the original intention behind its composition more precisely.

1) Extra-textual analysis

According to the generally accepted hypothesis on the shaping of the Book of Psalms,⁶ Psalm 108 belongs to the group of Psalms, 90-119, which expands the antecedent corpus of Psalms 2-89. Furthermore, from the publication of 11QPsa, the hypothesis that “Psalms 1-89 appear to have been stabilized earlier” has been widely agreed within the Psalmic scholars.⁷ From this perspective, the Books Four and Five of the Psalms have been considered the redactional works of the post-exilic (in terms of Book Four, some think late-exilic) period. Thus, we can regard Psalm 108 as

5 Gerald H. Wilson, *The Editing of the Hebrew Psalter* (SBL, 1985), 1-62; Hossfeld and Zenger, *Psalms 3*, 117-118; Peter Craigie, *Psalms 1-50* (WBC: Zondervan, 1983), 19-62.

6 At this stage, Psalm 1 gets its status as a prefix standing as a wisdom framework with Psalm 119, Markus Witte, “The Psalter”, idem (ed.), *T&T Clark Handbook of the Old Testament* (T&T Clark, 2012), 530-531; 542-543.

7 Since 11QPsa^a was found in 1956 at Qumran and published in an English translation in 1965, it has revealed the existence of an entirely different version of Psalms that has distinct order from the MT. James A. Sanders, *The Psalms Scroll of Qumrân Cave 11 (11QPsa)*, Discoveries in the Judaean desert of Jordan, Vol. 4 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965); W. D. Tucker Jr., “Psalms 1: Book of”, *Dictionary of the Old Testament Wisdom, Poetry & Writings* (IVP Press, 2008), 580. The interpreters in Qumran are accustomed to arranging the order of the Psalms with a certain intention, and this strongly supports that the Psalmic arrangement reflects that every redactor has a specific theological intention. See, Eugene Ulrich, “The Old Testament text and its transmission”, *The New Cambridge History of The Bible*, Vol. 2 (Cambridge University Press, 2013), 87; Kevin Gary Smith and Bill Domeris, “A Brief History of Psalms Studies”, *The Journal of the South Africa Theological Seminary* 6 (2008), 98; Tov explains this special intention within the liturgical purpose. Emmanuel Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*, 3rd edition (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2011), 320-321.

having been produced within the post exilic period.

The *Sitz im Leben* of Psalm 108 has been thought of as a cultic psalm being used in the post-exilic religious place.⁸ However, recent studies have cast doubt on the existence of “cultic prophets” who “played a significant role at the post-exilic Jerusalem temple”;⁹ thus, it is hard to say simply that Psalm 108 was composed for cultic purposes. Recently, two potential periods have been suggested for the composition of Psalm 108. Firstly, due to the fact that David is mentioned frequently as the ancestor of the Hasmonean Monarchy, some scholars assume that Psalm 108 is redacted for the purpose of legitimising the monarchy.¹⁰ However, this assertion has received serious opposition because Davidic Triptych(108-110) does not carry any theological notion of fulfillment.¹¹ Although this Psalmic group anticipates the day when salvation shall be fulfilled, it does not imply any already-fulfilled situation. In addition, in Davidic Triptych, the king is never emphasised as a character who has been longed for – a metaphorical king of the Hasmonean Monarchy made flesh.

The more reliable option would be to understand Psalm 108 “as the expression of the postexilic hope for a restoration of the Davidic kingship and even of David’s territories”.¹² This means that the *Sitz im Leben* of

8 Allen, *Psalms 101-150*, 69.

9 Joachim Schaper, “The Literary History of the Hebrew Bible”, *NCHB*, 125.

10 Hossfeld and Zenger, *Psalms 3*, 117. According to the view suggested by Ernst Axel Knauf, Psalm 108-110 was composed at the time of John Hyrcanus, who was a member of the Hasmonean dynasty. Ernst Axel Knauf, “Psalm LX und Psalm CVIII”, *VT* 50 (2000), 55-65.

11 Hossfeld and Zenger, *Psalms 3*, 118.

12 Hossfeld and Zenger, *Psalms 3*, 117.

Psalm 108 is found within the post-exilic period, somewhere in exilic Israel, but it does not denote concurrence with any certain historical event.

