

**NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY
(POTCHEFSTROOM CAMPUS)**

In association with
Greenwich School of Theology UK

**Sanctuary cult in relation to religious piety
in the Book of Psalms**

by

Dragoslava Santrac, BA, MA

Student Number: 23001127

**A thesis submitted for the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in Old Testament
at the Potchefstroom Campus of the North-West University**

Promoter: Dr Kathleen Rochester
Co-Promoter: Prof. Dr Herrie van Rooy

September 2012

ABSTRACT

The specific thesis that is tested in this study is that there is continual interaction between the sanctuary cult and personal religious experience in the Book of Psalms. The main theoretical argument is that the sanctuary cult had a formative role in creating the piety of the psalmists. The study attempts to explore the specific nature of that relationship and to benefit from the contributions of three major approaches to the Psalms, i.e., the form critical approach (Hermann Gunkel), the cultic approach (Sigmund Mowinckel) and the Psalter-shaping approach (Gerald H. Wilson, James L. Mays, Jerome F. D. Creach, Mark D. Futato, J. Clinton McCann and Walter Brueggemann).

The study suggests that the ongoing interaction between the sanctuary cult and personal piety in the Psalms is the result of the creative power of cult. It offers evidence of the possible shaping of the Psalter around the sanctuary motif. It also offers a unique perspective on the piety of the psalmists, suggesting that the psalmists, and particularly the editor(s) of the present shape of the Psalter, promoted the eschatological hope of Israel in the new temple and the heavenly aspect of Israel's sanctuary.

Key words: W. Brueggemann, H. Gunkel, cult, corporate personality, Hebrew poetry, J.L. Mays, S. Mowinckel, Old Testament eschatology, piety, Psalms, shaping of the Psalter, sanctuary, temple, G.H. Wilson.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my special gratitude to Dr Kathleen Rochester, my promoter and tutor of the Greenwich School of Theology, UK, for her kind guidance and contribution at every stage of the writing of this manuscript.

I also owe a debt of gratitude to Dr Herrie van Rooy, my co-promoter of the North-West University, RSA, for providing an important theological and methodological contribution.

Special thanks also goes to Mrs Peggy Evans for her extraordinary administrative assistance at GST and to Dr Stuart Rochester for his meticulous work of editing this manuscript.

Furthermore, I want to thank the administration (past President Dr Trevor G. Gardner and current Vice President for Academics Dr Carlton Drepaul) of the University of the Southern Caribbean, Trinidad, WI, where I am an Assistant Professor of Biblical Languages, for providing research endowment in regard to the completion of this work.

I also want to express my gratitude to the library staff of the Catholic Seminary in Trinidad, WI, for providing resources.

Finally, without the amazing understanding, patience and faith of my husband Aleksandar and of our two daughters, Nastasja Nada and Emily Grace, this research would not have been possible. Their enormous support and exuberant love cannot be adequately measured.

ABBREVIATIONS

General Abbreviations, Bible Texts, Versions, and Other Works Cited

A.D.	<i>Anno Domini</i> (in the year of our Lord)
ASV	American Standard Version
B.C.	Before Christ
BDB	Brown-Driver-Briggs (lexicon)
ESV	English Standard Version
FRLC	French common language version
GECL	German common language version
KJV	King James Version
NASB	New American Standard Bible
NIV	New International Version
NJV	New Jewish Version
NLT	New Living Translation
RSV	Revised Standard Version
TOB	<i>Traduction oecumenique de la Bible</i>
WEB	Webster's Bible

Books of the Bible

Gen.	Genesis
Exod.	Exodus
Lev.	Leviticus
Num.	Numbers
Deut.	Deuteronomy
Josh.	Joshua
1,2 Sam.	1,2 Samuel
1,2 Kgs.	1,2 Kings
1,2 Chr.	1,2 Chronicles
Neh.	Nehemiah
Ps.	Psalms

Prov.	Proverbs
Isa.	Isaiah
Jer.	Jeremiah
Lam.	Lamentations
Ezek.	Ezekiel
Dan.	Daniel
Nah.	Nahum
Hab.	Habakkuk
Zech.	Zechariah
Mal.	Malachi
Rev.	Revelation

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1	Background of the Present Study	1
1.2	Definition of Key Terms	2
1.3	The Problem Statement	3
1.4	The Aim of the Study	6
1.5	The Objectives of the Study	8
1.6	Central Theoretical Argument	9
1.7	Methodology	10

2.0 THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SANCTUARY CULT IN THE BOOK OF PSALMS

2.1	Cultic Aspects of the Psalms in their History of Interpretation	16
2.2	History of Interpretation Prior to Twentieth Century	17
2.3	Twentieth Century History of Cultic Approaches to the Psalms	20
2.3.1	Hermann Gunkel's Method of Cultic Interpretation	21
2.3.2	Sigmund Mowinckel's Method of Cultic Interpretation	37
2.3.3	Evaluation of Westermann's Non-Cultic Approach to the Psalms	48
2.4	Competence of the Pentateuch	53
2.5	Conclusion	55

3.0 SANCTUARY CULT AND THE SHAPING OF THE HEBREW PSALTER

		57
3.1	The Significance of the Sanctuary in the Enthronement Psalms and the Shaping of the Psalter	59
3.2	The Sanctuary and the Introduction to the Psalter	67
3.2.1	The Sanctuary in Psalm 1	67
3.2.2	The Sanctuary in Psalm 2	73
3.2.3	The Sanctuary in Psalms 1 and 2 and the Shaping of the Psalter	74
3.2.3.1	The Relationship between Psalms 1 and 2 and Psalms 73 and 74	75
3.2.3.2	The Sanctuary Experience in Psalms 73 and 74	77
3.2.3.3	The Sanctuary in Psalms 1 and 2 and the Concluding Psalms of the Psalter	81

3.2.4	The Sanctuary at the Vantage Points of Break between the Five Books	84
3.3	The Sanctuary in the Torah Psalms	85
3.4	The Sanctuary and Implementation of God's Justice and Righteousness in the Psalter	91
3.5	The Sanctuary and Motifs of Happiness and Holiness in the Psalter	94
3.6	The Role of the Sanctuary in the Move from Obedience to Praise	97
3.7	The Sanctuary as Refuge in the Psalter	100
3.8	Conclusion	102
4.0	THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CULTIC AND PERSONAL PIETY IN THE PSALMS	104
4.1	Question of Compatibility between Cult and Piety	106
4.1.1	Cultic and Personal Piety as Incompatible	107
4.1.2	Cultic and Personal Piety as Compatible	109
4.1.3	Erhard S. Gerstenberger's "Middle Road"	111
4.2	The Significance of the Sanctuary for Personal Piety in the Psalms	113
4.2.1	The Sanctuary as the Revelation of God	114
4.2.1.1	The Sanctuary as the Place where God Resides	114
4.2.1.2	The Visible Phenomena of God's Glorious Presence in the Sanctuary	117
4.2.1.3	The Sanctuary Furniture and the Cultic Rites	121
4.2.1.4	The Sanctuary and the Character of God	124
4.2.2	The Sanctuary and the Daily Life of the Individual	127
4.2.3	The Individual and Mount Zion	130
4.2.4	The Significance of Cultic Ceremonies for Individual Piety	132
4.2.4.1	Sacrifices	132
4.2.4.2	Festal Processions	137
4.3	Cultic Imagery and Personal Piety in the Psalms	142
4.3.1	The Role of Imagery in Hebrew Poetry	142
4.3.2	Cleansing with Hyssop in Psalm 51:7[9]	144
4.4	Critique of Cult in the Psalms	148
4.5	The Old Testament Concept of Solidarity and Personal Piety	152
4.6	Theocentrism in the Old Testament	163
4.7	Cult as Creative	165
4.7.1	Sigmund Mowinckel's View of Cult as Creative	166

4.7.2	Walter Brueggemann's View of Cult as World-Making	171
4.8	Conclusion	177
5.0	TORAH PIETY AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO CULTIC PIETY IN THE PSALMS	180
5.1	Torah Piety as the Possible <i>Sitz im Leben</i> of the Psalter	180
5.1.1	Torah Piety and Meditation	184
5.1.2	Torah Piety and Delight	185
5.1.3	Torah Piety and Blessedness	188
5.2	The Sanctuary in the Eschatological Hope of Ancient Israel and Torah Piety in the Psalms	192
5.2.1	Eschatological Expectations of the New Temple	193
5.2.2	Heavenly Symbolism of the Sanctuary	199
5.2.3	Eschatological Expectations of the New Davidic King in the Psalms	204
5.2.4	The Heavenly Aspect of Israel's Religion and the Eschatological Reorientation in the Psalms	207
5.3	Liturgical Use of the Psalms and Their Constitutive Power	216
5.4	Conclusion	220
6.0	SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS	224
6.1	Compatibility between the Sanctuary Cult and Piety	224
6.2	The Vital Link between the Sanctuary Cult and Piety	226
6.3	The Significance of the Sanctuary Cult for Torah Piety	227
6.4	Implications for the Cultic Approach	229
6.5	Implications for the Shape of the Psalter	230
6.6	Suggestions for Further Research	232
7.0	BIBLIOGRAPHY	234

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Present Study

After the Exodus, the sanctuary became the centre of all the ancient Israelites' religious practices (Exod. 15:17; 25:8; 40:34-38; Deut. 12:4-7). The centeredness of the sanctuary was symbolically and physically shown by the central place it occupied in the Israelites' camp (Num. 2:2). The cult was strictly organised and predetermined by the sanctuary laws (Exod. 25:9-40:38; Lev. 1:1-27:1-34; Deut. 12:1, 8). It is clear from various Old Testament texts that the ancient Israelites' religion was inseparably bound to the sanctuary (Lev. 1:1; 24:1-4) and was communal in character (Exod. 19: 10-11; Lev. 4:13-14; 23:1). However, it is also obvious from other Old Testament texts that God expected personal response and personal piety from each individual (Exod. 16:27-29; Lev. 1:1; 2:1; 3:1; 4:27; 5: 1-19; 6:1-7; Deut. 10: 12-13). Although personal responses of piety and communal sanctuary cult are usually assumed to be somehow related, this thesis explores the specific nature of that relationship in ancient Israelite religion in order to determine to what extent the sanctuary cult was decisive in the formation of the religious piety of the individual.

The Book of Psalms has been chosen as the primary biblical source for this investigation because it is regarded by a great number of scholars as the central resource for the understanding of Israel's response to the power and activity of God (e.g., Gunkel, 1998:7-9; Mowinckel, 2004, 1:1,2; Ringgren, 1963:x; Childs, 1979:508; Westermann, 1980:5-11; Guardini, 1968:7; Brueggemann, 1988:4; Sarna, 1993:3,4; Mays, 1994b:3-11). In the psalms all powers and experiences that move a human being are brought before God: joy (e.g., Ps. 21:1), lament (e.g., Ps. 22:1-21), love (e.g., Ps. 18:1), complaint (e.g., Ps. 13:1, 2), praise (e.g., Ps. 9:1, 2), plea (e.g., Ps. 17:1), hatred (e.g., Ps. 129:5-8), good-will (e.g., Ps. 128:5, 6).

In addition to this, the Book of Psalms is saturated with sanctuary imagery which refers to the sanctuary cult known through the Pentateuch and the later Jerusalem temple. Examples are, the sanctuary (e.g., Pss. 15:1; 20:2; 63:2; 68:24, 25; 73:17; 96:6; 150:1), the house of the Lord (e.g., Pss. 23:6; 27:4; 36:8, 9; 93:5; 122:1; 135:2), the temple (e.g., Pss. 5:7; 11:4; 18:6; 48:9; 65:4; 68:29; 138:2), God's holy hill (e.g., Pss. 2:6; 3:4; 15:1; 24:3; 43:3,4), Zion (e.g., Pss.

2:6; 14:7; 20:2; 48:11, 12; 50:2; 128:5; 129:5; 132:13; 133:3), the sanctuary items (e.g., Pss. 26:6; 56:12; 66:15; 84:3; 141:2), festivals and sacrifices (e.g., Pss. 42:2,4; 50:14, 23; 54:6; 55:14; 56:12; 76:11; 95:1, 2; 96:8; 98:4-6; 100:1-4; 118:27), the great assembly (e.g., Pss. 22:25; 26:12; 40:10; 89:7; 102:22; 107:32; 149:1) and other allusions to the sanctuary (e.g., Pss. 4:6; 13:3; 26:6; 51:7; 61:4; 80:3, 7; 116:13). These examples make it valid to draw in further information about the relationship between the sanctuary cult and the piety of the psalmists. The Book of Psalms appears to be the most appropriate context for exploring the relationship between the sanctuary cult and personal piety.

1.2 Definition of Key Terms

Cult in this connection is not limited exclusively to the sacrifices. Cult here refers to strictly organized acts which are necessarily bound to a clergy and a liturgy and are for the most part bound to a fixed time or place and serve to express religious experience of the community (Ringgren, 1963:xx). Cult also includes the use of sacraments or visible objects that signify or represent the invisible sacred beyond them (e.g., Exodus 25:8-9; 40) and of “regulated holy acts and words in which the encounter and communion of the Deity with the congregation is established, developed, and brought to its ultimate goal” (Mowinckel, 2004, I:15). In other words, cult is “the visible and audible expression of the relation between the congregation and the deity” (Mowinckel, 2004, I:16). Seen from the viewpoint of cult, the relationship between God and the congregation is initiated by God (Mowinckel, 2004, I:16). Therefore, in the Old Testament, cult refers to the sanctuary and all services that took place in the sanctuary or were associated with the sanctuary. For that reason, the terms sanctuary cult and sanctuary will be used synonymously, unless otherwise expressly stated.

Cult is communal in nature, which means that “individual prayer would not be regarded as belonging to the cult” (Ringgren, 1963: xx). Individual prayer would fall into the category of religious piety. In this research religious piety is understood to be personal living religion, personal religious experience which finds its expression in practical life. The emphasis is on the individual’s direct relationship with God and the quality of individual living (Erickson, 1996:1045-

46). Sabourin (1974:63) uses the following words as synonyms for piety: religious experience, religious thought, religion, man's response to his God. As these terms all point to the same reality, they will be used synonymously here.

1.3 The Problem Statement

Attempts to explain the relationship between the cult and the psalms that yielded significant results emerged in the early twentieth century. Most psalms research from an early date was done to find links between the Psalms and events in David's life or in another historical context. The early twentieth century approaches to the Psalms made a paradigmatic shift by focusing on the cultic aspects of the Psalms. There is a strong agreement that the cult was the original setting of most of the Psalms (e.g., Weiser, 1962:23-57; Ringgren, 1963:ix-xi, 1-19; Sabourin, 1974:34-62; 117-136; Brueggemann, 1988:4-14; Kraus, 1992:73-123; Gunkel, 1998:306-307, 313-318; Mowinckel, 2004:1-42).

The interest in the cultic setting of the Psalms originated with Herman Gunkel who adopts a form critical approach and maintains that a psalm has to be interpreted primarily according to its literary type or genre. Gunkel argues that one of the primary tasks in psalmic studies should be to restore the arrangement that indicates the origin and source of the Psalms. The results of his studies have led him to conclude that Psalms originated in the cult (Gunkel, 1928:70-71; 1998:1-2, 7-8). However, Gunkel believes that only the original, mostly lost psalms originated in the cult. The psalms in their present form were products of pious individuals who imitated the models which were familiar to them in public worship (Gunkel, 1998:13, 19, 122).

Gunkel's explanation has been felt to be unsatisfactory by Mowinckel who claims that the present Psalms were the actual liturgical songs used in the cult. Mowinckel and scholars agreeing with his assumption have attempted to define more fully the nature of this cultic activity. The cultic approach to the Psalms has been primarily focused on attempts to reconstruct from the Psalms the liturgy in which they were used, as Mowinckel (who proposes the enthronement festival of Yahweh, 2004:106-192) and some others who follow in his steps have endeavoured to do. Kraus (1992:107-123) proposes the annual celebration

of the royal Zion festival and Weiser (1962:27-52) thinks of the covenant festival as the real *Sitz im Leben* of the Psalms. These authors have relied extensively on the results of comparative religion study (e.g., Mowinckel, 2004:176-193; Kraus, 1992:107-123).

However, this research does not attempt to take a similar approach in exploring the relationship between the cult and piety in the Psalms. Modern psalmic studies rightly find the attempts to reconstruct an overarching festival that would incorporate the greatest number of psalms highly imaginative and unsatisfactory (McCann, 2009:159). Ringgren (1963:v) correctly asserts that the exclusive concentration on it tends to obscure the religious experience expressed in the Psalms.

Various authors disagree about the relationship between the cult and religious piety. According to some authors (Westermann, 1981; Quell, 1936, quoted in Ringgren, 1963:xxi) there is an essential difference between cult and religious piety. They believe that cult is not a personal, individual matter, but primarily a social phenomenon, meant to serve the community as a whole, rather than the individual. They see cult as separated from the everyday life and history of the people and of the individual (Westermann, 1981:155). Other authors reject such an approach on the premise that the collective character of the cultic experience does not necessarily exclude individual experience and piety. They believe that there is continual interaction between cult and religious experience (Ringgren, 1963:xx; Brueggemann, 1988:7-10). As Weiser (1962:24) expressed it effectively, the cult serves “not only as a reminder of what happened in the past, but also as something which at any given time assumed the character of a present event and experience.”

It appears that the opposing views on the relationship between the cult and personal piety in the psalms are based on the contrasting premises and presuppositions about the cult that the authors bring to the study of the psalms. An attempt to provide sufficient legitimation for one of the two contrasting views based on the reading of the psalms themselves seems to be strongly needed.

The cultic approach has made great achievements in the area of the dynamic or creative aspect of cult. Although the idea of the dynamic of the cult is already

present in Mowinckel's thesis (2004:15,17), it appears that he does not sufficiently relate it to the study of psalms. He rather moves to another direction, i.e., reconstruction of the *Sitz im Leben* of a great number of Psalms. While a number of authors follow his example and pursue the same direction, Brueggemann highlights Mowinckel's idea of cult dynamic and develops it further in relation to the psalms. Brueggemann (1988:6) suggests that "Mowinckel's hypothesis has not yet been fully considered because attention has been focused in the wrong place." What he finds as insightful for his thesis is Mowinckel's thought that the cult is "constitutive and not merely responsive." The significance of this notion for the psalms seems to require further study.

The modern psalmic studies have largely abandoned the cultic approach and moved toward more literary approaches. Modern scholarship wishes to pursue another direction, i.e., exploration of the setting of the Psalter itself (Nasuti, 1999:163). Modern trends in psalmic studies seek to trace the history of structuring the book of Psalms and to understand the overarching purpose and message of the entire book. These trends interpret the individual psalms in the light of "the theological 'heart' of the Psalter" (McCann, 2009:160).

