

PSALMS 1 AND 112 AS A PARADIGM FOR THE COMPARISON OF WISDOM MOTIFS IN THE PSALMS

Marlin E. Thomas*

There is a growing awareness among scholars of the complexity of thought in the ancient Near East. Ancient man did not only act out before the gods his fondest desires for a productive and successful year, whether agriculturally or militarily or economically. Nor did he merely divine for omens in the skies above or in the organs of sacrificial animals below. From the earliest periods we have clear evidence that man put his mind to the arduous task of seeking to understand at least the social processes of life. Those insights were then later reduced to writing so that succeeding generations might learn from the experiences of the past.¹

This attempt by ancient man to control his destiny by comprehending and manipulating favorably the forces of social behavior has come to be known by the genre of "wisdom literature." Its point of departure is the accumulated result of personal experience involving many persons and spanning many generations.² To the extent to which it distills the known results of certain actions into carefully worded observations and aphorisms, or "guidelines for life," it may even be called scientific, if such a concept is understood in its rudimentary forms of observation, data-gathering, hypothesization and experimentation. Those who promulgated such universally-gathered bits of wisdom were called "wise men," and in time they came to be regarded highly as teachers in the monarchical courts of many lands.³

Such "schools" of wisdom, however, did not remain the property of isolated kingdoms or dynasties. Wisdom literature has been recovered from Egypt and Mesopotamia⁴ in addition to that which has been preserved for us in the inspired Hebrew Scriptures. Moreover, the visit of the Queen of Sheba to Solomon in 1 Kgs 10:1-2 (cf. also 4:34) offers a glimpse into the truly international character of wisdom. Studies focusing on the similarities between Prov 22:17—

*Marlin Thomas is pastor of First Christian Church in Waukegan, Illinois.

¹See "The Instruction of Ptah-Hotep" and "Instruction Addressed to King Meri-ka-re," *ANET* 412-418.

²G. von Rad's definition, "A practical knowledge of the laws of life and of the world, based upon experience," may be taken as axiomatic; *Old Testament Theology* (New York: Harper, 1962), 1. 418.

³S. H. Blank observes that wisdom is "a quality of mind distinguishing the wise man, by virtue of which he is skilled and able to live well and both succeed and counsel success"; "Wisdom," *IDB*, 4. 852-853.

⁴Cf. with n. 1 above "The Words of Ahiqar," *ANET* 427-430.

24:22 and "The Instruction of King Amen-em-opet"⁵ have sought to determine whether one was dependent on the other with less than definitive results, further adding to the mystique of the international provenance of wisdom.⁶

A careful study of the Hebrew Scriptures makes it abundantly clear that the wise men of old did not isolate themselves from the rest of society, nor did society regard their work in isolation. L. E. Toombs is undoubtedly correct in suggesting that at least some of Israel's wise men believed that proper integration of the ordinary experiences of human beings was just as important in the theological pursuit of the good life as was an understanding of the history and institutions of the nation. According to Toombs, the author of Proverbs 2 seems to go so far as to suggest that to have wisdom is indeed to have salvation.⁷ Although this would seem to contradict the *Heilsgeschichte* of the exodus, wisdom's constant emphasis on the *tôrâ*, "teachings," and the fear of Yahweh should give ample reason for pause.⁸

Traditionally the wisdom materials of the OT have been located in Proverbs, Job, Ecclesiastes and the Song of Songs (Roman Catholic scholars add Ben Sira and the Wisdom of Solomon). Certain writers have suggested that there is narrative wisdom in the Bible also,⁹ and since H. Gunkel's pioneering work,¹⁰ wisdom materials in the Psalms have become increasingly well known.

It should not come as a surprise to find connecting links between wisdom materials and the Psalms, for points of connection between hymnic and wisdom literature may be found throughout the ancient Near East, as is illustrated in comparing the subject of the "hot man" and the "silent man" in Amenemopet with Psalm 1.¹¹ In fact, ancient wisdom literature in general offered a body of stock materials from which hymn writers could choose in the development of their own special materials. An example of this is Psalm 111, a hymn of thanksgiving, which closes with a wisdom motif.¹²

It need not be assumed that the wise men and cultic officials had nothing in common. Mowinckel points out that the temple personnel included scribes, and if Solomon was the patron of a school of scribes in Jerusalem—as he very well may have been—it should not be considered artificial for one group to influence the other. It is abundantly clear that Solomon's court was a place of

⁵ANET 421–425.