2) Inner-textual evidence

A few variations exist between Psalm 108 and its sources, which supports the possibility of its post-exilic date and location of Psalm 108. For instance, in verse 4[3], Psalm 108 changes the address אֲדֹנָי ('adonāy/my Lord) of Psalm 57:10[9] to יְהוָה. Considering the fact that Psalm 57 belongs to the so-called Elohist Psalter (42-83),¹³ it can be considered meaningful that the redactor of Psalm 108 shows a preference between אֱלֹהִים (elōhīm/God) and יְהוָה. This suggests either that the redactor is not overly concerned with the name, or, more likely, that he/she intends something by the change. With so little information we cannot say much more; however, a suspicion of the intentional change still remains. The existence of the transition supports the view that Psalm 108 was composed later, rather than earlier.

Similarly, in Psalm 108:10[9], the psalmist renders הִתְרַעַעִי (hitro'a'i/acclaim me) from Psalm 60:10[8] as אֶתְרוּעֵעַ (etro'a'/I would raise a shout over). This is one of the most incomprehensible change between two psalms. From its original reading, עָלַי פְּלִשְׁתֵּי הִתְרַעַעִי (over me, Philistia shout in triumph) in Psalm 60:10[8], this text renders it as עָלַי-פְּלִשְׁתֵּי אֶתְרוּעֵעַ (over Philistia, I shout in triumph). This does not

13 Frank-Lothar Hossfeld and Erich Zenger, *Psalm 2: a commentary on Psalms 51-100* (trans. Linda M. Maloney), (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005), 1-5.

mean Psalm 108:10(9) is an alternative reading of the same consonant textual *Vorlage*, because the different usage of ך and ך erases that kind of possibility and verb form of רוּא (rûa'/shout) is different. In Psalm 60, Philistine is mentioned as the subject who exalts God, in contrast to God was triumphant over Philistine in Psalm 108. Zenger explains this as a historical change within the political dynamics of the international relation.¹⁴ He understands that Philistine was not a hostile nation when Psalm 60 was written but now Philistine is an enemy of Israel in the post-exilic period. Whether or not, we make certain of that the redactor modifies the original text for his/her own theological purpose, but again he/she practices this task very conscientiously.

Therefore, this modification may reflect the change in the international relationship with the Philistines. This can be linked with extra-biblical study on the Philistines. We cannot specify clearly the day when Pharaoh struck down Gaza, though based on the superscription of the oracle in Jeremiah 47:1,¹⁵ we can suggest that the day may have fallen within, or slightly before, the exilic period. From this supposition, this transition reveals how the redactor of Psalm 108 understands the defeat of their long-standing enemy. Seeing the fallen country, the redactor theologically interprets this historical event as the triumph of God. Obviously, this kind of interpretation shows us that Psalm 108 was redacted after the fall of the Philistines, showing it to be quite late-dated.

The more important point that we have to focus on is that God's

14 Hossfeld and Zenger, *Psalms 3*, 116, 120.

15 The word of the Lord that came to Jeremiah the prophet concerning the Philistines, before Pharaoh struck down Gaza. (ESV)

active role as “a warrior” is emphasised in the salvation act.¹⁶ I will deal with this issue in more details in the following section. At this stage, it is necessary to deal with the question of how the concept of God as a warrior has been changed. According to Wilson, the picture of God has been changed through the historical events of ancient Israel, along with the understanding of the role of David, and this had been projected in the Book of Psalms.¹⁷ Wilson understands that Books One and Two affirm the Davidic monarchy, but Book Three, facing the Hebrews exilic situation, tries to answer the question of whether the Davidic covenant has failed and, if so, what follows. He sees Book Four as the crucial time to consider the question raised in Book Three with the Sinaitic covenant regarding God’s role. God appears as a king, though He is not a human character; rather, the human role is occupied by David. Book Five now enhances and praises the kingship of God in the post-exilic situation.¹⁸ From this position, we can argue that the expression of Psalm 108 which describes God as an active character in the salvation is the theological outcome in the post-exilic period.

16 W. Dennis Tucker Jr., *Constructing and Deconstructing Power in Psalms 107-150* (SBL AIL 19; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2014), 68, 71; A. F. Kirkpatrick, *The Book of Psalms* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1906), 341.

17 Gerald Wilson, “Shaping and Psalter: A Consideration of Editorial Linkage in the Book of Psalms”, J. Clinton McCann Jr.(ed.), *The Shape and Shaping of the Psalter* (JSOTSup 20; Sheffield: JSOT, 1993), 72-82.