The various authors suggest a number of possible themes and metaphors as central to the shaping of the Psalter. G. H. Wilson (1986:87-88), who pioneered in this area, suggests the motif of the kingship of the Lord as central to the Psalter. J.L. Mays (1994b:128-135) argues for the central role of the torah Psalms and torah piety. J.C. McCann (1993:41-50) seeks to demonstrate the centrality of the enthronement psalms with their concepts of justice and righteousness. M.D. Futato (2007:58-95) sees the instruction for happiness and the instruction for holiness as central to the shaping of the Psalter. W. Brueggemann (1995:204) sees the move from the "*hesed* doubted" to the "*hesed* trusted" and Psalm 73 as the turning point where that significant shift happened to provide special framing for the Psalter.

These modern studies in the shaping of the Psalter have yielded fresh contributions to the study of the psalms and of the Psalter as the book. However, it seems that the cultic questions have been pushed offstage unfairly.

The research efforts discussed thus far have not yielded desirable results as far as the understanding of the relationship between the cult and the personal piety in the Psalms is concerned. The present situation seems to require further study of the relationship between the cult and the piety of the psalmists.

1.4 The Aim of the Study

While the questions of cultic origins and of the shaping of the Psalter are important for this study, this research is not a study in the cultic origins of the Psalms or the shaping of the Psalter. This study attempts to move beyond the questions proposed by these approaches and seeks to understand the relationship between the sanctuary cult and the piety which produced the Psalms and the present shape of the Psalter.

Rather than following only one approach, this study ventures to benefit from the contributions of the three major approaches to the Psalms, i.e., the form critical, the cultic and the Psalter-shaping approaches, in exploring the relationship between the sanctuary cult and the personal piety in the Psalms.

This study endeavours to benefit from the achievements of the cultic approaches in attempts to investigate the importance of the sanctuary cult and confirm a possible presence of cultic elements in the Psalter. In this research it is assumed that most of the Psalms are cultic because of their numerous references to the sanctuary. However, the claim that the present Psalms were not originally written for private use but for use in the cult of the community is regarded here as exaggerated (contra Mowinckel, 2004, 1:29-31; Ringgren, 1963:1). Rather, the Psalms are considered here to be cultic in the sense that they directly or indirectly reflect piety that is related to the cult.

This study also attempts to benefit from another contribution of the cultic approach, i.e., the study of the creative aspect of cult. The creative character of cult appears as the common ground that this study shares with both Mowinckel's cultic approach to the Psalms and Brueggemann's understanding of cult. Modern studies in the liturgical use of the psalms promise to be insightful

for this study as they explore the creative power of liturgical words. This study endeavours to investigate the possible role of the creative aspect of cult in formation of the piety that is reflected in the Psalter. The assumption here is that the creative aspect of cult can be considered as the vital link between the cult and the piety of the psalmists if the considerable presence and influence of the sanctuary cult on the piety of the psalmists can be demonstrated in the Psalter. The cultic approaches seem to provide useful information that can promote the attempts of this study to explore this issue.

This study ventures to benefit also from modern studies in the shaping of the Psalter. Interest in discovering an overarching motif for the whole Psalter appears to provide a useful methodology for exploring the significance of the sanctuary in the Psalter. This study attempts to explore the significance of the sanctuary motif for the shaping of the Psalter. The assumption here is that the piety of the psalmists can be considered as strongly related to the cult if it can be demonstrated that the sanctuary motif plays an important role in the narrative and the final shaping of the Psalter.

A brief survey of the various ideas proposed as central to the shape of the Psalter yields an interesting result: the sanctuary seems to unify them all. The impression that these ideas reflect the sanctuary theology stimulates further examination, because if the centrality of the sanctuary cult for the shaping of the Psalter can be demonstrated that would strongly suggest that the religious piety of the psalmists and of the final editor(s) of the Psalter was largely tied to the sanctuary cult.

The specific thesis to be tested in this study is that there is a continual interaction between the cult and personal religious experience that is reflected in the psalms. The aim of this research is to seek to understand to what extent the sanctuary was important to the psalmists and how the sanctuary cult influenced their religious piety.

1.5 The Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this research is to understand how the cult and piety are related in the Book of Psalms. It can be formulated as the following two questions: To what extent was the sanctuary cult important to the psalmists? And what kind of influence did the sanctuary cult exercise in relation to the religious piety of the psalmists?

In order to answer these questions, it seems necessary to discuss the following three sub-objectives and questions related to them:

Sub-objective 1: How significant is the presence of the sanctuary cult in the Psalter?

This sub-objective serves to determine to what extent the Psalms are influenced by the sanctuary cult, i.e., how considerable are the references to the sanctuary in the psalms. The assumption of this thesis is that it is justified to view the piety of the psalmists as being shaped by the sanctuary cult only after demonstrating the significance of the sanctuary in the Psalter.

To understand this question the following issues are explored:

A. Cultic setting of the Psalms:

- a. What is the textual and literary evidence in the psalms that strongly suggests a close relationship between the psalms and the cult?
- b. How do psalm genres point to the cultic setting of the psalms?
- c. What is the interpretative significance of the association of psalmic genres with the cultic setting for the study of the psalms?
- d. Is there extra-biblical evidence that relates the psalms to the cult?

B. The sanctuary and the shaping of the Psalter:

- a. How the modern studies in the Psalter shaping help advance the question of the significance of the sanctuary cult in the Psalter?
- b. Is there enough evidence to consider the sanctuary cult as central to the shaping of the Psalter?

Sub-objective 2: What is the relationship between the cultic and the personal piety in the Book of Psalms?

The following issues are examined in attempt to answer this question:

- A. The compatibility between the cultic and the personal piety.
 - a. In what context was the sanctuary invoked or referred to by the psalmist?
 - b. How did the sanctuary meet the psalmists' needs?
 - c. Was the sanctuary cult an obstacle or enrichment to the piety of the psalmists?
- B. The role of imagery in Hebrew poetry and the impact of the sanctuary imagery in the psalms.
- C. The significance of Old Testament concept of solidarity for the understanding of the relationship between the individual and the community in the Old Testament.
- D. The significance of the Old Testament view of the relationship between the common and the sacred in the Old Testament for the understanding of the relationship between the cult and personal piety.
- E. The creative aspect of cult as the possible link between the personal piety and the cult.

Sub-objective 3: What kind of piety was motivated and nourished by the sanctuary cult in the Book of Psalms?

- A. What is the final aim of the piety of the psalmists in relation to the sanctuary?
- B. What is the significance of the liturgical use of the psalms for the piety of the modern believers?

These sub-objectives reflect the principle which underlines Knierim's critique of Gunkel that "text is governed by factors beyond those asked for by the form critical method, for example, by a thematic concern or a motif" (Knierim, 1973:468). By "motif," Knierim understood "any repetition that helps unify a work by potently recalling its earlier occurrence and all that surrounded it" (Knierim, 1973:468). The major sources of information about the sanctuary cult in this study are the Hebrew Psalter, the Pentateuch and 1 and 2 Chronicles.

1.6 Central Theoretical Argument

The main theoretical argument of this thesis is that the sanctuary cult had a formative role in creating the piety of the psalmists and that this argument may

be confirmed by demonstrating the significant and crucial role of the sanctuary in the Psalter.

The contributions of the cultic approaches point to the sanctuary as *Sitz im Leben* of the majority of the Psalms. Modern studies in the shaping of the Hebrew Psalter point to the central role of the sanctuary to this shaping. The centrality of the sanctuary cult in the Psalter seems to offer a fruitful ground for exploring the piety of the psalmist in relation to the sanctuary cult.

The psalmists' vocabulary, which relies heavily on the cult, betrays a particular piety which is responsible for the production of the Psalms and the shaping of the Psalter. This piety deserves a special attention as the understanding of it can shed additional light on both the Psalter and the cult. This study contends that the close dependence of the psalmists' piety on the sanctuary cult can be explained by the constitutive character of the cult.

The notion of cult as constitutive and creative is decisive in this study in attempting to describe the nature of the relationship between the sanctuary and the psalmists' piety. Here the term "constitutive" is borrowed from Brueggemann (1988:6,7), who means by it that the cult inevitably creates something. Brueggemann develops Mowinckel's idea that cult *creates* world, i.e., he considers cult to be world-making. In other words, cult is not merely responsive or descriptive, but constitutive as well. As Brueggemann (1988:7) says, "lack of such awareness in itself, however, will not prevent the inevitably ongoing work of construction." While the study focuses on the constitutive aspect of cult, it does not deny or underestimate its responsive character.

1.7 Methodology

This study will employ linguistic and textual research, using tools from literary and historical studies. Since the forms and poetic features of the Psalms are dependent on the types of ancient cultic poetry, especially that of Canaan, it will be necessary at certain points to refer to the latter by way of comparison.

Some of the assumptions basic to this study have form critical results as their basis. However, the form critical method has to be complemented by historical and literary insights provided by other approaches. Brueggemann (1988:6)

rightly argues that a historical-critical approach to the Scripture is resistant to a dynamic, creative understanding of cult and that a different mode of thought is required in order to understand its significance and influence. He utilizes a post-critical interpretation that “lets the devotional and scholarly traditions support, inform, and correct each other” (1984:16). The most fruitful approach seems to be the one which retains openness to more approaches while respecting the self-revelation of the Scripture. In other words, in this thesis an attempt is made to take full account of the critical gain made by such scholars as Gunkel and Mowinckel, without betraying enscripturated revelation.

In this thesis the accomplishments of inner-biblical interpretation will be taken into account. Intertextuality opens up the interpretive potential of connections with other parts of the Bible (Berlin, 2008:22).

This thesis joins with modern psalmic studies in their attempts to bridge the gap between biblical criticism and theology. So it profits to a large extent from the canonical approach which focuses on the final form of the text (the canon) and its theological meaning for the community of faith which uses it. Though immensely important for this study, form critical and cult-functional questions, i.e., the questions of form and setting, are subordinate to questions of content and theology. The interest of this study is not simply in “literary matters as such, but rather in how structure creates and reinforces theological meaning and how repetition highlights theological content” (McCann, 1993:19).

Nasuti (1999:165) refers to Childs as the one who has made a major hermeneutical shift from viewing the Psalms as the collection of prayers directed to God to viewing the Psalms as the word of God directed to the people. Childs (1979:513) argues that the psalms are not simply spontaneous prayers or responses to God’s word. “Because Israel continues to hear God’s word through the voice of the psalmist’s response, these prayers now function as the divine word itself” (Childs, 1979:513). This shift is important as it has opened a way to interpreting the Psalms as Scripture at the level of other Scriptures and drawing theological conclusions from the Psalms. In this thesis certain conclusions are made “on substantive theological grounds” and are not first “informed by any critical category of form, literary, or canonical criticism” (Brueggemann, 1995:204) though it largely profits from them. An approach which respects and follows both the linguistic and theological rendering of

reality in the Psalms seems to be decisive for the study of the piety of the psalmists.

Wendland (1994:6,7) rightly contends that “[i]t does not pay to push a historical-critical investigation of any sort too far” since “there is so little concrete evidence available to support counterhypotheses to a more conservative textual position.” He also rightly maintains that the original Masoretic text ought to be assumed correct and complete since “it is the final, canonical form of the Scripture that must be dealt with in translation, if not interpretation as well.”

The Book of Psalms has been chosen for this study because it is the best biblical witness to the piety of the psalmists in particular, and ancient Israelites in general. However, since the Book of Psalms is not the primary source of information about the sanctuary cult, other sources, i.e., the Pentateuch and other biblical material relating to the sanctuary and temple cult, must be consulted in order to create a comprehensive picture of the sanctuary cult. The focus will be on the Pentateuch because it is regarded as the primary biblical source of information about the sanctuary cult, i.e., as constitutive of the sanctuary cult to which the Psalms then bear testimony. This is particularly true of the book of Exodus and the book of Leviticus.

Mowinckel (2004, 1:35) is correct in stating that the picture of the cult given by the Pentateuch is both one-sided and fragmentary since it presents the service just from the priests’ own technical point of view and says practically nothing about the part played by the congregation. For that reason, texts in 1 and 2 Chronicles which deal with the temple will be referred to as complementary biblical evidence, e.g. 1 Chronicles 6, 13-16, 29 and 2 Chronicles 5-7. These texts provide information on the Israelites’ attitude towards the temple, the temple cult and prayers they used to pray in the temple.

The biblical inter-textual analysis, it is believed here, is helpful for understanding of the piety of the psalmists as it enables the researcher to understand how the psalmists envisioned and experienced the sanctuary cult witnessed by the Pentateuch and other Old Testament texts. Though the psalmists exercised poetic freedom, they were prompted to allude to or refer to particular sanctuary language, liturgical formulas, sanctuary items and rituals. In relation to this, a number of questions may be raised, e.g.: Which aspects of the sanctuary cult

did the psalmists mention and why? What was the effect on the audience, who must have been familiar with the sanctuary cult? The assumption here is that the psalmists are not simply loading their poems with sanctuary-sounding expressions. Rather they are alluding or referring to specific aspects of the sanctuary that, by virtue of their context in the cult, have specific associations. This speaks of their piety being closely related to the sanctuary or even sanctuary-oriented. The Pentateuch is a valuable source of information as it provides the context and fuller description of certain liturgical formulas, sanctuary items and rituals mentioned in the Psalter.

The important question now is whether such inter-textual analysis is justified. Mowinckel (2004, I:35) rules out such comparative analysis on the premise that the “Priestly Document” (P), the latest of the Pentateuchal sources, was collected after the Psalms were composed, and, therefore, “it would be a mistake to base our conception of the psalms on the later stages of Israelitic-Jewish cultic development”. However, it seems that Mowinckel has unnecessarily excluded the Pentateuch. Even if one assumes that the Pentateuch belongs to the later stages of the ancient Israelites’ religion, there is no doubt that valuable information could be drawn from it. There is no need to assume any radical shift between the various stages of development of Israelite religion, especially as there are texts which refer to the presence of a written tradition (e.g., 1 Chronicles 16:40). The assumption of this thesis is that the Pentateuch reflects the establishment of the sanctuary cult prior to the Psalms and thus may serve as the valid source of information about the cult in the Psalms.

This study seeks to make a threefold contribution. Firstly, while valuable scholarly works have been written on the dynamic of the cult in the Psalms (e.g., Ringgren, 1963; Brueggemann, 1988), it seems that the influence of the sanctuary cult in the Psalter requires further study. It is here, therefore, that a contribution to the interpretation of Psalms will be undertaken. Secondly, this thesis seeks to explore the sanctuary as a possible new motif central to the shaping of the Psalter. Thirdly, the contribution of this thesis may be seen also in the attempt to bring together the three largely alienated approaches, i.e., the form-critical approach, the cultic approach, and the Psalter-shaping approach,

and benefit from each of them in exploring the relationship between the sanctuary cult and the piety of the psalmists.

This study begins with two chapters that explore the significance of the sanctuary in the Psalms and the Psalter as a book. Chapter 2 reflects on the discussion of cultic aspects of the Psalms. This chapter deals with several authors who made a tremendous contribution in this area either by developing (H. Gunkel and S. Mowinckel) or criticising (C. Westermann) the cultic approach to the Psalms. Chapter 3 focuses on the most recent scholarship on the shaping of the Psalter (G.H. Wilson, J.L. Mays, J.C. McCann, W. Brueggemann, M.D. Futato and J.F.D. Creach) and the insights which may be gained from it for this study. It is only through “dialogue” with these authors that the main objective of this research has been defined in a clear way. Some of their results are integrated in the research or serve as a starting point.

Chapter 4 explores the relationship between the cult and personal piety in the Psalms. The main questions of this chapter are: Are the communal piety and personal piety compatible? How did the sanctuary cult influence and nourish the psalmists’ religious piety? How does the understanding of the constitutive aspect of cult contribute to better understanding of the relationship between the sanctuary and the religious piety of the psalmists?

Chapter 5 endeavours to investigate the overall aim of the piety that is promoted in the Psalter and its relation to the sanctuary. An attempt is also made to explore the significance of the liturgical use of the psalms for the piety of modern believers.

Chapter 6 brings all the results of the research together and attempts to form a statement on the significance of the sanctuary cult in relation to the religious piety in the Book of Psalms.

Scripture quotations are generally given according to the versification of the English translation and are taken from the New International Version (NIV), except when they are the author’s own translation or taken from another English version which is noted in parenthesis. Citations of psalms refer to verses in English; when Hebrew verses differ they appear in parenthesis.

The psalms within the Psalter come from a variety of periods, i.e., from before the monarchy (in a few cases) to after the exile. While precision is not possible, it is safe to assume that the Psalter was substantially edited in the form it exists today by the end of the fourth century B.C. (Craigie, 1983:31).

2.0 THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SANCTUARY CULT IN THE BOOK OF PSALMS

The primary focus of this chapter is on the significance of the sanctuary cult in the Psalms. The study of the relationship between the sanctuary cult and personal piety in the Psalms seems to be groundless unless the considerable presence and impact of the sanctuary cult in the Psalter is confirmed. This chapter seeks to demonstrate the importance of the sanctuary cult in the Psalms by pointing to the significant contributions of certain scholars in the history of psalmic interpretation and by profiting from the two main approaches to the Psalms in the first part of the twentieth century, i.e., the form critical approach and the cultic approach.

The following three objectives are pursued in this chapter: 1) to evaluate criteria which the authors of cultic approaches used to identify and interpret cultic elements and origins of the Psalms, 2) to critically assess the non-cultic approach, 3) to deal with the question of the relevance of the Pentateuch for the study of the cultic aspects in the Psalms.

Hermann Gunkel's and Sigmund Mowinckel's cultic methods are studied in order to meet the first objective, because these two authors are the pioneers in the area of the cultic origins of the Psalms and laid foundations for the cultic studies of the Psalms which followed. The non-cultic approach to the Psalms is eloquently argued by Claus Westermann, and for this reason his views are critically assessed to meet the second objective. The works of Gerald H. Wilson, James L. Mays, J. Clinton McCann, Mark Futato, Walter Brueggemann and Jerome F.D. Creach in the area of Psalter shaping are explored with reference to the third objective.

2.1 Cultic Aspects of the Psalms in the History of Psalmic Interpretation

Only with the rise of the twentieth century has attention been given to the cultic aspects of Old Testament religion in the Psalms (Ringgren, 1963:x). This chapter focuses primarily on the twentieth century contributions to this issue, but first includes a short overview of the history of interpretation prior to

thetwentieth century. In concentrating on the main lines of investigation over more than two millennia, this survey seeks to situate the cultic approach in its proper historical context in order to appreciate its contribution to the interpretation of the Psalms.