⁶See G. E. Bryce, *A Legacy of Wisdom: The Egyptian Contribution to the Wisdom of Israel* (London: Associated University, 1979), chaps. 1–2, for a convenient discussion of two opposing views.

⁷L. E. Toombs, "O. T. Theology and the Wisdom Literature," *JBR* 23 (1955) 193, 5.

⁸W. C. Kaiser, Jr., "Wisdom Theology and the Centre of Old Testament Theology," *EvQ* 50 (1978) 136.

⁹See J. L. Crenshaw, "Method in Determining Wisdom Influence Upon 'Historical' Literature," *JBL* 88 (1969) 129–142, for a good summary of Biblical passages cited.

¹⁰H. Gunkel and J. Begrich, *Einleitung in die Psalmen* (Göttingen: 1933).

¹¹Bryce, *Legacy* 120.

¹²*Ibid.*

intramural as well as international encounter (1 Kgs 4:21–24, 30–34), and in such an environment it would not be surprising to find priests, prophets, scribes and wise men intermingling freely.¹³ In an environment where all of life was seen as an integrated whole, centered in man's obedience to God, it may very well be expected that religious, cultic and didactic materials would intermingle.¹⁴

The focus of life in ancient Israel was found in the will of God. For the priest it was centered in the cult service, for the prophet it was centered in the *tôrôt* or teachings, and for the wise man it was centered in the fear of Yahweh (Prov 1:7 *passim*). These three aspects were brought together in certain of the psalms, which identified the fear of the Lord as the beginning of wisdom (Pss 111:10; 34:11; 19:9; 119:38), upheld the *tôrâ* as being the delight of the wise man's heart (Psalms 1; 19; 119), and did so didactically in a context of worship and thanksgiving.¹⁵

The identification of those psalms that may be classed under the genre of wisdom literature is a matter not yet closed to debate. Although Gunkel and Mowinckel, two of the most prominent interpreters of the Psalms, reject the title "wisdom psalms," they nevertheless accept their existence.¹⁶ Whybray follows their lead in suggesting that whereas some psalms may be considered as being wisdom literature, others only employ wisdom forms.¹⁷ He illustrates this by a study of the term *hokmâ*, "wisdom," in a variety of psalmic material.¹⁸ Yet R. E. Murphy is as representative as any psalms scholar when he discusses the characteristics of wisdom psalms as being located in stylistic peculiarities and in universalistic wisdom content. The stylistic formulae include the 'ašrê or "blessed" formula, numerical sayings, "better" sayings, the "my son" mode of address, alphabetic structure, simple comparisons, and didactic admonition. The content of wisdom psalms includes contrasting the wicked and the righteous, discussion of the two ways, the problem of retribution, practical advice concerning conduct, and the importance of the fear of the Lord. Kaiser adds the emphasis on the study of Torah.¹⁹

The *Sitz im Leben* of the wisdom psalms is not easily ascertained. That they

¹³S. Mowinckel, *The Psalms in Israel's Worship* (New York: Abingdon, 1962), 2. 104–105. Cf. idem, "Psalms and Wisdom," *VTSup* 3 (1955) 206.

¹⁴Cf. von Rad: Israel's artistic poetry "stands in a very close relationship to her faith, . . . for it is faith which creates for itself the form and the style"; *Theology*, 1. 365.

¹⁵W. C. Kaiser, Jr., *Toward An Exegetical Theology: Biblical Exegesis for Preaching and Teaching* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1981) 131; Mowinckel, *Psalms*, 2. 105–106.

¹⁶See J. L. Crenshaw, "Wisdom," in *Old Testament Form Criticism* (ed. J. H. Hayes; San Antonio: Trinity University, 1974) 250.

¹⁷R. N. Whybray, *The Intellectual Tradition in the Old Testament*, *BZAW* 135 (1974) 94.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 94–98.