18 Wilson, “Shaping and Psalter”, 75-80; idem, *The Editing of the Hebrew Psalter*, 220-228.

3. The themes of Psalms 57 and 60

From these brief observations, one thing is obvious that Psalm 108 was redacted with a certain theological intention in the post-exilic period. Psalm 108 sheds light on the problem of how to deal with the situation of the post-exilic faith-community, with respect to the interpretation of old scriptures in their new life-setting. Throughout examining the thematic relationship not only between Psalm 108 and Psalms 57 and 60, but also between them and the Davidic Psalter (51-71, 72), the most crucial question is why the redactor has picked these two psalms and, especially, the specific parts of them (57:8-12[7-11] and 60:7-14[5-12]).

From the fact that both source psalms (57 and 60) belong to the Davidic Psalter, there is little doubt that Psalm 108 and this group have a certain level of relationship. To examine this issue, I will first survey what features are represented by Psalm 57, 60. Then, I will briefly sketch out the redactional intention, or the main theme, of Davidic Psalter, comparing it with other Davidic psalm groups if needed. Through this, the intended meaning by the composition of Psalm 108 will be revealed more clearly.

1) The themes of Psalm 57 : 8-12[7-11] and 60 : 7-14[5-12]

(1) God the ruler of the world (57 : 12[11])

The speaker of Psalm 57 expresses the theological understanding that their God governs all the world. In verse 11[10], the speaker praises God for the reason that His steadfast love reaches to the heavens and His

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faithfulness to the clouds. By this praise, he/she reveals the theological understanding of how God governs His people and the world — that is, by אֱמֻנָהוּ וְחֶסֶדוֹ (his steadfast love and his faithfulness). In verse 12[11], God is exalted again with the two terms “heavens” and “earth” implying the entire world.

(2) God the warrior (60:7-14[5-12])

As mentioned above, God is described as a mighty warrior in 60:7-14[5-12]. For instance, 60:7[5] expresses the hope of being given God’s salvation by His right hand. The right hand is adopted as a symbol of “power to save His people” in the Hebrew Scriptures,¹⁹ and this notion is sometimes used in the literary setting of warfare.²⁰ It is described in 60:10[8] how God casts His shoe at Edom, and shouts in triumph over Philistia. Shouting in triumph calls to mind an image of warfare, while the concept of casting one’s shoe is a biblical expression that demonstrating possession or contempt.²¹ And the image of God as a warrior also contains the image of God as a savior, as seen in 60:13[11]: the speaker entreats the divine help from the hands of their enemies, because salvation of man is useless.

19 Exodus 15:6; 15:12; Psalm 18:37[36]; 20:8[7]; 21:10[9]; 63:10[9]; 77:12[11]; 78:54; 98:1.

20 Exodus 15:6; Psalm 21:10[9], etc.

21 *BDB*, s.v. “נָעַל.”

- (3) Threat from foreign nations (57:10[9], 12[11]; 60:8-11[6-9], 13-14[11-12])

Quoting Ballhorn's idea that "the threat of foreign nations is the theme that holds the two sections of Psalm 108 in common", Tucker sees the redactor's intention behind the selection of 57:8-12[7-11] and 60:7-14[5-12] as "cast[ing] the nature of the threat" in universal terms.²² From this perspective, both psalms represent "the threat" arising from the international relationship. We can find some phrases or words supporting their argument. For instance, in 57:10[9] the speaker gives thanks to God among the peoples (עַמִּים), and sings praises to God among the nations (אֲמִיּוֹת). These terms not only have a parallel phonetic relationship, but also share a similar meaning. Thus this parallelism grabs the reader's interest effectively and helps them to concentrate on this international circumstances.²³ In verse 57:12[11], succeeding the previous praise "God of heavens", the speaker keeps the praise that lets the glory of God shall be over all the earth, and this can be seen as a nuanced petition. The speaker calls for God to rule the earth, and this denotes that the speaker understands that his/her land is in danger from the foreign nations and needs to be full of God's governance. This theme is expressed most vividly in verse 60:8-11[6-9]. All the lands of Shechem, the Valley of Succoth, Moab, Edom, and Philistia, which were formerly neighboring nations,

22 Tucker, *Constructing and Deconstructing Power*, 69.

23 Actually, אֲמִיּוֹת ('ummim/peoples) is used only with גּוֹיִם (goyim/nations) when they are appeared in the paralleled connection in Psalms (44:15; 117:1; 149:7). עַמִּים and also with גּוֹיִם in somewhere (33:10; 96:3; 96:10). Psalms 57:10 and 108:4 are the only places where עַמִּים ('ammim/peoples) and אֲמִיּוֹת appears together.

are now metaphorically perceived as enemies to be governed.²⁴ Especially pertinent is that in 60:11[9] it is stated that Edom must be placed symbolically under Hebrew rule. Finally, in 60:13-14[11-12], the Hebrews' petition for God's salvation from their foreign enemies reaches its highest point.