2.2 History of Interpretation Prior to the Twentieth Century

From an early date many of the Psalms were given a historical interpretation. Attempts were made to find a link between the Psalms and events in David's biography or in another historical context. This is clear from the headings attached to some of the Psalms. Many of these headings link the Psalms (e.g., Pss. 3-32, 34-41) with the King David who was known as "singer of Israel's Psalms" (2 Sam. 23:1). Other headings relate the Psalms to specific incidents in David's life which are recorded in 1 and 2 Samuel (e.g., Psalm 18 is to be found in 1 Samuel 22; Psalm 34 refers to the events described in 1 Samuel 21:10-15; Psalm 51 is linked to the events recorded in 2 Samuel 12:1-14) (Davidson, 1998:2-3).

When the monarchy which David founded disappeared and the people of Israel no longer existed as an independent nation-state, many of the Psalms associated with David were given a new interpretation in the light of their hopes of the coming of a future king or Messiah who would restore Israel's kingdom (Davidson, 1998:3). It is this messianic interpretation, already current in early Jewish circles, that is present in the New Testament. For example, Acts 2 and 4 reinterpreted Psalms 2, 16 and 110, which were traditionally associated with David, in the light of the life, death, and resurrection of Christ.

This approach was also popular later in church history. The early church fathers used the Psalms surprisingly little in comparison with other books of the Old Testament, probably because the Psalter was used as a hymn-book of the Church and was consequently outside the category of biblical books in the ordinary sense. However, they did employ the Psalms to discern, wherever possible, a prophecy about the Christ or an allusion to him. The best examples of the interpretation of the Psalms in the earliest post-biblical writings are found in the *First Epistle of Clement* and the *Epistles of Barnabas* (Oesterley,

1962:111-112). Augustine's *Expositions on the Psalms* is a leading example of a Christological interpretation of the Psalms. However, like much patristic biblical interpretation inspired by the Alexandrian allegorical method, it has little value as exegesis of the biblical text (Day, 1995:139). The school of Antioch, in contrast to that of Alexandria, propagated a more literal approach to biblical exegesis, as illustrated in the works of Theodore of Mopsuestia, who accepted only Psalms 2, 8, 44, and 109 as messianic (Day, 1995:139).

In the medieval period the allegorical approach to the interpretation of the psalms prevailed, though there were notable exceptions such as Nicholas of Lyra (Day, 1995:139-140). Both Luther's and Calvin's commentaries on the Psalms betray a Christological interpretation. The Reformers, however, opposed the allegorical method and sought to find a literal, grammatical sense. Their tendency echoed the earlier works of Jewish exegetes Saadia ben Joseph (died A.D. 942), Rashi (died A.D. 1105) and Abraham Ibn Ezra (died A.D. 1167) (Oesterly, 1962:114-117). However, Luther lacked the critical sense of Calvin, who was conscious of the original historical meaning of the Psalms, in that he tended to see the messianic psalms as direct predictions of Christ without any relationship to the ancient Israelites' context and tended to see his own times directly addressed in the psalms (Day, 1995:140).

One way in which the Psalms continued to influence the church is through the great number of hymns which they inspired (Day, 1995:141). The messianic or Christological interpretation of the Psalms has across centuries been firmly established in Christian tradition, and still has many advocates (Davidson, 1998:3).

This brief sketch of interpretation of the Psalms before the Enlightenment reveals a widespread assumption that they reward rigorous investigation into their religio-historical context. Philological analysis is therefore complemented by theological reflection (Mowinckel, 2004:xxiii).

With the Enlightenment came an increased emphasis on rational inquiry, and the Psalms were examined as the products of human authors which can be understood properly only by clarifying the historical context in which they arose.

The study of the Psalms focused on seeking to assign each Psalm its proper chronological niche and to dissect each in quest of its reflection of historical events. The book of Psalms was used to elucidate Jewish history and Jewish history to elucidate the Psalms. This approach was advocated among other scholars by J. Wellhausen, M. Bittenweiser, R. H. Pfeiffer, and N. Snaith (Hayes, 1979:288; Mowinckel, 2004:xxiii-xxiv).

As a reaction to what was thought to be the excessive rationalism of the historical atomistic approach a new emphasis was placed on personal religious experience in the Psalms (e.g., Rosenmuller, De Wette). As a result of the influence of Friedrich Schleiermacher's romanticism the nineteenth century practitioners of the historical-critical method were more interested in the individual psalmist's psychological condition than in theology and revelation in the Psalms (Bosma, 2008:186,187). This early critical interpretation of the Psalms, called "the personal-historical method," attempted (and is still attempting) to date individual psalms and to discern in them information about David and other persons, groups, or events (McCann, 2009:158). In this approach the Psalms have been scrutinised in search of the piety, inward feelings and emotional experiences of individual poets (Hayes, 1979:288). The fact is that the historical-critical scholars of the nineteenth century were not the first to make the inner feelings of the psalmist their primary focus. The psychological and biographical approach has been popular since the early Christian writers. However, the critical writers of the nineteenth century did not see any divine revelation or prophetic character in the Psalms but merely a mirror of emotions, contra the New Testament writers and the church fathers (Bosma, 2008: 187-189).

Generally speaking, it was the traditional Jewish and Christian view that the psalms were originally private, individual psalms. Ancient scholars and the older generation of modern interpreters also generally shared this opinion, adding only that at a later stage private lyrics were given a secondary use as songs for the temple service (Sabourin, 1974:35).

2.3 Twentieth Century History of Cultic Approaches to the Psalms

In the early twentieth century Hermann Gunkel took a decisive step beyond the personal-historical approach which essentially characterized Christian interpretation of the Psalms since the early Christian writers and commentators, and opened the way for the Psalms to be seen and explored from a new perspective. He introduced a cultic approach to interpretation of the Psalms by pointing out the extensive evidence of stereotypical, cultic language and mythic tradition hardly applicable to the personal experience of a single individual. He moved away from the specific to the typical and introduced a method of classifying types of literature based on form, function, and social context, i.e., the life setting of the people in the earliest stage of usage of the Psalms (Gunkel, 1928:71; Mowinckel, 2004:xxv).

The common characteristic of cultic approaches is the recognition of the cultic origins of the Psalms. However, while Gunkel (1928:70-71) acknowledges that the Psalms are related to the cult only by imitating or deriving from ancient cult poetry of the public sanctuary, Sigmund Mowinckel (2004, 1:5,23) argues that the Psalms were in fact composed for and used in the actual services of the temple.

The question of whether the Psalms were “private” imitations of old cultic songs (Gunkel) or actual cultic songs related to definite cult (Mowinckel) is beyond the scope and limits of this thesis. This question is relevant for this thesis only when it touches the issue of compatibility between “traditionalism” and “personality” in religious poetry (Mowinckel, 2004, 1:14), which is part of the discussion in Chapter 3. The understanding of this issue sheds light upon the question of relationship between the sanctuary cult and the psalmists’ personal piety: that relationship is either personal, if the cult is able to relate to and communicate a believer’s personal experience, or impersonal, if there is no compatibility between the cult with its stereotyped acts and languages and personal religion.

The main interest here is on methods employed by these authors to identify and interpret the cultic elements and origins of the Psalms. It is important for obvious reasons to start with scientifically founded criteria for the cultic aspects

in the Psalms before proceeding with the evaluation of the relationship between the cult and piety in the Psalms. Attention to the types of the Psalms or to the festivals proposed for the *Sitz im Leben* of the Psalms will be paid only in the context of this objective.

2.3.1 Hermann Gunkel's Method of Cultic Interpretation

Instead of searching for elusive historical events or people in the Psalms, Gunkel adopts a form critical approach. He maintains that a Psalm should be interpreted primarily according to its literary type or genre in order to “keep the subjectivity in check” (Gunkel, 1998:16). He holds that the first task in interpreting the Psalms is

to arrange them in groups according to their literary types. This does not mean, however, any capricious classification in accordance with individual taste. Our aim is to restore the arrangement that indicates the origin and source of the Psalms (1928:70).

Gunkel's form critical approach is significant for this study for at least two reasons. First, it provides objective standards for relating the various psalms according to their genre. In that way, a psalm can be examined in the light of its genre, and other psalms of the same genre may shed light upon the particular psalm in view. Gunkel's form critical approach provides clues to establishing an objective, scientifically verifiable connection between the psalms, rather than subjective grouping according to the personal taste or doctrinal preference of a reader. However, even here one should be cautious not to rigidly impose the form critical standards on the text. Day (1995:13) warns that “form criticism is not an exact science” because “[t]he psalm writers were free to compose any psalm they choose, and were not bound by rigid concepts of form.” Secondly, Gunkel's form critical approach indicates the Hebrew cult as the original source or setting in life which produced the Psalms.

Gunkel's method of cultic interpretation is examined in two stages. First, Gunkel's definition of genre is presented. Secondly, a short exposition of Gunkel's four major psalm genres is given. A more detailed exposition of psalm genres, especially the aspect of genres which deals with their cultic setting, is

given in Chapter 4 as part of an evaluation of the piety of the psalmists in the context of the sanctuary cult.

Definition of Genre

Gunkel (1998:15) rightly points out that “one may only speak of a ‘genre’ when one first meets very specific, strictly observed stipulations.” There are three criteria that constitute a genre: (1) the poems belonging to the same genre grew originally from the same situation in life (*Sitz im Leben*), most often a specific occasion in the worship service; (2) they share a common treasury of thoughts and moods which is provided by their life setting; and (3) they should be associated by their common language related to the form, i.e., they share a common structural form. All three demands must be followed strictly in constituting and investigating a genre (Gunkel, 1998:16). To satisfy only one or two of them is not sufficient to establish a literary genre (Drijvers, 1965:46). Gunkel (1928:71-72) asserts that the Psalms should be arranged according to the aspects of the ancient Israelites’ religious life to which they originally belonged.

Thus Gunkel (1998:19,22-222) differentiates four major types or genres of Psalms: (1) hymn, originally sung at a sacred feast, or song of praise, used in public thanksgivings (e.g., Pss. 150, 148, 147, 145), (2) communal complaint song, rendered by the choir at times of national calamity, court songs, sung in the temple in the presence of the royal court (e.g., Pss. 79, 83, 80, 44), (3) individual complaint song, originally sung in the sanctuary by individuals at times of personal distress (e.g., Pss. 13, 54, 88, 3), and (4) individual songs of thanksgiving, initially sung to accompany a thank-giving offering for deliverance out of great misery (e.g., Ps. 30). Apart from these four major types Gunkel (1998:222-250) distinguishes six smaller genres. He also points to “the mixture of genres” which took place later in the history, whereas “the oldest genres were pure and simple” (1998:19).

However, one should not assume that total ignorance of the possibility of classification of the Psalms prevailed in the earlier days. In his *Summarien* Luther listed five classes of Psalms as being outstanding. Almost every writer

that commented on the Psalms after him had his own particular pattern of classification (Leupold, 1977:10). Bleek, Driver and Hupfeld classified the Psalms according to their subject matter, while Davison divided the Psalms primarily on the basis of their content (Hayes, 1979:292). However, what distinguishes Gunkel's study from those of previous commentators is that, as Mowinckel (2004, 1:28) points out, it was not based on a subjective arrangement of material or on aesthetic considerations and feelings or dictated by Christian doctrine, but rather on some external, scientifically verifiable principles. Hayes (1979:291-292) rightly observes that the most creative contribution of Gunkel's form critical study of the Psalms has not been the division of the Psalms into various types but rather the association of the types of the Psalms with their *Sitz im Leben*.

Psalm categories are important for interpretation because they guide the reader's expectations as to what can or cannot be found in a particular piece of literature, and they provide another level of context which relates a number of psalms that should be studied together (Futato, 2007:144-145). As Longman (1988:21) rightly points out, genre identification "determines the reading strategy of a particular text." In other words, a study of a few examples of a particular genre gives insights into all other psalms of the same genre as they all share many common traits (Longman, 1988:23).

Classification of the Psalms which springs from their setting-in-life can be utilized as an interpretive tool. Gunkel argues that once the types are established and the particular psalms placed in their right setting-in-life, "we shall thus have a clear view of the aspects presented by the religious life of Israel, so far as it finds expression in religious lyric poetry" (Gunkel, 1928:72). For Gunkel the religion of the pious individual is best revealed in individual dirges, originally sung in the sanctuary by individuals in times of personal distress, individual songs of praise, initially sung to accompany a thank-offering for deliverance out of great misery, and lyric wisdom poetry. The religion of the people is expressed in national dirges, rendered by the temple choir at times of national calamity, songs of praise, used in public thanksgiving, and hymns, originally sung at a sacred feast in which fundamental thoughts and feelings find expression.

How the knowledge of the psalm genres helps the better understanding of the piety of the psalmists is demonstrated in Chapter 4. In the same chapter the development and presence of the sanctuary cult in the various genres is also discussed.

Sitz im Leben and Cultic Setting

Gunkel seems to have been the one who recognized clearly the need to go beyond the literary-critical work of his era and develop the method for exploring the precompositional period of traditions and motifs (Knight, 2006:59).

Gunkel argues that the Psalms played a role in the life of people before they took literary form (1928:70-71), which naturally then indicates that “the genres of an ancient writing must be differentiated by the various events of life from which they developed” (1998:7). This means that one should look on the Psalms as having their source in the life of the people and attempts should be made to place the Psalms into their appropriate *Sitz im Leben* in the experience of Israel (Gunkel, 1928:71). This “setting in life” was, for the ancients, that of the community rather than of the individual. This is not unexpected since collective authorship was, in ancient times, the rule, and, in Israel, communal religious life found its expression in the cult (Sabourin, 1974:30).

The most important fact in this connection for Gunkel is that the singing of the Psalms was originally a part of the cult. Gunkel (1998:1-2, 7-8) claims that they are based on cultic prototypes for several reasons:

1. The name of the Psalter, *tehillim* (Hebrew תהלים meaning hymns), and the cultic usage of the Psalms in Judaism strongly suggest their cultic origin.
2. The formal nature of most of the Psalms confirms further this observation. One really encounters only very few specific details in the Psalms. The author is content to speak in very general references and suggestions and all kinds of allusions and images. Contrary to this formal language of the Psalms, in his personal dirge David mentions Saul and Jonathan by name.
3. The Psalms contain a number of cultic formulas and references.

4. Babylonian poems which were used in worship services demonstrate the same formality as the Psalms, only in greater measure.

Joachim Begrich, who completed Gunkel's book *An Introduction to the Psalms*, includes one more element in the last chapter of the book which was already anticipated by Gunkel, i.e., a variety of notes that appear to be the musical additions of the superscriptions. They are often accompanied with references to special instruments (e.g., stringed instruments in Pss. 4:1; 6:1, flutes in Ps. 5:1) and introduced with עָל (e.g., "according to the dove of the distant gods" in Ps. 56:1, "according to the eight" in Ps. 6:1, "do not corrupt" in Pss. 57:1; 58:1; 59:1). Although the meaning of these superscriptions is uncertain in most cases, they are clearly related to the temple music and temple singing as indicated by 1 Chronicles 15:20, 21 (Gunkel, 1998:349-51).

In addition to this, the antiphonal quality of many psalms and the alternation of voices also suggest cultic use. Many Psalms were intended to be musical worship responses (Hustad, 1984:407). For example, Psalm 118 starts with an invitation to praise God (v. 1a), followed by a statement of God's worthiness to be praised, presumably spoken by the congregation (v. 1b). The response to the invitation given in Psalm 118:1 then recurs three times as various groups are called to utter the words "His steadfast love endures forever" (vv. 2-4), showing the Psalm is to be spoken publicly. The alternation of voices appears in some Psalms as a shift from third to first person, probably indicating the involvement of multiple worship leaders. Thus, Psalm 81:1-5a opens with an invitation to worship God and a congregation's response. Then a new voice, the voice of God, is introduced in verse 5b by the use of the first person who speaks to the end of the Psalm (Creach, 2008:72-3).

Gunkel claims that the formal language of the Psalms and the cultic references in the Psalms are best explained by the presumption that the Psalms originally arose in the cult of Israel. He stresses that religion in ancient times had its climax in the cult and it was only at a later stage that a non-cultic piety, one hostile to the cult, arose (Gunkel, 1998:13). The first Psalms were composed by the priests who preserved them in the sanctuary in order to use them at various cultic occasions.

Sitz im Leben was an important factor for the choice of the form of expression. Gunkel assumes that each type of psalm originally had a specific function associated with ceremonies of the temple cult (1998:7-11). He reminds us that there were certain worship occasions in Israel that occurred often; these represented a rich opportunity to sing: the celebration of sacrifice and lamentation of the community, the act of confession and thanksgiving of a pious individual (Gunkel, 1998:19). A psalm of thanksgiving, for instance, was presumably written to accompany a sacrifice of thanksgiving and thus reflected that which was typical of the many situations in which thanksgiving was offered. The cultic origin serves as the best explanation for the general and typical language of many psalms.

Concerning the Psalms, an important question, as Sabourin (1974:30) points out, has to be answered: is their *Sitz im Leben* generally communal, even though the texts, as transmitted, seem to reflect, more often than not, individual interests? Gunkel would answer by saying that evolution, which affects all human realities, has also modified the course of the psalmic tradition. The cultic setting constitutes the original soil, in which psalmody in Israel took shape and developed. However, for Gunkel the majority of the Psalms, i.e., the individual laments, have been loosened from their original cultic setting. The occasional hints of cultic service in such individual psalms are just “leftovers of the old style” (Gunkel, 1998:13). Gunkel argues that criteria for determining whether an Old Testament text is or contains a tradition are to be found in the present form of the text. He writes,

Certain features, which once had good meaning in the earlier context, are transmitted in a new association to which they have in the meantime lost connection. Such old features - fragments of an earlier whole, without connection in the present account and hardly understandable in the intellectual situation of the narrator—betray to the researcher the existence of, and individual features of, an earlier form of the present narrative (quoted in Knight, 2006:61).

The original psalms were adopted and reshaped by individual poets to express their individual creativity and piety and to fit new life situations (Gunkel, 1998:19, 122). This new situation, Sabourin believes, became, in respect to the cult, a rival *Sitz im Leben* (1974:31). However, Gunkel argues that one cannot

go to this personal element in the Psalms so prematurely. Personal character of a psalm can be appreciated only if it is studied in the light of the genre from which it originated (Gunkel, 1998:19).

The Literary Context

Songs belonging to the same genre naturally have a common treasure of thought and mood. The common treasure of mood is seen in the common sentiments expressed in the songs of the same genre. For example, the individual complaint songs share the common feelings of distress, of one who is despised, and pours out his concerns to the Lord. The common treasure of thought is reflected in the shared intellectual material. For example, the individual complaint songs share a common world-view as in the case of portraying the opposition and character of the enemies (Gunkel, 1998:16,122,143-4).

An attempt is made in Chapter 4 of this thesis to trace and evaluate the sanctuary motif in different psalm genres. As personal piety is closely related to personal thoughts and moods, significant emphasis is placed on collecting the common treasure of thought and mood of each genre with reference to the sanctuary and on comparing the various genres on that basis. It is believed that by employing such methodology, one could be led to understand the relationship between the cult (the cultic setting) and personal thoughts and moods (personal piety) which are associated with a particular cultic situation in life.