¹⁹R. E. Murphy, "A Consideration of the Classification, 'Wisdom Psalms,'" *VTSup* 9 (1963) 159–160; see also E. Gerstenberger, "Psalms," in *Old Testament Form Criticism* (ed. Hayes) 219; Crenshaw, "Wisdom" 250; Kaiser, "Wisdom Theology" 133.

are the product of wise men is obvious, but the tension out of which they came cannot be easily assessed. Their use in the cult cannot be ruled out, especially in view of their relationship to the thanksgiving psalms,²⁰ but it is difficult to come any closer. Gerstenberger believes that there is a creative tension between the cult psalmists and the wise men,²¹ but if that is so the tension seems to have been for the most part a happy one. Of the major wisdom psalms, only Psalm 34 purports to be attached to a specific incident. The others all seem to address life in general. Five of the so-called wisdom psalms are acrostics, two of which extol the *tôrôt* of Yahweh, with one each dealing with justice, serendipity, the righteous man, and the works of Yahweh. It may be best to view them as being in some way directly related to the "king's chapel"—that is, having a relationship to the king's court and the cult "chapel" that his courtiers frequented.²²

Psalm 1 should doubtless be included with the wisdom psalms. Most commentators agree that Psalm 1, though possibly composed rather late, was intentionally placed at the head of the Psalter to serve as an introduction to everything else in the compilation. Dahood saw it, more than as introduction, as a *précis* to the entire book of Psalms,²³ whereas Kidner holds that it was specially composed to serve as the Psalter's introductory piece.²⁴ Everyone is impressed with its rich wisdom themes, and attention is frequently called to its parallel passages in Amenemopet 4:8–12; Jer 17:5–8.

E. A. Wallis Budge was the first to notice the parallelisms between Amenemopet and Psalm 1.²⁵ Although the extant MSS of Amenemopet date to the seventh and sixth centuries B. C., the material itself is thought to be from the Ramesside period, thus predating the Solomonic era. Psalm 1 is not, however, a direct repetition of Amenemopet 4. The equivalence is close only between Ps 1:3 and Amenemopet 4:8–12, with an even closer correspondence between the latter and Jer 17:5–8.²⁶ Buttenwieser notes the discontinuity between Jer 17:5–8 and Psalm 1,²⁷ which may lead to the conclusion that both were influenced

²⁰Murphy, "Consideration" 160–161.

²¹Gerstenberger, "Psalms" 219.

²²Mowinckel, "Psalms and Wisdom" 209, correctly speaks of the "learned psalmography" as having in common with genuine psalmography the characteristic of prayer. The author, he says, speaks to God as well as to men.

²³M. Dahood, *Psalms* (AB; Garden City: Doubleday, 1966), 1. 1.

²⁴D. Kidner, *Psalms 1–72: An Introduction and Commentary on Books I and II of the Psalms* (Leicester: Inter-Varsity, 1973) 47. J. Levenson of the University of Chicago, however, points out that the last verse of Hosea stands in direct contrast to this "Introduction" theory.

²⁵Cited in Bryce, *Legacy* 234 n. 16, with other notices.

²⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 121–122.

²⁷M. Buttenwieser, *The Psalms, Chronologically Treated with a New Translation* (Chicago: Chicago University, 1938) 851. He suggests that Jeremiah is spiritually motivated whereas Psalm 1 is materialistically oriented.

by Amenemopet but did not directly incorporate the Egyptian material into their work.²⁸

Brownlee uses the parallelism to suggest that a late (Maccabean) date for Psalm 1 is thus not required.²⁹ More to the point for our purposes is the recognition that there was a certain international flavor that pervaded all of wisdom literature, and such intercourse may also be seen internally within the body of literature produced by any given country. This helps to pave the way for a comparison of Psalms 1 and 112, to be addressed soon.

The fact that Psalm 1 appears to be a cohesive entity, built around the concept of the two trees borrowed from Amenemopet, makes it difficult to see how it can be suggested by some that Psalms 1 and 2 were at one time a unity, for the second psalm has little thematic unity with the first. It is true, as Brownlee notes, that the western text of Acts 13:33 follows the rabbinic tradition in quoting from the second psalm as though it were the first,³⁰ but the overwhelming evidence of the ancient MSS does not bear out that conclusion.³¹ It is rather possible, as already was suggested above, that Psalm 1 was at one time regarded as an introduction and therefore not reckoned in the numbering.³² What may be of some significance is that the introductory psalm, which speaks of the happiness of the man who follows the path of Yahweh, is immediately followed by an enthronement psalm welding the security of the Jerusalem throne to the power of Yahweh. By implication the suggestion would be germane that it is the "happy man" who as king in Jerusalem follows the path of Yahweh and therefore enjoys Yahweh's strength and keeping power.