(4) Hidden God (60:11-12[9-10])

Psalm 60:7-10[5-8] follows a typical format of petition psalms. The speaker asks God to answer him/her (v. 7[5]), so then God gives an oracle to him/her in His sanctuary (v. 8-10[6-8]). However, a sudden and surprising change in mood occurs in verse 11[9]. In spite of the fact that God has already given an answer, the speaker shouts like that he/she hasn't heard anything (v. 11[9]). The reason the speaker acts like that is partially explained in the next verse (v. 12[10]): God has rejected Israel, and so the speaker doubts that He will go with their armies.²⁵

This narrative flow makes a link to the well-known theme of the *Hidden God*. Psalm 60 remembers an old promise already given by God,²⁶ but the current situation seems to be ignored by God. At this point the speaker heightens his/her voice to God and entreats Him again. It is miraculous that in this frustrating situation the speaker does not leave God. Rather, he/she continues to believe in God and prays for His mercy, not having faith in any human power (v. 13-14[11-12]). This conclusion

24 Tucker, *Constructing and Deconstructing Power*, 70-72.

25 Sigmund Mowinkel, *The Psalms in Israel's Worship*, vol. 1 (Oxford: Blackwell, 1962), 217-218; Hossfeld and Zenger, *Psalms 3*, 121-122.

26 Leslie C. Allen, *Psalms 101-150* (WBC 21; Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2002), 70.

allows us to feel a paradoxical catharsis from the fact that the speaker's emotions are constructed by three factors of "the unsolved question", "hidden God", and "yet continuing firm belief".

2) The themes of the first half of Psalm 57 (57:2-6{1-5})

(1) God the ruler of the world (57:3-4{2-3}, 6{5})

Psalm 57 expresses the theological notion that God governs all the world. From the very first part of this psalm God is described as the Most High (57:3{2}). The next verse expresses the speaker's hope that God Most High shall send His steadfast love and faithfulness from heaven.²⁷ These are described as the means by which God rules the world and saves His people, so the speaker petitions God to send them (v. 4{3}), and in verse 6{5}, the speaker praises God as the ruler of heaven and earth, and appeals for His glory to cover all the earth with the same phrase used in 57:12{11}.

(2) Threat from foreign nations (57:2{1}, 5{4})

Psalm 57 starts with a voice requesting that God shed mercy on the Israel (57:2{1}). The speaker asks to be covered with God's wings until the destroying storms pass by – the storms acting as a probable metaphor for the enemies mentioned in the following verses. After praiseful verses

27 The hope is expressed in the phrase initiating by the imperfect form like יִשְׁלַח (yishlach/he will send). Gerstenberger explains this as 'a wish form' that has 'the force of a petition'. For the details, see, Erhard Gerstenberger, *Psalms: Part 1: With an Introduction to Cultic Poetry* (Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1988), 230.

in 3-4{2-3}, another metaphorical device to denote adversarial imagery is used; a vicious lion appears (v. 5-6{4-5}).

To sum up, two themes (*God the ruler* and *Foreign threat*) are interwoven throughout Psalm 57. The composer of Psalm 57 deliberately posits these two themes by turns, so that the effort of answering the theological conflict from the theodicean problem is revealed. On the one side, there is the belief in God as the ruler of the world; on the other, there is the real-world situation that the surrounding enemies are torturing them.

3) The themes of the first half of Psalm 60 (60: 3-6{1-4})

In the first half of Psalm 60, God appears almost as an enemy; in some ways He is worse than their human enemies. God appears as a more awful figure than He seems to be in the second half, *Hidden God*.