A literary study of the psalms, Gunkel (1998:3-4) affirms, should include a thorough investigation of the entire biblical and extrabiblical psalm-like material available (e.g., Moses' "Song of the Sea" in Exodus 15, the thanksgiving songs of Hannah in 1 Samuel 2, of Jonah in Jonah 2, and of Hezekiah in Isaiah 38, The Book of Job, some passages of post-exilic Prophets, the Lamentations, the songs of Tobit and of Judith in the Apocrypha, and literatures of the ancient Middle East countries). He observes that the widespread literary activity and rich cultic poetry inside and outside Israel provide extensive material whose laws can be determined and whose creations can be classified. However,

because of the space limitation of this thesis, the main focus here is on the Psalter. Evaluation of other psalm-like material in the Old Testament is made primarily when comparison is necessary to highlight and clarify certain remarks from the Psalter.

The final goal of Psalm studies, Gunkel argues, “must be to describe the entire type of poetry and its history” (1998:5). He correctly points out that his task includes not only the study of the entire cognate poetry transmitted to us, but also the study of the relationships between the individual Psalms that did not occur with the transmission, or that occurred only in part, and the study of the oldest worship in Israel based on the clues provided by the law, the narrative books, the Psalms themselves, and elsewhere. This study is likely to reveal in the present Psalter the literary activity of many generations, expressed in revisions and recensions of the ancient texts. Since, however, the literary form reflects the original function of a genre, i.e., the cultic function, it will usually be desirable to reconstitute the original actions to which they would have belonged (Gunkel, 1928:72-73; 1998:11), a task undertaken by Mowinckel.

Though no attempts are being made in this thesis to reconstruct the original cultic setting of the various Psalms, Gunkel’s observation that the study of the Psalms must involve the study of ancient Hebrew cult based on the clues provided by the law, the narrative books, and elsewhere is well appreciated as the psalmists in most cases assume a good understanding of the Hebrew cult.

Literary Forms

The songs belonging to the same genre display a strong resemblance in structural form. The three main components of the form are: (1) Introduction, (2) the “main element” or the middle part which remains after one separates the introduction and conclusion, and (3) conclusion. The introduction represents the beginning of the poem and the place on which “the force of the form tends to be placed most heavily” (Gunkel, 1998:17,29). Gunkel successfully argues that Hebrew psalm genres are mostly recognizable from the few first words, as is the case with English genres. For example, the opening words “once upon a time” betray a fairy tale, and the words “dear friend” introduce a letter. However,

if the introduction was written by a later hand or is missing for some reason, determining the genre becomes tremendously difficult. In addition to the introduction, special attention must be given to the conclusion which strongly corresponds to the form. Even though the “main element” tends to follow clear rules according to their form and content, Gunkel believes that it would be a critical error to seek the logical connection in the modern understanding of logic, i.e., something like a Greek “chorus”. The arrangement of the “main element” generally follows the preference of the poet so that it is very frequently the weakness or the challenge of a Hebrew literary work (Gunkel, 1998:17-18).

Gunkel has noticed that a number of fixed speeches or formulas associated with the same situation in life appear in the Psalms. He claims that such formulas are not the result of “the inspiration of the moment. Rather, they contain fixed forms and have been transmitted from generation to generation” (Gunkel, 1998:10). These formulas spring from the arena of Israelite worship where cultic speeches, spoken collectively by the congregation or a sanctified choir, accompanied the cultic action, as illustrated by numerous biblical examples (e.g., Exod. 15:20; Numb. 6:24; 10:35; 21:17; Deut. 21:7; 1 Kgs. 13:15; Jer. 51:59) (Gunkel, 1998:9-13). He argues that such examples of cultic actions accompanied by cultic speeches may be found in the Psalms (e.g., Pss. 24:7; 116:13; 118:27).

Gunkel shares a number of examples to support his claim. That a familiar formula of thanksgiving song existed in Israel is illustrated by parallels that can be found between the Psalms and other writings of the Old Testament (e.g., Ps. 136:1 and Jer. 33:11). Gunkel (1998:11) connects the thanksgiving psalm, which often speaks of sacrifices offered, with the “thanksgiving offering” mentioned in the law, which carries the same name, תודה.

The description of a person in great distress portrayed in Job 33:18-19 finds numerous allusions in the Psalms (e.g., “going to the pit” in Ps. 30:3; “to deliver life from the sword” in Ps. 22:20; “distress in bones” in Ps. 22:14). Gunkel refers also to obvious parallels between the “complaint songs” in the Book of Job and those in the Psalter (e.g., Job 10; 13:23-14:22; 16:6-17:9). In the same way, the

hymns in the Book of Job (e.g., Job 9:3-13) are comparable in tone and form to those of the Psalter (Gunkel, 1998:3).

Gunkel (1998:12) also thinks that a number of Psalms (e.g., Pss. 42:5; 48:13; 68:25) presuppose the same kind of holy parade around the city as the festival procession for the dedication of the walls in Nehemiah 12:27. The wording of Psalm 118:19 and Isaiah 26:2 strongly suggests to him that the two texts echo the same situation and cultic song performed at the entrance of the temple. The same situation is described in Psalm 24:7, Psalm 95:1-7 and Psalm 100. In the same way, Psalm 122:1 and Isaiah 2:3 are pilgrimage songs (Gunkel, 1998:12).

These fixed patterns of expressions demonstrate to Sabourin (1974:29) that religious experience was easily couched in traditional or conventional phraseology and that a cultic setting also helped to constitute the fixed pattern of the Psalms' types.

Review of the Four Major Psalm Genres

Gunkel differentiates four major psalm genres: the hymn, the communal complaint song, the individual complaint song, and the individual thanksgiving song. A short overview of each genre is given here in order to appreciate the interpretative significance of Gunkel's association of genre with the cultic setting. So, the main focus in reviewing the psalm genres is placed upon their situation in life as this point is mainly related to the subject of this thesis.

The Hymn

Gunkel (1998:22) characterizes the hymns as "the genre in which the foundational thoughts of pious poetry were generally expressed." The introduction of the hymn is easily recognizable because of various introductory formulas, all of which may be traced to three original formulas: "sing to YHWH," "I will sing to YHWH," and "blessed be YHWH." The introduction of the hymn clearly betrays its subject, i.e., a proclamation of majestic deed of God. The main person of the hymn is Yahweh. The most important aspect of the

introduction is that the author's praise will concern just this God, i.e., Yahweh (Gunkel, 1998:28,32).

The main part of the hymn follows the introduction and usually establishes the rationale for the summons and thus provides the particular content of the praise. The main part often starts with "for, that" (Hebrew כִּי) (e.g., "Praise YHWH for he is good," Ps. 135:3, "I will sing to YHWH, for he has dealt well with me," Ps. 13:6). Other cases involve the use of a relative sentence (e.g., "I will bless YHWH, *who has counselled me*," Ps. 16:7; emphasis supplied), a participle which is reflected by a relative sentence in English (e.g., "Sing to YHWH, *who lives in Zion*," Ps. 9:12; emphasis supplied), or the preposition *le* and an infinitive in later poems (e.g. "He had made known the power of his deeds to his people, *to bestow* the inheritance of nations to them," Ps. 111:6; emphasis supplied). The main part often portrays "something particularly praiseworthy about God when the poet's heart delights in God's greatness" and echoes rejoicing, trust, and fear (Gunkel, 1998:31-33,37).

The conclusion of the hymn displays a variety of forms. At times, the conclusion appears to be an expansion of the introduction thus rounding off the poem as a unit (e.g., Ps. 8:10). The conclusion may be expressed as a "contribution formula" with which the author lays his creation before God (e.g., Ps. 19:15). Elsewhere the poet may add yet another petition (e.g., Pss. 33:22; 104:35) (Gunkel, 1998:40).

Though the form clearly demonstrates the message of the hymn, Gunkel convincingly argues that the dynamic force of the hymn is best appreciated when the manner of its performance is recognized, i.e., its *Sitz im Leben*. The most important thing Gunkel has to say about the performance of hymns is that "hymns originally belong to the *holy places*." He points to numerous indications of the cultic setting of the Psalms of which some are briefly summarized here (Gunkel, 1998:41-47):

- 1) The particular place of the singing of the hymn is the sanctuary, Yahweh's outer courts, Yahweh's tent or dwelling place, Yahweh's holy temple (e.g., Pss. 11:4; 76:2; 84:3; 100:4; 135:2).

- 2) The worshipers enter the sanctuary after a happily completed pilgrimage (e.g., Ps. 122).
- 3) Singing of hymns goes together with sacrifice and festivals (e.g., Ps. 96:8). The community enters into the sanctuary with loud hymn singing through the holy gates (e.g., Ps. 100:4).
- 4) The highpoint of the festival is the common procession through the sanctuary (e.g., Pss. 26:6; 42:5; 68:25; 118:27; 149:3; 150:4).
- 5) A variety of musical instruments which were played during the hymn is often listed (Pss. 57:9; 81:3; 92:4; 98:5; 149:3; 150:3-5; Exod. 15:20; 1 Chr. 15:16; 2 Chr. 5:12; 20:28; 29:26).
- 6) Most of the hymns (e.g., Pss. 33; 65:2-9; 66:1-12; 67; 68, 81:1-6; 95:1-7; 96; 98; 100) were sung by the choir comprised of professional Levites (1 Chr. 15:16-21,25).
- 7) Certain psalms betray clear signs of being associated with particular festivals (e.g., Ps. 67 was most likely a thanksgiving song after a bountiful harvest; Ps. 114, Exod. 15, and perhaps Ps. 81:2-6 should be taken for Passover hymns; echoes of Passover hymns appear in Pss. 66:6; 77:16; 78:43-53; 105:24-38; 106:8-12; 11:9; 135:8; 136:10-16).

The hymns share a common treasure of thought and mood, which Gunkel (1998:47) calls also “the religion of the hymns.” More attention to it is paid in Chapter 4 which deals with the piety of the psalmist. At this point the main points are only briefly summarized for the sake of presenting the whole picture of Gunkel’s contribution. In doing so, however, a liberty is taken to add certain texts which are not indicated by Gunkel himself. These texts are put in italics. Examples that are presented are only those from the Psalms, though Gunkel includes a number of other texts outside the Psalter.

Gunkel (1998:50-57) recognizes the following themes as the recurring themes of hymns:

- 1) YHWH’s exalted dwelling and his rule in heaven (e.g., Pss. 9:4,7; 11:4; 14:2; 33:13; 53:3; 66:7; 103:19; 115:3).
- 2) YHWH’s dominion over humanity (e.g., Pss. 9:5-8; 11:5-6; 75:8; 107:33; 113:7; 145:14; 146:9; 147:6).

- 3) Glorification of YHWH's past deeds and YHWH's omnipotence (e.g., Pss. 44:1-8; 80:9-10; 89:11-13; 111:6; 135:8-12; 136).
- 4) Creation motif (e.g., Pss. 8:4-9; 19:1-7; 24:2; 74:13-17; 89:11-13; 136:5-9).
- 5) YHWH's future deeds (e.g., Pss. 12:7-9; 69:36; 86:9; 96:10-13; 102:14-23; 147:2).
- 6) The Zion motif and praising of the sanctuary of God (e.g., Pss. 29:9; 68:16; 93:5; 96:6; 84; 87; 122; 137:3).
- 7) YHWH's enthronement (e.g., Pss. 47; 93; 96:7-13; 97; 99). Though "the songs of YHWH's enthronement" comprise a separate, small genre, they are included here because they are strongly related to the hymn (Gunkel, 1998:19,57,66).

Gunkel (1998:47) observes that "the fundamental moods of this poetry are *enthusiasm, adoration, reverence, praise, and exaltation.*" Praise and thanksgiving dominate the hymn. In the following chapters of this thesis the role of the cult in fostering these moods is examined.

The great significance of the hymn is demonstrated in the strong influence it exercised on other genres. Scattered hymnic elements are found in psalms of other genres. For example, the complaint songs, which with their tone of moaning and entreaty are far removed from the sound of joy and praise in the hymn, are sometimes introduced by a hymn (e.g., Pss. 44:2-4; 106:1-3). The hymn can be a part of the middle section of the complaint song (e.g., Pss. 74:12-17; 80:9-12). Gunkel observes that "[t]hese hymnic elements express the singer's *trust*, and thus kindle the singer's hope in a way designed to make God intervene" (Gunkel, 1998:58-59).

This observation seems to strongly suggest that the individual piety expressed in the complaint songs is highly dependent on the cult of which the hymns are the inseparable part.

The Communal Complaint Song

Gunkel observes certain characteristics of the communal complaint songs which are briefly presented here (Gunkel, 1998:85-98). The characteristic of this genre is the naming of YHWH in the vocative within the first few words (e.g., Pss. 12:2; 44:2; 60:3; 74:1; 79:1; 80:2). Occasionally, YHWH's name is circumscribed or expanded, as in the following example: "Lord" (Pss. 79:12; 89:51), "God of our salvation" (Pss. 79:9; 85:5), "YHWH Sebaoth" (Ps. 80:8, 15), "YHWH, avenging God" (Ps. 94:1), "Judge of the earth" (Ps. 94:2). Because of the nature of the complaint song, God is usually addressed as "you" (singular). Nevertheless, in certain passages YHWH is addressed in the third person, especially when there is the perception of standing before God or when there is a more peaceful mood of trust instead of fervent longing.

The middle section of this song contains "the cry of doubt and the cry for help of a tormented people whose own sacred perceptions have also been offended" (Gunkel, 1998:87). The communal complaint song boldly expresses the nation's shocking and puzzling feeling that "[t]he terrible fate which they now experience contradicts that which they confidently believed" (Gunkel, 1998:89). For this reason, these songs are characterized by the apprehensive "Why?" and the impatient "How long?" (Pss. 74:10; 79:5, 10; 115:2).

The communal complaint song usually closes with the petition (e.g., Pss. 44:24-27; 89:51) or the complaint (e.g., Ps. 89:47-50). The usual tense used to express the petition is imperative, as in the following examples: "hear" (e.g., Ps. 80:2), "look" (e.g., Pss. 74:20; 80:15), "wake up" (e.g., Ps. 44:24), "restore us" (e.g., Pss. 80:4, 8, 15, 20; 85:5).

The setting of this genre is in the worship of the great complaint festivals which the community tended to hold in the face of or in response to some general calamities: war, exile, drought, famine. The song is sung by a characteristic "we," which is Israel. Gunkel points to Joel 2:17 which shows that these songs were performed originally by a choir and the "I" of Zion would have been voiced by an individual.

The lament festival was held in the sanctuary (Judg. 20:23, 26; 1 Kgs. 8:33, 35; Jer. 36:6; 2 Chr. 20:9). All the people, including the elderly, women and children, gathered together (1 Sam. 7:5; 2 Chr. 20:13; Jer. 36:6, 9; Joel 2:16). Fasting was the holy act performed during these festivals (Judg. 20:26; 1 Sam. 7:6; Esth. 4:16; Jer. 36:9) alongside with other activities which were done as an expression of distress (e.g., tearing of the clothes, Josh. 7:6; Isa. 32:11; falling to the ground, Ps. 44:26; Isa. 29:4) in precise contrast to feasting and celebrating during the joyous festivals of the hymns. (Gunkel, 1998:82-83).

As for the common treasure of thoughts and moods, Gunkel (1998:88-89) recognizes three main categories into which these songs are divided: 1) a lamenting complaint over the misfortune (almost exclusively political in nature, but conceived as religious distress); 2) a supplicational petition to God to change the misfortune; 3. All types of thoughts expressing self-reproach and nothingness or crying to God in order that he will show mercy and intervene. It is customary for these songs to begin with lament but end with the tone of rejoicing for the certainty of being heard (Pss. 10:16-18; 12:8; 60:14; 79:13).

The Individual Complaint Song and the Individual Thanksgiving Song

Gunkel (1998:93, 94) rightly observes that “at times, the individual and communal poetry stand in relationship to one another,” and are quite similar in their outline and many details. For that reason the genres of individual complaint and of individual thanksgiving are presented here only in the points where they differ from the communal complaint and thanksgiving songs.

Gunkel (1998:86,94) argues that the major distinguishing mark between the complaint songs of the community and those of the individual is the use of “we” for the community and the use of “I” for the individual. He points to some other marks as well: the communal complaint songs complain about national distress, while the individual complaint song wails over the individual distresses, especially illness; anger over the national enemies dominate the communal complaint songs, while the motif of going down to the pit is often found in the individual complaint songs.

For Gunkel, the major distinguishing mark between the communal thanksgiving songs (the hymns) and the individual thanksgiving songs is again the use of “we” for the community and the use of “I” for the individual. The most important element of the thanksgiving songs is the list of reasons for giving the thanks and praise to God. In the case of the individual thanksgiving songs the narrative tells of the fate of the one offering thanks and in most instances it is an extreme illness or opposition from enemies (Pss. 9:4; 30:2, 3, 10; 71:24; 92:12; 107:17-22; 116:8-10; 118:10-2, 17; 138:7) (Gunkel, 1998:202-203). Though these seem to focus on the individual, the lack of specific references, of which Gunkel (1998:202) takes note too, makes exclusive application to the individual difficult, as argued by Mowinckel (2004, 1:37-39; 42-80; 235).

Several clues indicate that the individual complaint songs originate in worship: the sanctuary as the place of prayer is mentioned explicitly (Pss. 5:8; 28:2); the hour of the evening or morning offerings as the time of prayer is sometimes mentioned explicitly (Pss. 5:4; 30:6; 46:6; 57:9; 59:17; 90:14; 119:147); the occasional mention of washings and purifications (Pss. 51:4, 9); the wearing of the sackcloth of the sinner (Pss. 30:12; 35:13; 69:12); the bowing down and kneeling (Pss. 35:14; 38:7; 119:107, 125); stretching of the hands toward the sanctuary (Pss. 28:2; 141:2) (Gunkel, 1998:124-126).

Gunkel (1998:199) points out that the cultic origin of the individual thanksgiving songs may be claimed with complete certainty as they are most frequently accompanied by the thanksgiving offerings and sacrifices (e.g., offering of rejoicing, Ps. 27:6; sacrifices, Pss. 66:13; 107:22; 116:17; sacrifices of vows, Pss. 22:26; 56:13; 61:9; 66:14; 116:18; free will offerings, Ps. 54:8; whole offering, Ps. 66:15). Moreover, both the thanksgiving psalm and the thanksgiving offering bear the same name, תודה. The thanksgiving song took place before the sacrifice (Ps. 66:13) and was the center of the thanksgiving festival which included the celebratory meal (Ps. 22:27), the festive procession or dance (Ps. 30:12) through the “gates of righteousness” (Ps. 118:19) and temple gates (Pss. 66:13; 100:2, 4) (Gunkel, 1998:199-200).