Psalm 1 does indeed seem to focus on a man of high standing for, as Brownlee observes, v 1 uses the term *'iš* rather than *'ādām*, the usual term for a man. Use of the phrase *'iš 'āṣātō*, "his counselor," in Isa 40:13; 46:11 helps to underscore the argument.³³ If that is so the main theme, that of retribution,³⁴ serves not only to remind all users of the Psalms of the just outcome of their actions but especially the man of high standing who leads his people. Such leaders of

²⁸Bryce discusses this material in his *Legacy*, chap. 5, under the final, integrative stage of the transference of Egyptian wisdom themes into Israelite life. This should in no way be construed as a threat to the inspiration of the Scriptures, for all truth is God's truth, and his Spirit should be allowed to use whatever experiences are common to mankind in his efforts at guiding God's people to comprehend his leading more clearly. We must, however, note the theological correctives that OT wisdom brings with it vis-à-vis wisdom literature in general, especially in the themes of "Torah" and the "fear of Yahweh."

²⁹W. H. Brownlee, "Psalms 1-2 as a Coronation Liturgy," *Bib* 52 (1971) 326-327.

³⁰*Ibid.*, pp. 321-325.

³¹J. T. Willis, "Psalms 1—An Entity," *ZAW* 91 (1979) 385.

³²*Ibid.*, n. 17. See pp. 392-393 for a complete rebuttal of the unity theory.

³³Brownlee, "Psalms 1-2" 329.

³⁴See e.g. W. O. E. Oesterley, *The Psalms, Translated with Text-Critical and Exegetical Notes* (London: SPCK, 1939), 1. 119; E. J. Kissane, *The Book of Psalms, Translated from a Critically Revised Hebrew Text with a Commentary* (Dublin: Richview, 1953), 1. 1.

men are thus lectured concerning the company they keep, the correct way in which to walk, and the moral types with which to associate. The progression from the "counsel" to the "way" to the "assembly" (of the wicked) parallels the realms of thinking, behaving and belonging.³⁵ Although Buttenwieser finds some parallels therein to retributive justice as defined by Ezekiel, as well as to the religious ideals of the later postexilic period,³⁶ the theme also fits well in Jerusalem's earlier court.

The two ways are contrasted in vv 1 and 6. The usual term, *derek*, is used, which in its primary sense means "way, road, path," but in derived meanings can also refer to "way, manner, course of life, moral actions." The same theme is taken up in Psalm 101, where the "perfect way," *derek tāmīm*, is defined as being fraught with loyalty and justice (*ḥesed* and *mišpāṭ*). There it is seen in its relation to God (in terms of personal integrity) and to man (in terms of practical justice).³⁷ This fits well with the office of the king or leader of a people, as does the Ugaritic meaning of the term, where it conveys the idea of "rule, dominion, power, throne."³⁸ This justifies the translation "assembly" in Ps 1:1, as offered by many commentators.

The man who walks in the right path is "happy." The form *'ašrē* refers to a state of blessedness or happiness and is so used here in reference to the courtier/leader of his people who looks well to his demeanor and does not fall into the way of wrongdoers—that is, those who govern improperly.

Much work has been done on the structural analysis of the psalms, especially by French scholars.³⁹ Vogels is certainly right when he suggests that the psalmic materials must be studied on the basis of their cognitive composition as well as their grammatical structure.⁴⁰ He agrees with Willis⁴¹ in dividing Psalm 1 into three parts: the righteous man, vv 1–3; the wicked man, vv 4–5; the conclusion, v 6—although each diagrams the strophic relationship differently. Yet there is an alternative manner in which the psalm could be structured, based on how one interprets the initial *waw* of v 3. The authors cited evidently take it to be *waw*-coordinative, but if it is taken to be explicative and then linked up with "not so" in v 4, vv 3–5 become the body of the psalm with vv 1–2 serving as the introduction and v 6 as the conclusion. It could then be diagrammed in the following manner:

³⁵Kidner, *Psalms 1–72* 47.

³⁶Buttenwieser, *Psalms* 851.