(1) God acting like an enemy (60: 3-5{1-3})

The psalmist of Psalm 60 understands the harsh situation of Israel as the punishment of God. He mistreats them, as their enemy does: rejects them, breaks their defences, is angry, and even makes the land quake (v. 3-4{1-2}). The psalmist sees this distress and suffering as originating from God (v. 5{3}). The theological thinking behind these expressions also reflects the speaker's world-view with respect to the theodicy. This parallel conflict between the metaphysical religion and the physical life creates a more vivid picture than the one drawn in Psalm 57.

(2) God the savior (60: 6(4))

In the remaining verse 6[4], God sets up a banner (נִסִּי) for those who fear Him to rally to out of bowshot (צִוּצִי). נִסִּי (nēs) calls to mind other biblical images, such as the fiery serpent that Moses made; however, because of the use of the military term צִוּצִי (qošet), God appears here as not only as a savior but also as a mighty warrior. Similar notions of God continue in the second half of Psalm 60.

To sum up, the first half of Psalm 60 shares similar themes with the second half; however, the former is harsher than the latter. In other words, the overall tone is released through the flow of the psalm, from the theme of *God the enemy* to the theme of *Hidden God*.

4) Brief Conclusion

On the basis of the previous studies, we can categorise three themes of Psalms 57 and 60 as such: *God the mighty savior*, *Threat from foreign nations*, and *Hidden God*. These three elements consist of the world-view of the speaker, and he/she attempts to resolve the dislocation that occurs between them. This twofold image of God, as a mighty but hidden savior, conflicts with itself in the Israel's real-life situation, in which they are facing a threat from foreign nations.²⁸ In Psalm 108, the speaker throws these themes altogether, asks a theodicean question, and petitions for salvation, but nothing is resolved.

28 J. C. McCann, Jr., "The Book of Psalms: Introduction, Commentary, and Reflections", *1 & 2 Maccabees; Introduction to Hebrew Poetry; Job; Psalms* (NIB 4; Nashville: Abingdon, 1996), 1121.

Each psalm has its own thematic coherence, and the redactor of Psalm 108 picks the parts that bear the core themes of respective psalms. In other words, when the composition of Psalm 108 was proceeding, no other essential themes of Psalms 57 and 60 are excluded. The redactor of Psalm 108 would select the parts consciously from the sources, and forms a delicate composite poetry.

4. Thematic approach to the Davidic Psalter (51-71, 72)

In this section, the relationship between Psalms 57 and 60 and the Davidic Psalter (51-71, 72) will be examined thematically. Through this process, we shall see whether there is any evidence to show why the redactor of Psalm 108 selected these two psalms among the psalmic corpus. Examining all the psalms of the Davidic Psalter exceeds the limit of this short paper. Therefore, I will briefly survey what is the main theme or theology of the Davidic Psalter, and sketch out any thematic correlation between the Davidic Psalter and Psalm 108.

1) The themes of the Davidic Psalter

According to Gerstenberger, the Davidic Psalter (51-71, 72) was redacted in the exilic period while other collections were gathered.²⁹ Hossfeld and Zenger explains this redactional development in more details. They understand that the expansion of the first exilic collection,

29 Gerstenberger, *Psalms: Part 1*, 29.

Psalms 52-68, occurred in the fifth century, both being explicitly “Davidized” and “being given a beginning in Psalm 51 and a conclusion in Psalms 69-72”.³⁰ They sees that the latter expansion, conducted by the Asaph group, and the Davidic Psalter have a thematic connection with the precursor Davidic collection, Psalms 3-41.³¹ Therefore, we can be firm that the Davidic Psalter has a clear redactional intention. Tate introduces a brief but essential explanation of the themes of the first half of the Davidic Psalter.

The significance of the collection of psalms in Book II has received little attention from commentators but is worthy of more consideration than it has been given [...] The collections in Book II probably originated in later pre-exilic or exilic times [...] This dating refers to the collections, of course, not to individual psalms. In general terms, the later pre-exilic and exilic contexts seem to match well the content of these psalms. The heart of Book II is found in Pss 51-64. Anyone who has worked through these psalms knows that they deal with *great pain and agony of soul*. Ps 51 is the only true confession of sin in the Psalter of any length, and it is a powerful one. The psalms which follow in Pss 51-64 are dominated by the language of *lamentation, complaint, and petition*. They reflect a society either under or threatened by oppression, *fierce foes*, or corruption, and in the more urgent need of *divine intervention and help*.³² [Italics by the writer.]