The differing views of Gunkel and Mowinckel on the interpretation of the “I” in the individual songs and the evidence of cultic origin of these songs are

discussed in Chapter 4 because that debate reflects the issue of compatibility between the communal and personal piety.

2.3.2 Sigmund Mowinckel's Method of Cultic Interpretation

Gunkel's conclusions on the nature and content of the cultic context within which the Psalms were employed have been felt to be unsatisfactory and attempts have been made to define more fully the nature of this cultic activity. Mowinckel disagrees with Gunkel's supposition that the Psalms as we have them were products of pious individuals who imitated the models which were familiar to them in public worship. He challenges Gunkel's belief by making a significant remark: ". . . it is inconceivable how any younger, private, lay poetry could possibly have made its way into the cult, and even supplanted most of the genuine old ritual poetry," especially in the ancient Israelite context where "[w]ithin the framework of a divine service of worship nothing is accidental"(Mowinckel, 2004, 1:29,30). As Sabourin (1974:36) points out, "the cultic sphere is indeed known to be a closed, almost intangible world."

Mowinckel ventures that the Psalms were actual liturgies used in the cult. He is the first to propose that "a true interpretation of the psalms must try to form as complete and vivid a picture as possible of the old Israelite and Jewish cult and its many situations and acts" (Mowinckel, 2004, 1:35).

In other words, Mowinckel believes that Gunkel's formal literary point of view is not sufficient to interpret the Psalms fully. The cultic functional point of view is not only complementary, but, for Mowinckel, even more important. The real question for him is: "to which cultic occasion must this psalm group have belonged, and what has the congregation experienced and felt on that occasion?" (Mowinckel, 2004, 1:32). In this question Mowinckel actually presents two objectives. First, he points to the need for the reconstruction of the definite cult to which the Psalms belonged. Second, he points to the need to evaluate the piety of the congregation in the light of the cult. Mowinckel is aware that cult has power to create or, at least, to influence what the congregation experiences and how it feels. However, he only touches this issue while addressing the creative nature of cult and focuses primarily on looking for

scientifically founded criteria for the cultic purpose of Psalms and the reconstruction of the cultic occasion(s)(Mowinckel, 2004, I:5, 12-23).

Mowinckel (2004, I:106-192) emphasizes that the Psalms must still be understood in the light of their cultic context, many of them in the context of the annual New Year festival in pre-exilic Israel, a festival in which the triumph of Israel's God, Yahweh, in creation and in the redemption was celebrated, his kingship over all his enemies acknowledged, and the covenant union between himself and his people renewed. The Psalms celebrating Yahweh's kingship, particularly Psalms 47, 93, and 95-100, play an essential role in Mowinckel's thesis, as do parallels from the Canaanite New Year festival. In the context of this celebration of the kingship of Yahweh, the ruling monarch in Jerusalem played a key role.

Whether there ever was in Israel the kind of New Year festival envisaged by Mowinckel, however, is highly debatable. Criticism has rightly attended to questions about kingship and evidence for the particulars of the festival in Mowinckel's hypothesis (Westermann, 1980:109). Ringgren (1963:93) suggests that the festival which has been variously called the enthronement festival (Mowinckel), the New Year's festival (Johnson), or the covenant festival (Weiser) "was probably nothing but one aspect of the pre-exilic Feasts of Tabernacles." Brueggemann (1988:4) describes Mowinckel's attempt to reconstruct from the Psalms the liturgy in which they were used as "an incredibly imaginative act".

However, the widespread presence of cultic elements in the Psalms makes it difficult to completely reject the contribution of Mowinckel's cultic approach. Though one may disagree with Mowinckel's interpretation of the cultic elements in the Psalms with its details of the enthronement festival, scientifically founded criteria for the cultic purpose of the Psalms listed by Mowinckel cannot be overruled. Moreover, they seem to be of great value for the evaluation of the relationship between the cult and piety in the Psalms because they point to the importance of the cult to the psalmists. In the following lines an attempt is made to systematically present and analyze these criteria.

Psalm Types

Mowinckel (2004, I:29) fully embraces the achievements of Gunkel's form critical method. He states that "all further investigations of the psalms must be based on the foundation thus laid by him," i.e., Gunkel. The first factor pointing to the cultic nature of the Psalms is their type or form. Mowinckel (2004, I:21-29) agrees with Gunkel that the classification of Psalms into different groups is not a subjective arrangement of material, based on aesthetic considerations and feelings or "catchwords" taken from the loci of Christian doctrine. Rather it must be based on something objective and dependent on external observations, namely types with their formal and material characteristics. Mowinckel (2004, I:28) holds up Gunkel's conclusion that all main psalm types had sprung from definite cultic situations.

However, while Gunkel just ventures the supposition that the Psalms (particularly the hymns) were originally derived from the Israelite cult, Mowinckel carries the cultic interpretation of the Psalms far beyond this approach of Gunkel's in a comprehensive investigation of the cultic origins of the Psalms (Westermann, 1981:20). Mowinckel suggests that the Psalms as we have them are not only based on cultic prototypes, or simply derive from ancient cult poetry, as Gunkel suggests, but are the actual materials produced for use in Israel's cult, i.e., "with very few exceptions - real cult psalms, made for cultic use" (Mowinckel, 2004, I:30).

Mowinckel (2004, I:30-31) points to the striking uniformity and formality of the majority of the Psalms as the indication that they are ritual lyrics meant to voice those moods and experiences which are common within the cult community. The personal, individual elements in most of the Psalms are pushed into the background and their phraseology is often the stereotyped, traditional one (contra personal lyrics which show elements of personal effusion, e.g., 2 Samuel 1:23, 25, 26). This leads Mowinckel (2004, I:36) to conclude that,

When once we have grasped that each situation creates its own formal language around a definite subject-content, then we are able, from characteristics of the content and form in a certain group of psalms, to reconstruct the precise cultic occasion which produced them, and which also supplies their natural explanation.

In other words, Mowinckel proposes a cult-functional method in interpretation of the Psalms which will reconstruct the actual festival and liturgies of which the Psalms were the part.

Moreover, Mowinckel has understood what Gunkel failed to admit, i.e., that the rule “content and form go together,” as applied to the Psalms, suffers exceptions (Sabourin, 1974:37). Mowinckel (2004, I:31) writes,

An alien form may have been used as an effective means of expressing the content. Thus, although the prophets often used the psalm-style to underline and emphasize their message, nevertheless their utterances are prophecies and neither hymns nor lamentations. And the psalm writer may use the form of the ‘wisdom-poetry’ for his personal expression of the praise of God, or thanksgiving for a blessing received – without this psalm becoming a wisdom or problem poem.

In the same way, a psalm may consist of parts belonging to different form types: hymn, praise, lamentation. This variety may correspond to the liturgical setting. So Mowinckel argues that the form-historical method has to be complemented by the cult-functional method. To understand a psalm cult-functionally means to see it in the right cultic situation. Mowinckel’s search for the actual cultic situation of the Psalms is “no doubt important, if it can be done” (Sabourin, 1974:37).

However, the principle behind Mowinckel’s emphasis on the close connection between the Psalms and the cult seems to be justified. He is right that “a Christian baptismal hymn or a communion hymn acquires full significance only when seen in connection with the holy acts to which it belongs”(2004, I:34). He further explains that “from the cult new light falls on the psalms, and from the psalms light falls on new sides of the cult” (2004, I:35). Though Mowinckel affirms that both these points of view must be kept in a constant reciprocity, he focuses primarily on the second point in attempting to restore the actual cult from the Psalms.

The assumption of this thesis is that these two views can be explored and understood in a constant reciprocity through the study of the piety of the psalmists in the light of its relationship with the sanctuary cult. In other words, once the piety of the psalmists is understood in the light of the cult, it will be

possible to understand more profoundly the cult itself, i.e., its creative or constitutive nature.

While Gunkel classifies the Psalms according to their main linguistic features, Mowinckel goes a step further suggesting that the Psalms must be classified “in accord with the ‘divisions’ in the cult itself, its different occasions, situations and acts” (Mowinckel, 2004, I:37). Mowinckel (2004, I:38, 39) recognizes two main types of divine service in ancient Israel: joy and thanksgiving festivals, and days of penitence. They each demanded their own type of psalms, which was clearly reflected in the two main types of psalms, i.e., psalms of praise and thanksgiving and psalms of lamentation.

He also identifies another division in Israel’s cultic service important for the classification of the Psalms: cultic acts performed on behalf of the individual as a “private” person and cultic acts performed on behalf of the community. This division is reflected in the so-called “I-Psalms” and “We-Psalms” or individual and congregational Psalms. However, this division cannot be strictly made. Even when the cultic actions are performed on behalf of the individual, the congregation is present and the individual is regarded as part of the community. In religion and prayers of ancient peoples (e.g., Mowinckel points to Babylonian hymns) an individual may act as a representative who “incorporates” the whole. This issue of a “corporate” personality is important for understanding the relationship between the cult and the piety of the individual as it sheds light upon the relationship between the piety of the individual and the piety of the congregation. There is no doubt that the piety of the congregation is cultic; this fact is elaborated on further in Chapter 4.

Though Mowinckel strengthens the relationship between the Psalms and cult by classifying the Psalms according to the major divisions in the cult, it seems that he does not give enough textual evidence for relating the two major moods of the Psalms (praise and lament) to the major divisions in the cult (praise and penitence). Other authors relate the different moods of the Psalms to something other than cult. Brueggemann (1984:19), for example, also recognizes the two major moods of the Psalms but relates them to the flow of human life which

consists of seasons of well-being, seasons of suffering and death, and seasons of surprise when the new gifts of God bring joy into despair.

In the next chapter an attempt will be undertaken to understand and describe the relationship between the Psalms and the sanctuary cult in its linguistic, theological and functional context.

The Title of the Book of Psalms

Mowinckel (2004, I:2) sees in the title of the book of Psalms an important indication that the Psalms belonged to Israelite cult. He (2004, II:218) interprets the Hebrew term תהלים (tehillim) as meaning “cultic songs of praise” referring to the cultic meaning of the words תהלה and הלל in passages like Pss. 22:26, 48:11, 100:4, 149:1; Neh. 12:46; 2 Chr. 20:22. He believes that the other passages need to be interpreted in the light of these passages where the meaning of the words is obviously cultic.

The Hebrew תהלים is a later (post-biblical) plural of תהלות (Mowinckel, 2004, II:218). The word תהלה (“doxology”, “hymn”) is derived from the verb הלל, indicating the utterance of shouts of joy and exultation, arising from an overwhelming feeling of adoration and pride (Mowinckel, 2004, II:218). Most often it implies shouting in honour of somebody. Mowinckel explains that the verb is almost exclusively used of the cultic shouts of joy and salutation in honour of Yahweh or some other god, and has received the technical, cultic sense of praising the deity with joy and singing. In the Psalms, and so in the Jerusalem temple (Isa. 64:10[11]), the hymn (תהלה) is the primary vehicle of praise, which consists of a call to communal praise and a statement of the ground of praise (e.g., Pss. 113; 135; 145; 146) (Allen, 1997a:1035-1036).

The call to praise Yahweh (הללו יה) occurs in the Psalms either as a liturgical direction or literary designation (Allen, 1997a:1036). It has an initial position in Psalms 111 and 112, and a final one in Psalms 104; 105; 115-117; while it frames Psalms 106; 113; 135; 146-150 at beginning and end (Allen, 1997a:1035).

Mowinckel (2004, I:2-3) indicates that some of the cultic traditions are supported by the titles in the Hebrew text, as in the case of Psalm 92, which indicates that the Psalm was used “on the Sabbath.” The Septuagint and the Mishnah (*Tamid* vii. 4) add information about Psalms designated for the other days of the week, i.e., Pss. 24, 48, 82, 94, 81, 93, 92 for the seven days respectively. Mowinckel (2004, I:2-3) has no doubt that what is referred to is singing after the drink offering at the daily morning sacrifice (תמיד) in the temple. He points also to the title of Psalm 100 (לתורה) which testifies that this Psalm was used at a special sacrifice of thanksgiving, and the title להזכיר in Psalms 38:1 and 70:1 which probably refers to a specific sacrifice, the so-called אזכרה offering referred to in Leviticus 2:2, 9, 16; 5:12; 6:8; and Numbers 5:26.

There is scriptural evidence that liturgical music was thought to be a supernatural phenomenon; in Israel's case, it was associated with the voice and power of Yahweh (e.g., 1 Sam. 10:5,6; 16:23; 2 Kings 3:15,16a) (Hustad, 1984:408). Although Westermann (1980:28) sees as liturgies “only those Psalms in which liturgical activity is unambiguously seen to be connected with liturgical speech”, he agrees that “worship was the place where the Psalms originated” (Westermann, 1980:14).

The Liturgical Annotations of the Chronicler

The traditional use of the Psalms in the temple service is confirmed by the fact that the Chronicler in 1 Chronicles 16 uses quotations from the so-called enthronement psalms (Pss. 96; 97) and other closely related Psalms for description of a certain cultic occasion, i.e., the transference of the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem (Mowinckel, 2004, I:4,127).

The Chronicler describes some of the psalmists as being associated with the Temple service and its music (e.g., David in 1 Chr. 16:4, 7 and 2 Sam. 23:1; Asaph in 1 Chr. 25:1, 6, 7). He also testifies about a highly established order of musicians and singers and a well-developed system of music service and of sacred songs (1 Chr. 15; 16; 25).

Testimony of the Mishna and the Talmud

Rabbinic tradition preserved both in the Mishna and the Talmud, regarding the series of Psalms which were used on different occasions in the temple cult, serves as another indication of the cultic nature of the Psalms (Mowinckel, 2004, 1:2-4). The Mishna and the Talmud witness a number of Psalms being used on various festivals such as the Feast of Tabernacles (e.g., Pss. 29; 65; 120-134). The so-called “Egyptian Hallel” (Pss. 113-118) was sung both at the slaying of the Paschal lamb and at the Feast of Tabernacles. Psalm 30 was sung both at the Feast of Dedication and when the first-fruits were presented. A late source (Talmud, *Sopherim* XVIII) mentions Psalms 30; 7; 135; “the Egyptian Hallel”; 29 and 137 in connection with the Feast of Dedication, Purim, the first six days of the Passover and the seventh day, at Pentecost, and at Lamentation on the eighth of Ab, respectively.

The Talmud (*Sopherim* XVII) shows that Psalms 145-150, which as early as the middle of the second Christian century were an integral part of the daily synagogue service, were similarly sung daily in the Temple. A great deal of information about the traditional use of the Psalms in the ancient synagogue is contained in the tractate *Sopherim* X-XXXI (A.D. 589 onwards) (Oesterley, 1962:99).

Mowinckel (2004, 1:4,5) is fully aware that the later cultic use does not necessarily imply a cultic origin of the Psalms. Some scholars argue that these items of information about the Psalms in the tradition do not refer to the service in the Temple, but to that in the synagogue. However, Mowinckel (2004, 1:4) argues against such a view, reminding us that “the synagogue service was in ancient times always songless,” and “not before mediaeval times did synagogal poetry and singing come into existence.” Consequently, when the Mishna and Talmud speak of the Psalms in the context of worship, they must refer to the worship in the Temple and the Israelite cult.

There is no doubt that the Jewish tradition witnesses to the cultic character of the Psalms and their long engagement in the Israelite worship. This means that the cultic character of the Psalms was sufficiently strong and apparent to make

them eligible to be used in the cult. Otherwise, the Psalms would have never found their way into the cult. Furthermore, this strongly suggests that the piety of the psalmists was highly impressed by the cult.

Definite Allusions to Cult

A number of definite allusions in the Psalms to the cult and its ceremonies, its sacrifices and lustrations, its songs, music and dance have led Mowinckel to conclude that there is a close connection between the Psalms and the cult. They are both numerous and strong not only in such Psalms as are composed of a “set of liturgical formulas” but are fairly equally dispersed over the whole Psalter (Mowinckel 2004, I:7-12). Some of the many examples are: intention to worship (Ps. 5:7), to fulfil vows (Pss. 7:18; 22:26; 50:14), to offer sacrifices (Pss. 27:6; 54:8; 66:15; 96:8), to walk around the altar (Pss. 26:5; 43:4), to sing praises in the vast assembly (Pss. 35:18; 40:11; 68:27), and numerous references to “Zion,” “Yahweh’s tent,” his “dwelling place,” “house” or “palace,” “the Sanctuary.” A more detailed presentation and analysis of definite allusions to the cult is presented in the following chapter of this thesis.

The positive relations to temple and cult are so numerous that Mowinckel (2004, I:12) finds it “surprising that a cultic interpretation of the psalms has not been suggested long ago.”

Parallels in Ancient Oriental Psalm Poetry

Mowinckel believes that the Pentateuch is not sufficient because of its one-sided picture of the cult and even not competent because of its later date. He looks for the clues for restoring the *Sitz im Leben* of the Psalms in other ancient oriental psalm poetry, e.g., Babylonian-Assyrian, the Egyptian, the Canaanite and Hittite (Mowinckel, 2004, I:41). Mowinckel assumes that the Israelite liturgy to a large extent adopted the older cultic patterns of Canaan and the ancient East, because of the great common cult-historical connection. Through comparison between Israelite and other oriental psalm poetry Mowinckel attempts to see what the Israelite religion made of the foreign material it supposedly adopted. In reconstructing the Israelite cult Mowinckel points out not

only what the Israelite cult adopted from others but also what was due to its new peculiar nature and meaning (2004, I:41,130-140).

However, a number of scholars objected to Mowinckel's excessive reliance on the clues given by comparative religion. As Leupold (1977:11-12) comments, in Mowinckel's study the New Year Festival becomes virtually the most prominent of all Israel's festivals despite the total silence of the sacred writings of Israel on this subject. Mowinckel bases his study on the presumption that because the annual enthronement of Marduk, chief divinity of the Babylonians, played a crucial role in Babylonian life, the same must have taken place in the lesser nation, Israel.

Longman (2005:55-59) observes that the Psalms share a number of similarities with other Ancient Near Eastern prayers (e.g., terseness, parallelism, imagery and some secondary poetical devices). The Psalms sometimes purposely describe Yahweh in the language of Baal (Ps. 29) or Marduk (Ps. 104). However, "[t]he uniqueness of Israelite prayer is found not in form but in nature of the deity addressed" (Longman, 2005:59).

Moreover, Sabourin (1974:45) rightly points out that "a sharp distinction has to be drawn between literary and ideological patterns." As an example he points to the sharp difference between the Israelites' representation of divine judgment and that of the Egyptians (1974:49). In Oriental paganism sin was understood primarily as a physical stain, to be eliminated by magic rites. A complex system of nature rites was believed to secure the order of the physical world and national prosperity, including magic and superstitious cults, necromancy, and incantations. In contrast, the Psalms present sin as a violation of the moral law. Only repentance can remove it. Idolatry and paganism are condemned, while magic is never even mentioned.