³⁷J. E. Weir, "The Perfect Way, A Study of Wisdom Motifs in Psalm 101," *EvQ* 53 (1981) 54–59.

³⁸C. H. Gordon, *UT* 387; cf. also G. W. Anderson, "A Note on Psalm 1:1," *VT* 24 (1974) 232; Brownlee, "Psalms 1–2" 329; Dahood, *Psalms*, 1. 1.

³⁹See Willis, "Psalm 1" 396–398, for an excellent summary. See also now P. Auffret, "Essai sur la Structure Litteraire du Psaume 1," *BZ* 22 NS (1978) 26–45.

⁴⁰W. Vogels, "A Structural Analysis of Psalm 1," *Bib* 60 (1979) 410.

⁴¹Willis, "Psalm 1" 399; cf. Vogels, "Structural" 411–412.

- A 1 (the wicked), v 1
 2 (the righteous), v 2
 B 2 (the righteous), v 3
 1 (the wicked), vv 4–5
 A' 2 (the righteous), v 6a
 1 (the wicked), v 6b

Such an arrangement is compatible with the consensus of scholars that the psalm serves as an introduction to the entire Psalter, for then A is seen as stating the parameters of the “happy man,” first negatively and then positively. The negative locus is often imprecated in the psalms whereas the positive locus, Yahweh’s law(s), is extolled. B is seen chiasmically in a description of the “happy man” and his opposite in the process of living their lives, and A’ serves as the conclusion to the psalm, again chiasmically in comparison to A, stating the end result of each type of man introduced in A.

Whether Psalm 1 is indeed the conceptual introduction to the Psalter, it should not be surprising to find that other psalms would also deal with one or another of the several themes latent therein. This is certainly true of Psalm 112, which focuses almost in its entirety upon a description of the “happy man.”⁴² Psalm 112 has an opening statement that Psalm 1 does not have. It also has a much shorter introductory statement regarding the “happy man” than does Psalm 1, but then it proliferates with praise and admiration in describing his characteristics. The characteristics of the “wicked man” are then greatly abbreviated, as is also the concluding statement. This gives Psalm 112 a perfectly symmetrical arrangement in the order of 1 + 2 + 17 + 2 + 1 stichoi, as compared to that of Psalm 1, with 5 + 4 + 4 + 2 stichoi.

The structural analysis that Pierre Auffret suggests for Psalm 112 divides the psalm into three strophes of three verses each, with v 10 serving as a refrain, and is based on the distribution of key words used in the psalm (“righteous,” “forever,” “fear of Yahweh,” “misfortune”).⁴³ However, based on the cognitive content of the psalm it may also be suggested that the psalm compares rather well with Psalm 1, albeit with certain omissions. We would suggest the following:

- A 2 (the righteous), v 1
 B 2 (the righteous), vv 2–9
 A' 1 (the wicked), v 10

Thus it may be seen that the author of Psalm 112 takes up in an abbreviated fashion the positive aspect of A (the introductory statement of Psalm 1), greatly expands upon the positive aspect of B (the body of Psalm 1), and then incor-

⁴²Mowinckel, *Psalms*, 2. 112, notes that a favorite subject of the psalms is the destiny of the good and the bad people, as noticed in Psalms 1 and 112; see also Oesterley, *Psalms*, 2. 467; Kissane, *Book of Psalms*, 2. 199.

⁴³P. Auffret, “Essai sur la Structure Littéraire des Psaumes CXI et CXII,” *VT* 30 (1980) 264–268. See Kaiser, *Toward An Exegetical Theology* 170–171, for another approach.

porates an abbreviated form of the negative aspect of A' (the conclusion of Psalm 1), for his own purposes.

There are also other points of contrast between the two psalms. Vogels points out that the same words open and close both psalms: 'ašrê, "blessed," in v 1, and ta'ābād, "shall perish," in each closing verse.⁴⁴ Thus the suggested scope of each psalm encompasses all of life, from ' , "a," to t, "z." The focus of Psalm 112 is upper-class,⁴⁵ as can be seen by the phrases "mighty in the land" (v 2), "wealth and riches" (v 3), "a good man . . . lends" (v 5), and "he freely gives to the poor" (v 9). This compares favorably with the man of stature placed in the "counsel/assembly/seat" of 1:1, 5. There is also the "law of Yahweh" in 1:2; 112:1 in which the righteous man delights, and the destruction of the wicked in 1:4, 6; 112:10.