As suggested by Tate, the themes of the first half of the Davidic

30 Hossfeld and Zenger, *Psalms* 2, 3.

31 Hossfeld and Zenger, *Psalms* 2, 4.

32 Marvin Tate, *Psalms 51-100* (WBC 20; Waco, Tex.: Thomas Nelson, 1991), xxiv-xxv.

Psalter are easily identified : *petition for salvation* (in the forms of lamentation, complaint, and petition), *foes*, and *divine salvation*.

The second part of the Davidic Psalter continues the former petitions with four praise psalms (65-69).³³ From a thematic view, while Psalms 65 and 67 develop the theme of God the ruler of the world,³⁴ Psalms 66 and 68 focus more on the enemies and the salvation from them brought by God. All the first phrases of Psalms 69-71 are petitions for God's salvation: אֱלֹהִים הוֹשִׁיעֵנִי אֱלֹהִים (‘‘Save me, O God’’, 69:2[1]); אֱלֹהִים לְהַצִּילֵנִי (‘‘O God, deliver me’’, 70:2[1]); and בְּצִדְקַתְךָ תַּצִּילֵנִי (‘‘In your righteousness, deliver me’’, 71:2). These psalms see the Israel petitioning God for salvation from their enemies.³⁵ Finally, the superscription of Psalm 72 indicates לְשִׁלֹּמֹה (To/Of Solomon); however, this psalm is included in the Davidic Psalter with the final doxology: ‘‘The prayers of David, the son of Jesse, are ended’’ (72:20). And if we consider its redactional composition to fit the theology of this collection, this ‘‘royal song’’ or ‘‘royal petition’’ has a coherent thematic flow with the other psalms.³⁶ Therefore, we can roughly categorise four main themes of the Davidic Psalter (51-71, 72): *Petition for salvation*, *Foes*, *Divine salvation* and *God the ruler of the world*.

The Davidic Psalter holds thematic coherence from start to end, and each theme appears in Psalms 57 and 60 (*God the mighty savior*, *Threat from foreign nations* and *Hidden God*). Therefore, we can presumably say that Psalms

33 Hossfeld and Zenger see Psalm 68 as a lament, but its overall voice weighs the praiseful message, Hossfeld and Zenger, *Psalms* 2, 2.

34 65:6-14; 67:3-8.

35 69:5, 7, 13, 15, etc.; 70:3-4; 71:4, 10, 13, etc.

36 Hossfeld and Zenger, *Psalms* 2, 205-207.

57 and 60 represent the Davidic Psalter in their thematic view.

5. Remaining Problem: Superscription?

Some scholars think that the superscriptions of these two Psalms give useful information regarding Psalm 108, and have contributed to conjecture around the redactional intention of the composition of Psalm 108.³⁷ Although there are debates around when the two preceding Psalms were titled, Beth Tanner suggests the view that the superscriptions supply useful information regarding how the ancient Jewish people regarded them, by showing examples of situations in which certain psalms could be used.³⁸

Similarly, one possibility is to say that these superscriptions describe certain narrative backgrounds of David. We don't know who added these superscriptions to these psalms, or when they did it, but it is clear that these psalms have a narrative background. The superscription of Psalm 57 is "To the leader: Do Not Destroy. Of David. A Miktam, *when he fled from Saul, in the cave*", and the one of Psalm 60 is "To the leader: according to the Lily of the Covenant. A Miktam of David; for instruction; *when he struggled with Aram-naharaim and with Aram-zobab, and when Joab on his return killed twelve thousand Edomites in the Valley of Salt*". Though the latter superscription does not have a canonical

37 Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 28.

38 Tanner, *The Book of Psalms*, 486.

background as a narrative quotation, the specific details are clearly linked to the narrative of David. Thus, one could argue that these superscriptions give the explanation as to why the redactor of Psalm 108 chose these psalms.³⁹

However, it is unsatisfactory to simply say that these superscriptions explain everything. Firstly, they do not fully cover the question of why the redactor selected the particular passages in the two psalms. Furthermore, the date when these psalms were entitled is still obscure, so the superscriptions does not fully guarantee that Psalms 57 and 60 were composed and entitled before the redactional date of Psalm 108. Even some details of the superscription of Psalm 60 do not fit its contents.