The following example also points to the sharp distinction between literary and ideological patterns. Mowinckel (2004, I:132) argues that the Israelites received the idea of God as king from the Canaanites, and adopted the same harvest and new year festivals which in Phoenicia signified the revival and resurrection of the god Baal. It is true that Yahweh was also designated as Baal, as

illustrated by the name Bealiah (1 Chr. 12:5) which means “Baal is Yahweh” or “Yahweh is Baal” (Doukhan, 1993:xiv). However, Doukhan (1993:xiv) argues that similarities between literary patterns do not necessarily imply direct religious borrowings, but may merely illustrate common cultural patterns of thoughts and feelings. He makes an interesting observation with regard to the use of the name Baal which means in Hebrew “husband” or “master.” When under the Phoenician influence the Israelites began to confuse their God, Yahweh, and Baal, the Phoenician god of fertility, the prophet Hosea warned his people to stop calling Yahweh בעלי (my master, husband) and call him instead אישי (my man, husband) (Hosea 2:16, 17). On the other hand, names which contained the name of Baal were often changed and the word בעל (Baal) was replaced by the word בִּשְׁת, meaning “shame” (e.g., 2 Sam. 11:21).

Keel’s study on the Ancient Near Eastern iconography and the Psalms provides numerous examples which illustrate the distinctiveness of the psalmists’ thought. Keel (1978:194) mentions, for example, the parallels between Psalm 103:13, which speaks of God as a father who receives his children with heartfelt love, and the picture of Akhenaton, in the circle of his family, kissing one of his daughters. The picture, Keel continues, must be understood in relation to the luminous sun disc (Aton), whose life-giving power is incarnated in the action of the king. However, in the Old Testament, Keel argues, the caring attitude of a father toward his children is not seen as a symbol of cosmic life-forces like in Egypt, but as an image of the personal love of Yahweh.

Gerstenberger (1988:83-84) finds striking similarities between complaints of the biblical Psalms and complaints of Ancient Near Eastern psalmography (e.g., the action of the enemies, the rhetorical question “How long?”). He concludes that “analogous use of such phrases in various literary texts of the OT may tell us something about their function.” Thus, the question “How long?” is seen as introducing a reproachful speech.

These examples clearly indicate that literary similarities do not necessarily reflect ideological and theological borrowings. The new, distinctive content given by the psalmists seems to suggest a distinctive piety which produced it

and a distinctive source of piety as well. In this thesis an attempt is being made to understand the distinctive piety of the psalmists in the light of the creative power of the Israelite sanctuary cult.

2.3.3 Evaluation of Westermann's Non-Cultic Approach to the Psalms

Claus Westermann is after Gunkel and Mowinckel perhaps the most important author for critical Psalms study (Brueggemann, 1988:7). While Gunkel is highly resistant to a notion of creative cult, Westermann takes Gunkel's resistance to the utmost and disregards the issue of cult in the Psalms completely. Westermann's main concern is to continue the original question that has been raised by Gunkel, namely to grasp each of the Psalm categories in its peculiar character and many-sided existence, a line of research neglected because of trends to explain the Psalms in relation to the cult. Westermann analyzes the Psalms in their two main categories: the Psalms of lament and the Psalms of praise, as well as in their environment (Babylonian-Assyrian context).

Westermann (1981:20-21) praises Gunkel's attempt to grasp each of the Psalm's categories in its peculiar character, and criticizes Mowinckel and those who followed the cultic method for trying "to fit everything into the same mold," namely the cult concept. In the process of searching for a cultic schema or a specific festival or ritual as an explanation for the Psalms, the cult concept has become, according to Westermann (1981:21), more limitless and confused. He calls for a search of what the Old Testament itself said about cult, and concludes that "in the Old Testament there is no absolute, timeless entity called 'cult,' but the worship in Israel" or praise (Westermann, 1981:21, 154-5). Westermann (1981:21) understands praise and worship in Israel, and therefore the Psalms, only in connection with the history of God's dealings with his people, as the people's response which developed gradually in all its various relationships, those of place, of time, of personnel, and of instrumentality.

In regard to praise, Westermann (1981:22-24) defines two basic types of the Psalm of praise: the declarative Psalm of praise where God is praised for a specific, unique intervention in history (e.g., Exod. 15 and Judg. 5), and the descriptive Psalm of praise, where God is praised for the fullness of his being and activity (e.g., Isa. 6:3).

Westermann (1981:155) understands cult as a happening separated from the everyday life of the individual and independent of the history of the people and of the individual. For that reason he believes that the praise, and not the cult, occupied the central place in Israel (Westermann, 1981:155,161). He speaks of cult in the Psalms only conditionally, that is, solely as of the phenomenon which takes place when people speak to God, as plea and praise (Westermann, 1981:154).

There are two aspects of Westermann's critique of the cultic methods which are appreciated in this research. First, Westermann is right that cult has become "all too common and indefinite a word" (Westermann, 1981:154). Various authors applied it to various things, for example, Mowinckel applied it to the Royal Festival, Weiser to a Covenant Festival, and Johnson to a New Year Festival. Second, Westermann rightly points out that attempts need to be made to formulate a new definition of cult which will be closer to "the basic occurrence which transpires in 'cult'" (Westermann, 1981:154). For him, in the Old Testament there is only worship and praise as the people's response to God's activities.

Westermann (1981:21-22) speaks about the Psalms primarily as the people's response to the history of God's dealings with his people, meaning God's specific acts of deliverance (e.g., Exodus in Exod. 15 or the victory over Jabin, the Canaanite king in Judg. 4-5) or God's activities in their fullness, in general. This response he defines as praise or prayer loosed from all cultic limitations. This response, whether individual or communal, is primarily personal and spontaneous (Westermann, 1981:22-25,259).

However, in the Old Testament the sanctuary is perceived not only as praise and worship springing from personal and spontaneous response of the people, but also as cult, a stipulated system based on strict and detailed laws. Moreover, it was also perceived as one of God's acts in the history of Israel and as the revelation of God. God revealed his glory in a visible way on Mount Sinai. God's revelation depicted in Exodus 24:15-18 equals, if not supersedes, "the fullness of God's being and activity" described in Isaiah 6:3, i.e., in the example given by Westermann to illustrate a descriptive Psalm of praise (Westermann, 1981:22-23). The inseparable part of that "fullness of God's being and activity"

on Mount Sinai was the disclosure of the sanctuary cult (Exod. 25:40; 26:30; 27:8).

A similar case is found in Exodus 20:22-26. Again, “the fullness of God’s being and activity” is revealed: “You have *seen* for yourselves that I have spoken to you from heaven” (Exod. 20:22; emphasis supplied). The immediate context, Exodus 19:18-20 and 20:19-22, reveals that the Israelites saw the glory of God. The English word “seen” in verse 22 is the translation of the Hebrew word רָאָה, “to see, look at, inspect,” which also has an extended and metaphorical meaning, “to *perceive, feel, understand, enjoy, learn*” (Culver, 1980:823, emphasis supplied). A word from the same root is רֹאֵה, “the seer,” synonym of נְבִיא, prophet (Culver, 1980:823). Clearly the word includes the idea of personal perception, experience and involvement. However, Exodus 20:22-26 does not rest with the personal response. The expected response is obviously cultic and not merely personal and spontaneous: “Make an altar of earth for me and sacrifice on it your burnt offerings and fellowship offerings” (Exod. 20:22-24). Even the praise is seen in the cultic context, namely, accompanying the offering of the sacrifices on the altar (vv. 24-26).

Exodus 19:4-6 describes what kind of response to his interventions in history God desired, which clearly is cultic in nature. Verse 4 gives a description of God’s specific saving act in the history of Israel, the Exodus. Verses 5-6 describe what kind of response God desired to inspire in his people. It consists of three parts: 1) obedience and faithfulness to his covenant (v. 5); 2) “you will be for me a kingdom of *priests*” (v. 6a, emphasis supplied); 3) “and a *holy nation*” (verse 6b, emphasis supplied). Points 2 and 3 inevitably point to the cultic nature of the response. Holiness is generally seen in the cultic context (e.g., Lev. 11:44-45).

Also in Exodus 18:9-12 praise and response to God’s specific acts in the history of Israel (vv. 9-11) are inseparable from the cult (v. 12). The presence of Aaron, the high priest, strongly suggests this conclusion (v. 12).

Westermann takes Isaiah 6:3 as a classical example of a descriptive (non-cultic) praise of God. The context of Isaiah 6:3, however, clearly supports the cultic nature of that praise since the glory of God is revealed in the sanctuary, and in a visible way displayed in the form of a cloud. These three elements,

i.e., the revelation of God's glory, the sanctuary cult, and the cloud, led the Israelites in their everyday life activities (Exod. 25:22; 40:34-38). The cult, therefore, was part of the everyday life of the individual and of the history of the people and of the individual (contra Westermann, 1981:155). Brueggemann rightly objected to Westermann on the basis of the observation that "without the cult, that is, a viable community that actively processes the claims of the Psalms, they [the Psalms] are only dormant literature" (Brueggemann, 1988:7).

According to Westermann (1981:219), the Psalms bear witness to how Israel held fast to the unity of her history in spite of everything by reciting the "historical Credo" expressed through lament. Westermann (1981:220) speaks about the constitutive significance of the "looking back at God's earlier saving deeds" or, as he calls it, "the confessional recitation of the historical Credo." Although Westermann is strongly opposed to the cultic idea, he defines the "historical Credo" of the Psalms in terms which are familiar to cult. Westermann (1981:220) says:

... in addition to the confessional *recitation* of the historical Credo, there was another *Sitz-im-Leben* for the summary "*re-presentation*" of these same events. It is this looking back at former acts which confronts God in the lament. What now seems to me to be of constitutive significance for the "*re-presentation*" of history in Israel is this: The events in history, remembered by Israel within a *confessional setting*, were kept alive on *those various occasions* not only in such a way that an individual could remember and cause others to remember, but also in a way that enabled the *congregation* to remind God of his acts of deliverance in the past... *Recalling history had the immediate purpose of influencing history.* (emphasis supplied)

The terms "recitation," "re-presentation," "confessional setting," "those various occasions" are used to define cult. However, aware of this correlation, Westermann (1981:224-225) draws a difference between the verbal re-presentation and cultic re-presentation of a past event.

He takes the Tammuz cult as an example of "re-presentation" by way of a cultic drama. There the incorporation of the primordial mythic event into the cultic act itself takes place. The dying and rising of the god happens *in* the cultic endorsement of his dying and rising. The temporal distance between the elemental event and the cultic event does not exist and is irrelevant at the

moment in which it is acted in the cult drama. Thus the cultic re-presentation becomes a new event by itself.

Westermann argues that it is precisely this absence or irrelevance of the temporal distance between the past event and its re-presentation which is fundamentally different in the purely verbal 're-presentation' of past events. In the verbal "re-presentation" the temporal distance between the event in the past and the present is not dissolved in the retelling. The two points in time, when the event occurred and when it is retold, are retained, between which the narrative forms a bridge. Westermann argues that the Psalms are the "re-presentation" of saving events by means of word alone and not by means of a cultic drama. He bases his conclusion not only on the abundance of the verbs of telling, recounting, and announcing used in this context in the Psalms, but also by the context itself, namely, the vow of praise and declarative praise.

Westermann (1981:225-228) criticizes the cultic re-representation because in it the relationship between the two events is not one of cause and effect but of identity, meaning that what happened in the past is actually present in the cult. He seems to be right when applying this principle to the festivals which commemorate historical events in the Israelite history. He writes that one cannot speak of a dramatic "re-presentation" of God's deeds in the Passover, because the rites consisted of what people did in response to the activity of God, and these became ritual through constant repetition. The Passover was not the new actualization or embodiment of the Exodus. The temporal distance was always maintained. The Passover observance was meant to "commemorate" and celebrate the Exodus event (Exod. 12:14). The Exodus event was made "real" for the present by evoking the past.

However, this principle cannot be applied to all aspects of Israelite religion. The sanctuary ceremonies were obviously not just a "verbal" re-presentation of God's saving acts nor did they consist only of what people did in response to God. They were events or rites which provided forgiveness of sin in the very moment of performance. Through them the relationship with God was actually restored, the presence of God revealed, and the judgment executed. The dramatic re-presentation (referred to as "creative aspect" of cult in this thesis) and the verbal re-presentation (referred to as "responsive aspect" of cult in this thesis) were complementary to each other in the Israelite cult (e.g., 1 Chr. 16).

Even Westermann (1981:225) has to admit that “certain features of ‘re-presenting by performing’ are surely present in the Israelite cult”.

This dual understanding of what takes place in the cult is reflected in the Psalms. Various psalms illustrate verbal re-presentation of historical events (e.g., Ps. 106). However, what takes place in the cult is not only commemoration of the past but a present reality of salvation as well (e.g., Pss. 50:2-3, 23; 51:2, 7; 68:35). In Psalm 116, the psalmist meditates on God’s deeds in the past. He says that God has heard his voice and cry for mercy and delivered him from death (Ps. 116:1-8). As a response to God’s deliverance, the psalmist is asking: “How can I repay the Lord for all his goodness?” (v. 12). The response that follows is clearly cultic: he will fulfil his vows in the presence of God’s people, offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving, and visit the courts of the house of the Lord in Jerusalem (vv. 12-19). The psalmist’s response is characterized as cultic because the psalmist follows certain cultic norms in expressing his personal feelings and gratitude. His response may be spontaneous, springing from his heart and free will decision, but it is clearly expressed in the cult. Evidently in the Psalms there is no separation between the worship and the cult. Rather they are naturally intermingled, so that when the psalmist exclaims “I love the house where you live, O Lord” (Ps. 26:8) he actually worships God in his sanctuary.

Therefore, Westermann’s claim that “in the Old Testament there is no absolute, timeless entity called ‘cult,’ but the worship in Israel” (Westermann, 1981:21) leads to separation of worship and cult which is not seen in the Old Testament. The references to the sanctuary cult are too numerous in the Psalms to be easily ignored or underestimated. Sabourin (1974:35) seems to be right when he says that for some scholars “the failure to appreciate the cultic origin of the psalms lies in the low estimate they had of the value of cult and liturgy,” rather than in the evidence found in the Psalms.

2.4 Competence of the Pentateuch

The question of sources of information about the sanctuary cult must be cleared before proceeding with the modern studies in the shaping of the Psalter and

considering the sanctuary as one of the possible unifying themes of the Psalter. While certain books and chapters from the Old Testament have been widely accepted as eligible sources of information about the Israelite cult (e.g., 1 and 2 Chronicles, 1 Kings), the Pentateuch, i.e., the Priestly materials of Exodus 25-31, 35-40, the Book of Leviticus, and Numbers 1-10, has been under severe scrutiny and even rejected (e.g., Mowinckel 2004, 1:35). For that reason, the competence of the Pentateuch deserves special attention.

Though Mowinckel (2004, 1:35) affirms that “the whole central part of the Pentateuch consists of cultic and ritual,” he assumes that “it would be a mistake to base our conception of the psalms on the later stages of Israelitic-Jewish cultic development.” He believes so for two reasons: the early date of the Psalms and the one-sided and fragmentary picture of the cult provided by the Pentateuch.

The Psalms, Mowinckel argues, are to a very great extent much older than the greatest part of the Pentateuch, i.e., the Psalms date from the time of the monarchy, namely before the exile, while the “Priestly Document” (P), the latest of the Pentateuchal sources, was collected in post-exilic, Jewish times. However, it seems that Mowinckel has unnecessarily barred the Pentateuch. Even if one assumes that the Pentateuch belongs to the later stages of the ancient Israelites’ religion, there is no need to assume a radical shift between the various stages of the Israelite religion especially as there are texts which refer to the presence of a written tradition (e.g., 1 Chr. 16:40). There is no doubt that the Pentateuch reflects the establishment of the sanctuary cult prior to the Psalms and thus provides valuable information about the cult in the Psalms. Brueggemann (1997:662) rightly observes that “[e]ven if it is dated late, the material surely reflects older practices.”

The second reason given by Mowinckel to leave out the Pentateuch from the study of cult in the Psalms is that “the picture which the priestly source gives us of the cult is both one-sided and fragmentary. It presents ritual and other features of the service from the priest’s own technical point of view” (Mowinckel, 2004, 1:35). Mowinckel (2004, 1:35-36) points out that rarely in the Pentateuch is anything said about the role played by the congregation, the words spoken in the cult, the prayers which were prayed, and the Psalms which were sung. Other sources (e.g., the book of Chronicles, Amos 5:21-23, 2 Sam. 6:5) clearly

show that they formed part of the service. The Psalms, likewise, Mowinckel argues, provide considerable information about the cult.

This reason seems to be even less sustainable than the first one. While the Psalms provide considerable information about the cult, most of these are mere allusions and consists only of the words to be prayed or spoken by the congregation. No psalm reproduces a complete worship service (Westermann, 1980:97-98). Moreover, in the Psalms it is assumed that the reader or the member of the congregation is well acquainted with the sanctuary furniture, festivals and sacrifices, and no efforts are made to illuminate the recipients of the message about their meaning and significance. What was the source of information about the sanctuary for the psalmists is debatable, but it cannot be denied that the Pentateuch is a valuable source of information about the sanctuary for a modern reader. Therefore, it seems unjustified to leave out the Pentateuch, as both the Psalms and the Pentateuch bear witness to the cult in Israel.

2.5 Conclusion

In this chapter attention is paid to the form critical and cultic approaches because these approaches provide substantial data that confirm the significant influence of the sanctuary cult in the Psalms. In the light of the criteria for the cultic origins of the Psalms given by Gunkel and Mowinckel, which confirm a considerable presence of cultic elements in the Psalms, it seems plausible to conclude that the psalmists were significantly impressed by the cult. This study would be groundless without this aspect.

The modern psalmic studies generally abandon the cultic approach and do not show great interest in the form critical questions. What appears to be most problematic in the cultic approach for many modern scholars is the concern for social and cultic setting. Some of these scholars (e.g., James L. Mays) are reluctant to pursue genre definition in traditional Gunkel mode and have turned away from classifying the Psalms according to the form (McCann, 2009:159). However, Nasuti (1999:210-211) claims that genre provides “a vital background against which to appreciate the individual texts,” i.e., “an interpretive

framework.” Truly, “only in the interplay of similarities and differences with other texts that which is truly distinctive about a particular text becomes apparent” (Nasuti, 1999:214).

This study is indebted to the contributions of the form critical and cultic approaches in identifying the cultic elements in the Psalms and providing a framework or form within which these elements are distributed. This study moves now to the modern studies in the shaping of the Hebrew Psalter. The various ideas proposed as central to the shape of the Psalter are explored and an attempt is made to demonstrate how these ideas point to the central place of the sanctuary in the Psalter.