Psalm 112 should not be entirely separated from its context, however. All scholars seem to agree that it corresponds well to Psalm 111, which provides the first of two scenes. Kissane notes that both psalms have an identical alphabetic structure,⁴⁶ and several scholars observe that Psalm 112 continues the theme of the virtues of righteousness where Psalm 111 leaves off.⁴⁷ More precisely, it may be observed that Psalm 111 extols the righteous ways of God, whereas Psalm 112 extols the happy way of the righteous man.⁴⁸ Dahood suggests that Psalm 112 ascribes the same attributes to the just man as Psalm 111 ascribes to Yahweh. In this way, he notes, a hymn becomes a wisdom psalm similar to Psalm 1.⁴⁹

Because Psalm 112 is composed as an acrostic there is no strictly logical cognitive arrangement evident in its development.⁵⁰ But that is not to say that it does not accomplish its purpose. Its tenor is bright and cheery, and it conveys a happy, optimistic picture of the righteous man. As has already been noted, its balance (1 + 2 + 17 + 2 + 1) is more perfectly designed than that of Psalm 1.

The outlook of Psalm 112 is no less materialistic⁵¹ than is Psalm 1, although it goes into greater detail in listing the rewards of the righteous. Emphasis is placed on individual materialistic retribution, although v 8 suggests that at

⁴⁴Vogels, "Structural" 413.

⁴⁵R. Gordis, "The Social Background of Wisdom Literature," *HUCA* 18 (1943) 17 n. 2, suggests that it is thus proto-Pharisaic.

⁴⁶Kissane, *Book of Psalms*, 2. 199.

⁴⁷Oesterley, *Psalms*, 2. 467; Buttenwieser, *Psalms* 860; Dahood, *Psalms*, 3. 122; Bryce, *Legacy* 120; Auffret, "Psaumes CXI et CXII" 257.

⁴⁸D. Kidner, *Psalms 73-150: A Commentary on Books III-V of the Psalms* (Leicester: Inter-Varsity, 1975) 398; Buttenwieser, *Psalms* 860. Kidner also notes that Psalm 112 is the middle one of three Hallel psalms, the third one extolling Yahweh who lifts up the poor and humble.

⁴⁹Dahood, *Psalms*, 3. 127.

⁵⁰Oesterley, *Psalms*, 2. 468.

⁵¹Kidner, *Psalms 73-150* 399. This does not mean, however, that the psalm has no homiletical value.

times a wait may be necessary.⁵² Besides being generally rewarded for his righteousness, the happy man who is the hero of this psalm is protected in calamity (v 6a), from slander (v 7a), and from violence (v 8).⁵³

There is another way in which Psalms 112 and 1 may be compared. We have already suggested here that Psalm 112 is an amplification of 1:3, the second strophe of the psalm that serves as an introduction to the Psalter. If 1:3a is taken to suggest the stability of the righteous man, then 1:3bcd may be seen as offering a positive appraisal of his deeds. On the one hand he is seen as a person who is able to adapt to a given new environment and draw deeply upon its resources; he therefore becomes well-anchored, strong and stable. On the other hand the nourishment he is able to draw from his environment is able to make him an abundantly productive person, so that his fruit is timely and his leaves remain green and firmly attached to the branches. Thus everything to which he puts his hand prospers, and other men take pleasure in his "shade."

The major strophe of Psalm 112 (vv 2–9) seems to be an amplification of the two themes of 1:3, alternating between each one in chiasmic order. Verse 2 affirms prominence not only for him but also for his descendants, a picture of stability and strength. "A generation of upright ones" in v 2b seems to be a commentary on v 2a, "his descendants." It is strange, however, that this psalmic author would suggest only one generation of prominence.⁵⁴

The second pair of comparisons follows in vv 4–5 by the indication of light shining by night upon the upright, a light depicted in v 4b as being gracious, compassionate and just. That is to say, even when the fortunes of life darken around him his way is illuminated by the gracious and compassionate insight that it is just for him to receive. Elevating the wisdom theme here seems more compatible with the tenor of the psalm than do the efforts of commentators and some major translations to identify the light with Yahweh, the Sun of righteousness, on the basis of Psalm 111.⁵⁵ This statement of stability is again followed by a reference to the righteous, flourishing acts of mercy of the righteous man ("he is generous in lending," v 5a), with the attendant blessing of being effective within the circles of justice.