Nevertheless, the superscriptions still suggest a possible interpretation. Whereas Psalm 57 is supposedly attributed to David being pursued by Saul, Psalm 60, although represented by David, deals with a communal crisis: the battle between Israel and Edom. The two *Sitze im Leben* suggested by the superscriptions, i.e., the personal and the communal crisis, meet the national crisis of the Babylonian captivity. Individual and communal songs become inseparable; the Israelite community shared a common destiny.

39 Quoting Kidner's view, Craigie also shows his preference for the antiquity of the superscriptions. Their understanding is based on the theory that the translators of LXX are ignorant of some details of the superscriptions of Hebrew psalms. See, Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 28-30.

6. Conclusion

Psalms 57:8-12[7-11] and 60:7-14[5-12], which belong to the collection of Davidic psalms in Book Two of the Psalms; however, its message goes beyond simply combining them. This calls for consideration of the *Sitz im Leben* of Psalm 108. As a first step to examine precisely the redactional date of Psalm 108, I researched both textual and extra-textual evidence. There is little doubt that this psalm was redacted during the post-exilic period.

Then, I clarified the themes of Psalms 57 and 60, and how they are linked. From the observations as I discussed above, three themes of Psalm 108 (57:8-12[7-11], 60:7-14[5-12]) were categorized: *God the mighty savior*, *Threat from foreign nations*, and *Hidden God*. Although the relationship of these themes with other psalms in the Davidic Psalter (52-71, 72) was briefly examined, I argued that the themes of Psalms 57 and 60 represent the main themes of this Davidic collection.

The reason why Psalm 108 borrowed the themes of the original psalms is clear when considering its historical background. The post-exilic Yehud was under the control of a powerful external enemy, the Persian Empire. World domination by empire has now become an almost permanent international situation. The divine status of Jerusalem, which had received God's extraordinary protection, was hurt. Nevertheless, according to the biblical point of view, through divine intervention, Israel returned to their 'promised' land. These circumstances provide the rationale behind the post-exilic meditation on three theological themes

dealt with in Psalms 57 and 60: *God the mighty savior, Threat from foreign nations, and Hidden God*. The ironic theology of ‘Yahweh who seems to be hidden, yet still King of the whole world’ becomes the main theme the post-exilic psalmists ponder.

From the superscriptions of Psalms 57 and 60, the additional possibility of the redactional intention of Psalm 108 was suggested. Each describes David’s personal agony due to Saul’s persecution and the communal petition to Yahweh in the situation of war against Edom, respectively. The Babylonian captivity was the national and catastrophic experience of whole Israel, in which the distinction between individual and communal petitions lost its meaning. All individuals share the common destiny. However, I do not insist that the superscriptions explain all the reasons for the composition; rather, it must be denied on the ground that it has little historical evidence.

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검색어

시편 108, 주제 분석, 구성적 관점, 포로후기, 다윗 시편, 시편 57, 시편 60

[ABSTRACT]

Recalling David and His Psalms after the Return: Focusing on the Themes of Psalms 57, 60, and 108

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Psalm 108 was created by borrowing almost verbatim from Psalms 57:8-12[7-11] and 60:7-14[5-12], which belong to the collection of Davidic psalms in Book Two of the Psalter; however, its message goes beyond simply combining them. This calls for consideration of the *Sitz im Leben* of Psalm 108. As a first step to examine precisely the redactional date of Psalm 108, this study examines both textual and extra-textual evidences. There is little doubt that this psalm was redacted during the post-exilic period. Then, I explicate the themes of Psalms 57 and 60, and how they are linked. From these observations, three themes of Psalm 108 (57:8-12[7-11], 60:7-14[5-12]) can be categorized: *God the mighty savior*, *threat from foreign nations*, and *hidden God*. Although the relationship of these themes with other psalms in the Davidic Psalter (Pss 52-71; 72) was briefly examined, I argue that the themes of Psalms 57 and 60 represent the main themes of this Davidic collection. The ironic theology of ‘YHWH who seems to be hidden, yet still King of the whole world’ becomes the main theme for the post-exilic psalmists. From the superscriptions of Psalms 57 and 60, the additional possibility of the redactional intention of Psalm 108 is explored. Each describes David’s personal agony due to Saul’s persecution and the communal

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petition to YHWH in the situation of war against Edom, respectively. The Babylonian captivity was the national and catastrophic experience of whole Israel, through obscured the distinction between individual and communal petitions. All individuals would share the common destiny.

key words

Psalm 108, Thematic research, Compositional approach, post-exilic period, Davidic Psalms, Psalm 57, Psalm 60

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