3.0 SANCTUARY CULT AND THE SHAPING OF THE HEBREW PSALTER

The most recent interpretations of the Psalms have largely abandoned the cultic approach and moved toward more literary approaches (McCann, 2009:159). Modern scholarship wishes to pursue another direction, effectively described by Mays (1987:12):

The context for the construal of language in the Psalms shifts. Semantic horizons are more those of intratextual relations and less groups of types and reconstructed cultic occasions. Form critical and cult-functional questions are subordinated and questions of content and theology become more important.

As the interest of this thesis is not simply in literary matters as such, but rather in seeing the literary questions as tools to getting to a better understanding of the theological content of the Psalms, this new trend is welcomed here. Modern studies of Psalter shaping seem to be very helpful for this thesis as some of the key topics in the Psalter suggested by various authors seem to be closely related to the sanctuary cult.

This chapter seeks to evaluate the various ideas proposed as central to the shaping of the Hebrew Psalter and to examine whether they are related to the sanctuary cult. It seeks also to understand the role of the sanctuary motif for the shaping of the Psalter.

Most psalms research since the Enlightenment has assumed that the Psalter is a relatively haphazard collection of disparate pieces with little or no discernible organization (Creach, 1996a:12-13). A number of settings for Psalms have been surveyed by various scholars throughout the history of psalmic interpretation. These settings have ranged from the historical situation of ancient Israel to the existential situation and cultic setting. Yet one more setting has begun to have an important impact on modern Psalms research, i.e., the setting of the Psalter itself (Nasuti, 1999:163). The words “shaping” and “shape” used by the scholars refer to “literary structure, the internal clues that give directions as to how the whole should be read and understood” (Creach, 1996a:11).

Childs (1979:513) argues that “[t]he original cultic role of the psalms has been subsumed under a larger category of the canon.” This means that “the original setting [of the Psalms] has been subordinated to a new theological function for

the future generations of worshipping Israel” (Childs, 1979:514). Childs believes that the modern interpretation of the Psalter has to deal seriously with the role of the canon as the collectors understood the canonical material to function for the community of faith (Childs, 1979:511-514; 522-523). Miller (1986:11) argues that this form of the new interpretation of the Psalms is actually reinterpretation of psalms that “focuses more on the final form of a psalm than its original genre and character.” He believes that reinterpretation of psalms is necessitated by the very growth of the Psalter itself and the psalms’ capacity to speak in and for different situations in Israel’s history (Miller, 1986:11-13).

Modern trends in psalmic studies seek to trace the history of structuring the book of Psalms and to understand the overarching purpose and message of the entire book. Mark D. Futato (2007:59) effectively expresses the basic assumption of these trends by saying that “the original function of a given psalm in its original context and the function of that same psalm in the context of the completed book of Psalms are not necessarily the same.”

In other words, the Psalms are not seen as a random anthology of prayers and praises but as an intentional collection with a clear purpose and a unified message (Futato, 2007:57). “Looking for interaction between psalms within a context means that the contemporary reader can seek out themes and emphases or look for threads running through pairs or groups of psalms which point to topics that editors of the final form of the Psalter wished to emphasize” (Grant, 2005:107).

Recent investigations of the shape of the Hebrew Psalter include two types of research: 1) studies on the arrangement of a limited section of the Psalter (e.g., Psalms 104 and 105; 111 and 112), and 2) research on the shape of the entire book (Creach, 1996a:13-14). The first approach is applied in this thesis to the study of Psalms 1 and 2 and of Psalms 73 and 74 in an attempt to understand how these psalms function as related smaller units in the Psalter. However, the second approach, initially developed by G.H. Wilson and J.L. Mays, bears more directly on this thesis and is the primary focus of this study.

3.1 The Significance of the Sanctuary in the Enthronement Psalms and the Shaping of the Psalter

The initiative for studying the structure of the entire book of Psalms came from Gerald H. Wilson, who was interested in the editorial process by which the Psalms came together (Mowinckel, 2004:xxx-xxxi). Wilson (1986:87-88) understands the Psalter to be structured around the theme of Yahweh's kingship, and so royal psalms played a pivotal role in the Psalter shaping and betrayed the editorial purpose behind the Psalter arrangement. He argues that the appearance of royal psalms at three out of four significant junctures which mark the boundaries between the five books of the Psalter cannot be accidental, but, on the contrary, displays "an apparent thematic or theological development observed in the sequential arrangement of these psalms." Wilson contends that through reading the royal psalms one can plot a "narrative" which traces the rise and fall of the Davidic monarchy (Grant, 2005:108).

Following the sequential arrangement of royal psalms, Wilson (1986:89, 90) has discovered that "Book Three departs strongly from the Davidic motif which dominates the two earlier books." Psalm 89, which closes Book Three, depicts the failure of the Davidic covenant and rejection of the Davidic king. Wilson (1986:92) further points out that Books Four and Five decidedly shift their emphasis away from "hope in human, Davidic kingship back to the premonarchic period with its (supposed) direct reliance on God's protection and the individual access guaranteed by the Law (Pss. 90,119)." Thus, Wilson argues, the Psalms are arranged in such a way as to promote the direct rule of God which is "most clearly expressed in the YHWH MALAK psalms, 93-99, which become the theological 'heart' of the expanded final Psalter."

A close look at Psalms 93-99, commonly called the enthronement psalms, yields an interesting result, i.e., the sanctuary motif seems to be an indispensable part of the theological "heart" of the Psalter. The enthronement psalms seem to suggest strongly that the Lord's reign was inseparable from the cult, as they portray the Lord reigning from his sanctuary and call the people to serve him in the sanctuary following the sanctuary stipulations (e.g., Pss. 95:1-2, 6; 96:8).

The splendour and strength of Yahweh, Israel's king and the King of the whole earth (Pss. 95:7; 98:4; 99:1), is displayed in a specific place, i.e., God's sanctuary (Pss. 93:5; 96:6, 8, 9). For the psalmist it is not only Yahweh the king who is adorned with majesty and holiness but his sanctuary as well (Pss. 93:5; 96:6). People reverently gather to the sanctuary, the place where the King's majesty is revealed, to worship their King with music, songs, offerings and thanksgiving (e.g., Pss. 95:1-2; 96:1-2, 8, 6; 98:4-6). The mention of "jubilant songs" and "jubilant" feelings (Pss. 94:3; 96:12; 98:4) contributes to the sanctuary atmosphere (Lev. 25; 1 Chr. 16:32).

Psalm 99 employs expressions which specifically point to the sanctuary to describe the Lord's kingly rule. "Zion" and "his holy mountain" are terms associated with the sanctuary (Pss. 99:2, 9; 20:2; 48:2; 50:2; 76:2; 84:7; Exod. 19:9-23). The description of God as sitting "enthroned between the cherubim" strongly points to the Ark of the Covenant which was considered to be Yahweh's throne in the most holy place in the sanctuary (Ps. 99:1; Exod. 25:18-22; Num. 7:89).

The choice of names from Israel's past, i.e., Moses, Aaron and Samuel (Ps. 99:6), also suggests a close connection between the kingship of Yahweh and the sanctuary. These three persons from Israel's' past have one thing in common, i.e., they served in the sanctuary. The psalm continues with the sanctuary references by specifying that the Lord spoke to these three individuals from the pillar of cloud (Ps. 99: 7), which was a visible representation of God's presence among the people and was at times located in the sanctuary (Exod. 19:9; 40:34-38).

It seems logical to assume that the sanctuary as the place of gathering would play a significant role in the veneration of God when the present concept of a worship place is transposed back into Old Testament times. The sanctuary was indeed the place of gathering of God's people to worship as indicated by the term "sacred assembly" (e.g., Lev. 23:2, 4, 27, 35; Joel 1:14; 2:15). However the Israelite sanctuary was more than just a place of gathering to worship the Lord. An attempt is made in Chapter 4 to fully discuss the roles of the sanctuary other than the place of gathering to worship God and the impact of the

sanctuary on the personal piety of the psalmists. However, this issue is also briefly discussed here for the sake of understanding of the significance of the sanctuary in the enthronement psalms. The main focus is on the function of the sanctuary in the totality of each of the relevant psalms.

The sanctuary was the place which God, not the people, chose for his dwelling (Ps 68:16; Deut. 12:5, 11, 13, 14, 18, 21, 26; 14:23-25; 15:20; 16:6, 7, 11, 15, 16). The sanctuary was “*the place*” (Hebrew, המקום) as opposed to any other place (Pss. 24:3; 26:8; 132:5; 1Kgs. 8:29, 30). The Israelites were strictly commanded to worship and offer their sacrifices in the sanctuary only, i.e., in the Lord’s presence (Exod. 40:34-38; Deut. 12:4-14; Ezek. 44:5). The sanctuary with all its furniture and cultic acts was perceived primarily as the revelation of God, i.e., given by God himself, and not as a human attempt to reach and please God (Exod. 25:26, 40; 26:30; 27:8). The Israelites exercised their obedience and reverence to the Lord by strictly following the sanctuary stipulations (Ezek. 44:5-9). For that reason the consequence of not following the cultic stipulations was drastic (Num. 3:38; 18:31).

The question that arises in this context is: Why was the sanctuary governed by such vigorous and exclusive stipulations? Apart from other possible reasons, one reason seems to be prevalent, i.e., the sanctuary served to reveal the holy God. The Israelites’ king was holy and so worthy of adoration (Ps. 99:3, 5, 9). Kraus (1992:42) rightly points out that “holy” is a statement about Yahweh himself, about his name (Pss. 98:1; 99:3; 103:1; 111:9; 145:21), about his word (Ps. 105:42), his arm (Ps. 98:1), his way (Ps. 77:13), and all his work (Ps. 145:17). Though by virtue of his holiness he is wholly other and separated from all earthly beings, the God of Israel is persistent in overcoming obstacles in his aim to come to his people (Kraus, 1992:42). The sanctuary was God’s means to dwell among his people and have them enter his holy presence (Exod. 25:8). The psalmist testifies that the sanctuary played a significant role in enabling him to behold God: “I have seen you in the sanctuary, and beheld your power and your glory” (Ps. 63:2). He wishes to dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of his life “to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and to seek him in his temple” (Ps 27:4). Since the Israelites worshiped the invisible God, the Creator of heavens and earth, who could not be represented in the form of any image

(Exod. 20:4, 5; 33:20, 23; Ps 105:39; 115:3-7, 15, 16; Isa. 40:28), the whole sanctuary served to reflect and represent the Lord's glory and provide a secure environment for the sinful people to approach their holy king (Exod. 19:10-24; Lev. 16:13, 29-31; 23:29, 30).

Psalm 99 specifically says that the Lord gave his statutes and decrees (חוק וּמִצְוָה) (Ps. 99: 7) to the Israelites through Moses, Aaron and Samuel. The statutes and decrees undoubtedly refer to the sanctuary laws (e.g., 2 Kgs. 23:2, 3; 1 Chr. 29:19; 2 Chr. 34:30, 31; Jer. 44:23). Therefore, the sanctuary was not only the place of worship and people's response to God. The sanctuary was the place which provided a special environment where people could see and experience the presence and glory of their invisible divine king.

Therefore, the people were called to worship in the sanctuary not simply because the sanctuary was the place of gathering but to pay homage to their divine king who dwelt in the sanctuary following the stipulations that he designed for them. In the sanctuary the people could observe the glory of the invisible God revealed in a unique way. The sanctuary contributed to the people's encounter with their divine king in various substantial ways. This issue is more fully discussed in the next chapter.

The study turns now to demonstrate the role that the sanctuary played in the development of the "narrative" of the enthronement psalms. Wilson (1992:132-133) contends that the editorial shape of the Psalter betrays a "royal covenantal frame" which "focuses on the Davidic covenant: its introduction in divine grace (Ps. 2), its transmission to David's successors with hope (Ps. 72), and its collapse in the destruction and despair of the Exile (Ps. 89)." Wilson argues that Books IV and V shift to Yahweh as Israel's true divine king and the solution for the crisis of Davidic kingship described in Psalm 89. He writes:

This is the crisis that calls forth the response of the fourth and fifth books of the Psalter. How can a people continue to live faithfully when all their former hopes are gone? How can a people reidentify themselves when all the old landmarks have been swept away? Psalm 90, and the remainder of the fourth book, begin to point Israel away from reliance on the inadequacies of human kings and kingdoms to the adequacy of Yahweh himself. Yahweh was the rock of refuge available for Israel long before the monarchy was even a glimmer in Israel's collective eye.

Yahweh is the almighty creator who founded the earth and controls the destiny of all nations. The central psalms of book four (Pss. 93; 95—99) celebrate the kingship of Yahweh who, unlike human princes, rules forever (Wilson, 1992:140).

Questions have been raised about how well this narrative works in details. Grant (2005:108-109) believes that the royal psalms have a much stronger emphasis in Books IV and V than claimed by Wilson. He points to the return of the Davidic king in Psalms 101-103, the strongly eschatological presentation of the Davidic king in Psalm 110, and the fact that the last voice heard in the Psalter prior to the concluding doxology (Pss. 146-150) belongs to the Davidic king (Pss. 138-145).

However, this recovery of a Davidic king in Books IV and V does not destroy the “narrative” about the Davidic king in the Psalter proposed by Wilson. Rather it serves to clear Yahweh from the accusations, presented in Psalm 89:38, 39, that the Lord has renounced his covenant and broken his promise given to David. In the following lines an attempt is made to present the “narrative” in its entirety and its close relationship to the sanctuary.

Psalm 2 tells of the inauguration of the Davidic king. This psalm specifically says that the Lord installed David as king on Zion, the Lord’s holy hill (v. 6). It should be noted that this statement is given after the description of the enemies who plot and conspire to destroy the king, the representative of the Lord (vv. 1-3). In the face of such threat, the Lord laughs at the enemies as if to accentuate their vain attempts to overcome the king of Israel who is undefeatable because he has been installed on Zion. It becomes clear that the king’s strength and superiority over his enemies comes from the fact that he is firmly grounded on Zion, God’s sanctuary. The king will rule over his enemies as long as he stays on Zion.

The crisis of Davidic kingship in Psalm 89 has much to do with the king’s departure from God and his sanctuary. The king is blessed as long as he walks “in the light of your presence, O Lord” (v. 15). The sanctuary is often depicted in the Psalms as the place of the Lord’s presence and his light (Pss. 4:6; 5:5, 7; 31:16, 20; 101:7). The mention of God’s law, statutes, and decrees (vv. 30-31)

further points to the importance of the sanctuary in this connection (e.g., Ezek. 44:24). The psalmist laments that the Lord has put “an end to his splendour” (v. 44). The word for “splendour” here is from the Hebrew root טָהַר which bears the notion of cultic cleanness or purity elsewhere in the Old Testament, including the Psalter (e.g., Lev. 11:32; 12:4, 5, 7, 8; 13:6, 34, 58; Ps. 51:2, 7). The category of clean/unclean defined the ritual standing of people (e.g., Lev. 12; 13:3, 8, 11; 15; Num. 19), food (e.g., Lev. 11:2-23) and objects (e.g., Lev. 13:47-52; 14:33-53; 15:20; Num. 19:11-15; 31:19, 20). Cultic purity is a necessity for worshipping the holy God (Lev. 11:44, 45; 19:2; 20:7, 26). Hartley (2003:426) nicely explains the meaning of the cultic rites in Israel:

The purpose of these rules was to establish boundaries in the routine of daily life in order that the Israelites might live as a holy people serving Yahweh, who is holy. The primary boundary was to prevent any impure person or thing from entering sacred space; therefore, all had to be ritually clean before entering the sanctuary lest holiness consumes them.

Cultic purity is one aspect of Israel’s holiness alongside other characteristics that comprise their holiness, i.e., covenantal relationship with God, God’s holy presence in their midst and their keeping of God’s ceremonial and moral laws (Hartley, 2003:425). These various aspects of holiness are inseparable in the sense that they have to be practiced together and not one at the expense of the other (e.g., Pss. 15; 24:3-6). This view is supported by the meaning of Hebrew root טָהַר that refers not only to cultic purity in its narrow, technical sense, but also to purity of heart (Ps. 51:10[12]; Prov. 22:11), of hands (Job 17:9), of eyes (Hab. 1:13), of words (Ps. 12:6[7]). This suggests that טָהַר may refer to purity of character as demonstrated in certain cases when it refers to purity from sin in a general sense (e.g., Ps. 51:2[4]; Prov. 20:9; Ezek. 36:33; Mal. 3:3).

The concept of holiness is strongly present in Psalm 89. The psalmist points to the council of the holy ones of Israel (v. 7[8]) and to the Lord’s holiness (v. 35[36]). The only one who does not match this description is the king who is rejected (Hebrew, יָנָה) and spurned (Hebrew, בִּיאַס) by the Lord (v. 38[39]). The psalmist declares that his “uncleanness” (God has put an end to his טָהַר, v. 44[45]) provoked the wrath of the Lord and caused the Lord to hide his face from him (89:46). The situation here is the opposite of what Aaron’s blessing promises (Num. 6:24-26). The psalmist is aware that God is not to be blamed

for his state. The phrase “you have rejected (זנח), you have spurned (באצט)” (v. 44[45]) seems to echo the similar wording in 1 Chronicles 28:9: “if you (i.e., the king) forsake (Hebrew, עזב) him (i.e., the Lord), he (i.e., the Lord) will reject (זנח) you (i.e., the king) forever.”

Wilson (1992:140) is correct that the psalms that follow also leave no doubt that the failure of the monarchy and the exile cannot be attributed to any weakness of God but to Israel’s sin and disobedience (Pss. 90:7-8; 106:6-42). God appears in the enthronement psalms in such majesty that all doubts as to his power and control are removed and Israel is called to surrender to the eternal king worthy of praise. The hope of restoration is based on Israel’s repentance (Wilson, 1992:140). In the enthronement psalms the sanctuary serves not only as the place where the majesty of the divine king is displayed before the people (Pss. 96:6, 9; 97:2, 11), but also as the place where the encounter with the holy God, who is surrounded by thick darkness and lightning, is made possible (Pss. 95:2; 96:8; 97:2-5). This encounter is initiated by the Lord himself and is regulated by his statutes and decrees which he gave to Moses, Aaron, and Samuel (Ps. 99:6, 7).

Though the hope of Israel is restored by this assurance of the divine king who reigns and has full control, the accusation that the Lord has broken his solemn promise to David (Ps. 89:30-45) still has to be addressed. Psalm 94 speaks of the failure of the Davidic covenant in a similar way to Psalm 89. Both psalms ask the question “How long?” (Pss. 89:46; 94:3). Both point to the joy of Israel’s enemies (Pss. 89:42; 94:3) and their wickedness towards God’s people (Pss. 89:41, 50, 51; 94:4-6). Both refer to destroyed thrones (Pss. 89:44; 94:20). However, while Psalm 89:38 claims that the Lord has rejected his people, Psalm 94:14 is firm that “the Lord will not reject his people.”