Then comes another statement of security (v 6), influenced perhaps by the immediately preceding stich, followed by the only allusion to 1:3c, "its leaves

⁵²Buttenwieser, *Psalms* 859. Gordis, "Social Background" 95, notes that the same economic contrast between the borrower and the lender (v 5a) is developed further in Ps 37:21, 24.

⁵³Kissane, *Book of Psalms*, 2. 199.

⁵⁴Statements in the Torah that iniquities would be visited upon a man's descendants to the third and fourth generations whereas righteousness would be rewarded for an extended period of time (Exod 20:5; 34:7; cf. Deut 5:9) would seem to suggest some inflation here also. Perhaps our author knew all too well of the tenuousness of political favors and was not willing to suggest more than one generation of such largesse. But perhaps he also wanted to suggest that each generation had to earn its own favors, knowing only too well that one misstep could undo a lifetime of effort. Following the security promised in v 2, the psalm shows in v 3b that the hero's righteous deeds shall always abide (cf. "it shall give its fruit," 1:3b).

⁵⁵Dahood, *Psalms*, 3. 127–128; Kidner, *Psalms 73–150* 399; *KJV*; *RSV*. *JB*, *NIV*, *NASB* are much more in tune with the wisdom theme of the psalm.

shall not wither," in the statement that rumors regarding the wicked shall not cause him undue inward stress (v 7). This statement also affords the second of three references to the reality of evil in the world (vv 4 and 8 contain the other two), balanced by his steadfast reliance upon Yahweh. While v 7b could appear to afford a reference to the first of the two themes under discussion here, v 7a coupled with v 7b clearly illustrates the way in which leaves are kept from withering by the anchorage of the tree in a fertile, watered place. As such, both the person himself and those who seek his counsel are not disappointed. *Libbô* here is again reminiscent of Amenemopet's "quiet man."

The final pair of verses again follows the suggested chiastic schema by subtly shifting the emphasis in v 8 from an active to a passive sense, so that whereas in v 7b the Niphal participle *nākôn*, "remaining steadfast," was used, now in v 8 the Qal passive participle *sāmûk*, "being sustained," is called into play. Thus v 8 clearly signals that "the happy man," being anchored firmly, is not shaken from his position by "that which he will see regarding his enemies," a reference perhaps to the schemes and plots of those who would usurp his position.⁵⁶ The final statement, v 9, in a tripartite cadence again reasserts what has been said before. The righteous man is full of good works that shall endure, as can be seen by the generous way he gives to the poor.⁵⁷ Thus his "fruit" will always endure, and his "horn" of praise will never fail.

In this paper we have endeavored to show that one of the themes of Psalm 1, which for one reason or another stands at the head of the Psalter, is taken up in another psalm (in this case 112). There it is greatly expanded and elaborated upon to suit the author's own purposes. From this we would like further to suggest that one or more themes in Psalm 1 may be found in other wisdom psalms also,⁵⁸ if not in many other psalms as well. That is not to say that other (wisdom) psalms were consciously composed with one of the themes of Psalm 1 in mind, or even that Psalm 1 was consciously composed as an introduction to the Psalter with many of its major themes in mind. But it is to suggest that the correspondences observed between Psalms 1 and 112 may also be found between other pairs (or even larger groupings) of psalms. These correspondences should help us understand more about the cosmopolitan tenor of the environment out of which the psalms came and consequently assist in further comprehending the focus and intentions of the message of many of the psalms.

⁵⁶Suggestive perhaps of the calmness and patience of Mordecai when Haman rose too quickly to a place of prominence.

⁵⁷An example of hendiadys: "he scatters, he gives."

⁵⁸Cf. the following psalmic themes: Psalm 19b, in praise of the law of Yahweh; Psalm 34, Yahweh delivers the righteous from trouble; Psalm 37, the security of the righteous is in Yahweh; Psalm 49, the folly of the wicked rich; Psalm 78, security in keeping the commands of God; Psalm 111, the goodness of Yahweh to his people; Psalm 112, the blessedness of the righteous man who fears Yahweh; Psalm 127, in praise of Yahweh who builds his house; Psalm 128, in praise of the man who fears Yahweh.