However, the psalmist in Psalm 94 has struggled before he comes to this conclusion in a similar manner as described in Psalm 73. The problem of the success of evildoers has almost made his feet slip (Pss. 73:2; 94:18), but the Lord rescued him from falling (Pss. 73:17; 94:18). The sanctuary, as the place where this transformation took place, is prevalent in both psalms. Psalm 73:17 denotes the sanctuary as the environment where his understanding was

transformed. Psalm 94 is placed among the psalms which clearly point to the sanctuary (Pss. 93:5; 95:1, 2, 6; 96:6, 8, 9; 97:2, 8; 98:4-6; 99:1-9). For that reason it seems plausible to understand the exclamation “O Lord ... shine forth” in Psalm 94:1 in the context of sanctuary worship (Pss. 50:2; 67:1; 80:1, 3). The psalmist addresses the Lord as the judge of the earth (Ps. 94:2). The Lord’s judgment is closely related to his throne in the sanctuary (Ps. 9:4, 7; Ezek. 44:24). Clearly the psalmist received the reassurance that the Lord will not reject his people after seeing the Lord in his sanctuary.

The role of the sanctuary to reveal God’s presence in a special way and to strengthen the believer’s faith becomes important for the understanding of the renewal of Davidic kingship in Books IV and V. Only after Israel repented and renewed her alliance to the Lord, her divine king who reigns in his sanctuary, is the Lord ready to re-establish the Davidic king in Israel. The eschatological reinterpretation of the future Davidic king becomes the key to continuing kingship in the Psalter (Grant, 2005:110, 114). Psalm 110 reintroduces the Davidic king in a way that is reminiscent of Psalm 2. Again, the source and the guarantor of the king’s strength and longevity is Zion (v. 2). The mention of priesthood further reinforces the strong relationship between the kingship and the sanctuary. The inauguration of the Davidic king in Psalm 110 not only echoes the installation of the one in Psalm 2 but also acts as a defence of God’s name. By re-establishing the Davidic king in Zion in Psalm 110, God proves that his oath in Psalm 89:35 was true. The second oath of God makes it even more sure (Ps. 110:4).

The Davidic psalms in Book V (Pss. 138-145) are characterized by praise, thanksgiving, and confirmation of God’s everlasting reign (Pss. 138:1-3; 144:9; 145:1-3, 13). Certain striking parallels between Psalms 89 and 144 may point to the reversal in the fate of the Davidic kingship elaborated above in this study. Both psalms refer to the “fleeting” nature of human existence (Pss. 89:47; 144:4). However, while Psalm 89 speaks of God “breaking through all his [the king’s] walls” (v. 40) and turning “back the edge of his [the king’s] sword” (v. 43) and not supporting him in battle, Psalm 144 praises the Lord that “there will be no breaching of walls” (v. 14) and for giving “the victory to kings” (v. 10) and delivering “his servant David from the deadly sword” (v. 10). Strikingly, the last

Davidic psalm in the Psalter, Psalm 145, closes with assurance that the Lord is “faithful to all his promises” (v. 13). This reassurance should provoke responses of praise and thanksgiving. Praise and thanksgiving are the most prevalent themes in the concluding psalms of the Psalter (Pss. 146-150). Psalm 150 concludes the Psalter by calling the worshipers to praise the Lord in his sanctuary (v. 1).

These observations lead to the conclusion that the expression “YHWH reigns” needs to be understood in the context of the revelation of God in the sanctuary. Thus, Wilson’s insightful demonstration of Psalms 93-99 as central to the shape of the whole Psalter and the remarkable connection between Yahweh’s kingship and the sanctuary places the sanctuary at the central place in the Hebrew Psalter.

3.2 The Sanctuary and the Introduction to the Psalter

Psalms placed in certain positions within the Psalter take on special importance (Grant, 2005:107). This applies particularly to the psalms which are placed at the beginning and end of the five Books of the Psalter (Wilson, 1986:85-94). Wilson’s methodology of examining the psalms which appear at the vantage point of breaks between collections in order to understand the shape and the message of the whole Psalter seems very useful here. However, instead of looking at the psalms which end each of the five collections in the Psalter, the focus here is on the Psalms which introduce each of the five Books of the Psalter.

3.2.1 The Sanctuary in Psalm 1

Book I, which consists of Psalms 1-41, opens with Psalms 1 and 2. These two psalms are intentionally separated from the rest of the psalms in Book I by not being designated “A Psalm of David” as the others are (except Psalms 10 and 33 which also have no such designation). There is wide agreement in modern scholarship that Psalms 1 and 2 function as an introduction to the whole Psalter and underscore certain themes that resonate throughout the whole Psalter (Mays, 1994a:15; Futato, 2007:58-59; Grant, 2005:108). For that reason they

are treated separately from the other Psalms. Though some argue that only Psalm 1 serves as the introduction to the Psalter and Psalm 2 plays the role of the introduction to the first Book (e.g., Wilson, 1986:88; Wilson, 1992:132), it seems much more likely that Psalms 1 and 2 combine to provide a joint introduction to the whole Psalter. Grant (2005:108) shares two convincing reasons: 1) their common lack of superscription, and 2) various linguistic links between the two psalms, including a bracketing inclusion based in the word אֲשֶׁרֵי (“blessed,” Pss. 1:1; 2:12). Wilson (1992:132) points to some New Testament manuscripts of the Western tradition which refer to a quotation from Psalm 2 with the phrase “in the first psalm,” as the indicator that either Psalm 1 did not as yet exist or that it was still unnumbered. However, this indication may also point to the joint nature of these psalms. Futato (2007:58) designates Psalm 3 as the opening psalm of Book I.

Psalm 1 depicts the righteous by a simile of “a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruits in season and whose leaf does not wither” (Ps. 1:3). Mays (1987:4) understands the simile of a tree in Psalm 1 as the description of “the blessedness of those who trust in the Lord” that is also found in Jeremiah 17:5-6 (also, Sarna 1993:40). However, the simile seems to point to more than that, it seems to picture the righteous as abiding in the sanctuary. This interpretation is suggested by several other examples in the Psalter which repeat the motifs of the river and the tree found in Psalm 1 and place them in the sanctuary context. Creach (1999:35) recognizes textual parallels between Psalm 1:3 and Psalms 52:8 and 92:13, 14 that also speak of the righteous as trees planted in the temple of God. Psalm 36:7, 8 may also be included as it relates the sanctuary to the river motif, i.e., it speaks of the abundance in God’s house, which includes drinking from God’s river of delight. Creach (1999:36) contends that if Psalm 1:3a were dependent on these passages that would seem significant for the introductory purpose of Psalm 1. Moreover, the sanctuary motif would emerge as one of the key concerns regarding the shape of the Psalter.

Psalm 1:3 displays strong connections with a number of Old Testament texts. Jeremiah 17:7-8 has been widely recognized as such a text. However, Creach (1999:36) rightly argues that “[a]lthough Ps 1:3a borrows from Jer 17:8, the psalm deviates significantly from Jeremiah at points.” Most significant differences are those that point to different wording between the two texts (e.g.,

Ps. 1:3 has פלגי מים “streams of water,” while Jer. 17:8 lacks (פלגים) and to disparity in the overall structure of the poems (e.g., Ps. 1 and Jer. 17:5-8 differ in the development of the image of the tree) (Creach, 1999:37).

Creach (1999:46) rightly argues that “the differences between Ps 1:3 and Jer 17:8 are best explained by the psalmist’s borrowing from other texts, particularly texts that contain a tradition equating Zion and the temple with paradise.” He points particularly to Ezekiel 47:12 as the clearest source for the writer of Psalm 1. This view is supported by the almost exact wording of the two passages. Additional evidence is the word פלגים (“streams”) in Psalm 1:3, a word selected perhaps because of its presence in various texts where the waters of the holy mountain and its temple are described (e.g., Isa. 30:25; 32:2; Pss. 45:5; 65:10) (Creach, 1999:41,46). Psalm 46:5 depicts the streams that make glad the city of God. In Psalm 65:10 the streams of water signify the Lord’s power experienced on Zion. Isaiah 30:25 and 32:2 associate the term with the waters of paradise. Creach (1999:42) points to other examples of association of the streams of water and the temple. The adjective דשן (“fat, rich”) of growing plants in Isaiah 30:23 appears in Psalm 92:15 in reference to the health of trees planted in the temple.

The designation of the righteous as the tree and its association with the waters of the sanctuary are also found in Ezekiel 31:3-5, 7-9. This text may be seen as additional support to the idea that Old Testament writers used the images of tree and the streams of water to describe the righteous in the sanctuary, though it does not display the textual similarities with Psalm 1:3 as Ezekiel 47:12 does. Despite various differences between Psalm 1:3 and Jeremiah 17:8, the three images in Jeremiah 17:8 are placed in the sanctuary context, i.e., in the context of the living waters that are associated with God’s throne in his holy sanctuary (Jer. 17:12-13). The association of waters with paradise and the sanctuary has wide biblical (e.g., Gen. 2:10-14; 1 Kgs. 7:23-29, 44; 2 Chron. 4:2-10; Isa. 8:6, 7) and extrabiblical support (Keel, 1978:116-117,136,140-143).

Creach (1999:36) rightly concludes that “the writer of Ps 1:3a transforms the simile of the tree (as it appears in Jer. 17:8) into a comparison of the righteous to trees planted in the temple precincts” as given in Ezekiel 47:12. This conclusion leads to a relevant question: What is the meaning of the inclusion of

the torah in Psalm 1? (Creach, 1999:43). Creach (1999:45,46) argues that the torah is implicitly compared to the temple and is seen as the temple's replacement. However, the important role of the sanctuary in the eschatological hopes of ancient Israel and observance of certain cultic laws in the absence of the temple strongly suggest that the concept of replacement is overstated here. Whether this was the psalmist's intention is discussed in more details in the next chapter. Nevertheless, it seems obvious that Psalm 1:3 indicates "a shift in the perceived source of safety, from temple to torah" especially in the period of Israel's history when "the frailty of the temple, and perhaps its remoteness (in the aftermath of 587 B.C.E.), were distinct problems" (Creach, 1999:46).

Brown offers an insightful analysis of the tree imagery in Psalm 1 against its biblical and extrabiblical, literary and iconographic backgrounds. He also points to a strong connection of the tree image in Psalm 1 with the temple vision of the grove planted by the sacred river in Ezekiel 47:12 (Brown, 2002:59). At least two more texts from the Old Testament that have not been mentioned so far employ similar imagery (Isa. 44:4 and Ezek. 31:3-5, 7-9). However, Psalm 1, Ezekiel 47:12 and Jeremiah 17:7-8 share strikingly similar language with the following four key elements: 1) the river; 2) the tree planted by the river; 3) the fruits of the tree; 4) leaves of the tree which do not wither.

Like the psalmist, the prophet Ezekiel establishes the connection between the life-giving waters, the river of Zion, issuing from the temple, God's holy sanctuary, and the miraculous flourishing of arboreal life (Brown, 2002:59). Isaiah envisions Zion and Jerusalem as a tent (אהל designates here the sanctuary) that will not be moved and as the place of broad rivers and streams (Isa. 33:20, 21).

In Mesopotamian texts, the tree and life-giving waters are placed in sanctuaries, e.g., the Epic of Gilgamesh depicts a special cult tree erected on the Apsu, the watery abyss, in Eridu, the sanctuary of Enki (Brown, 2002:60).

The iconographic data give insights for the understanding of Psalm 1. Brown (2002:61-67) points to iconographic parallels among numerous seal impressions, tomb reliefs, and statuettes, images of goats and caprids eating the leaves or buds of trees which assume a prominent position. The tree motif undoubtedly lies in the background of the two pillars that flanked the vestibule of

Solomon's temple (1 Kgs. 7:21; 2 Kgs. 25:16-17; 2 Chr. 3:15-17). "[T]he twin pillars of the Solomonic temple, in addition to marking the boundary between the profane and the holy, represented the "paradisiacal life-giving aspect of the sanctuary"" (Brown, 2002:63).

The imagery of a tree is undoubtedly prominent among sanctuary images (e.g., Exod. 37:17-22; Ezek. 41:18). "Iconographically and architecturally, the temple reflected the garden of God" (Brown, 2002:67). Brown (2002:67) expresses nicely its significance for the Psalter:

It is no accident that the Psalter is introduced with the image of the tree, the metaphor of blessing. Standing at the threshold, the tree demarcates the poetic counterpart to the holy sanctuary, whose entrance leads to cacophony of voices in praise and petition, including the voice from on high, the sound of worship.

The study now turns to exploring the parallels between Psalm 1:3 and Psalm 92:14. Psalm 92:14 describes the righteous as trees planted, flourishing and bearing fruits in the house of the Lord, using the language that is strongly reminiscent of Psalm 1:3.

The linguistic parallels between Psalms 1 and 92 may be demonstrated in several key examples from both psalms. The key words in Psalm 1:3 used to describe the flourishing tree are used again in Psalm 92:13 to describe the prosperous trees "planted in the house of the Lord" which "flourish in the courts of our God." The Hebrew שְׁתוּלִים means "planted, deeply rooted" and the Hebrew פְּרִיה means "to bear fruit, be fruitful, flourishing." Not only is the destiny of the righteous described with the same terms in Psalms 1 and 92, but also the destiny of the enemies or the wicked ones (רְשָׁעִים in both Ps. 1:4 and Ps. 92:8) is described with the word אָבַד, meaning "to perish," in both 1:6; 92:9(10). Interestingly, both psalms open with the three actions which characterize the righteous followed by the Hebrew preposition כִּי which introduces the reasons why the three actions mentioned are performed. In Psalm 1:1-2 the righteous one "does not *walk* in the counsel of the wicked or *stand* in the way of sinners or *sit* in the way of mockers, *but* (כִּי) his delight is in the law of the Lord ..." (emphasis supplied). In Psalm 92:1-4 the righteous one wants "to *praise* the Lord and *make* music to your name, O Most High, to *proclaim* your love ... *for* (כִּי) you make me glad by your deeds ..." (emphasis supplied). The linguistic

parallels between Psalm 1 and Psalm 92, which clearly displays the sanctuary scenery, strongly suggest thematic parallels between the two psalms and allow the tree imagery in Psalm 1 to be interpreted as referring to the sanctuary.

Interestingly, the image of the righteous being planted is also found in Exodus 15:17, where the author describes the exodus experience and the beginnings of Israel as the nation saying “You will bring them in and *plant* them on the mountain of your inheritance – the place, O Lord, you made for your dwelling, the sanctuary, O Lord, your hands established” (emphasis supplied). The sanctuary is designated here as the place where the righteous are planted.

Brown makes significant remarks about how the image of the tree contributes to the shaping of the Psalter. He (2002:78) writes,

The opening psalm, in sum, initiates a dramatic movement that contributes to the overall shape of the Psalter. The tree is transplanted beside waters that issue forth from the Psalter’s (i.e., *tora*’s) sanctuary (1:3), marking the entrance. In Psalms 52 and 92, the tree has gained full entrance into the precincts of YHWH, flourishing within the temple itself. The righteous, moreover, have aged, reaching full maturity yet still “full of sap” and bearing fruit (92:14). Near the end of the Psalter, nestled amid peals of praise, botanical imagery has spread its shoots, as it were, to envelop the family and nation of Israel (Psalms 128, 144).

The development of the image of the tree in the whole Psalter sheds new light on the tree image in Psalm 1 and contributes to making a stronger connection between this psalm and the sanctuary. Moreover, the image of the tree also remarkably contributes to the understanding of the central place of the sanctuary in the Psalter. The Psalter marks the journey of the righteous which begins in Psalm 1 and provides the ideal description of who the righteous should be. The simile depicts the righteous “like a tree” (Ps. 1:3) as if to highlight the image of the righteous on the way to reaching and abiding in the sanctuary. In the middle of the Psalter, which may signify that the psalmist is in the middle of his journey, the psalmist enters the sanctuary (Ps. 73:17). There he deals with doubts and questions that threaten to stop him in his journey from “obedience to praise” (Brueggemann, 1995:196). There he becomes a new creature and achieves a new level of confidence in God’s leadership: “You guide me with your counsel” (Ps. 73:24) (Crenshaw, 2001:126). Crenshaw (2001:126) nicely remarks that “[w]here that leadership takes the psalmist remains a mystery,” unless the end of the Psalter is taken to provide the

answer, i.e., to the sanctuary. It is only in the final psalms at the end of his journey that the psalmist enters the sanctuary with full assurance of faith and praise.

Similar conclusions seem to be implied by the Hebrew word אֲשֵׁרִי (“happy”), which opens Psalm 1:1 and is found at the end of Psalm 2. This Hebrew word is closely related to the verb אָשַׁר (“to walk straight”), and it may point to the way in which a believer seeks happiness, i.e., he must come to Zion (Pss. 65:5[4]; 84:5[4]), where refuge is to be found (Pss. 2:12; 34:9[8]; 84:12[13]), and where sins are forgiven (Ps. 32:1, 2) (Cazelles, 1974:446).

The Hebrew word אֲשֵׁרִי which opens the Psalter (Pss. 1:1; 2:12), is missing from the first two books of the Psalms with the exception of the last psalm in each group (Pss. 32-41 and 65); it occurs in the psalms which conclude sections I (Ps. 41:2[1]), III (Ps. 89:16[15]), and IV (Ps. 106:3), and finally appears quite often in the last book (8 times) (Cazelles, 1974:446). This seems to suggest that the journey toward happiness culminates in the last book of the Psalter, which ends in praises to God in the sanctuary. Cazelles (1974:446) argues that אֲשֵׁרִי represents a liturgical cry and that a connection between this cry of happiness and the liturgy of the Second Temple can hardly be denied.

3.2.2 The Sanctuary in Psalm 2

The second part of the general introduction to the Psalter, i.e., Psalm 2, continues with an image which has strong connections to the sanctuary, i.e., Zion, God’s holy hill (v. 6). Psalm 2 is a royal psalm and as such it must be interpreted in association with the coronation of the Israelite king (Craigie, 1983:64). The psalm undoubtedly introduces the theme of kingship that is later developed in the Psalter.

However, Psalm 2 also provides interesting clues to other themes of the Psalter, especially the sanctuary theme, when viewed in its unique relationship with Psalm 1. Here in Psalm 2 the contrasting nature and destinies of the righteous and the wicked presented in Psalm 1 evolve into an active conflict. In Psalm 2 the wicked are given personal identity and are placed under the rubric “enemies” (Creach, 2011:53) which stands in contrast to their impersonal

description in Psalm 1. The wicked in Psalm 2 are also active and organized. The wicked conspire, plot and gather against the Lord and his righteous one (vv. 1-3). Increased action on the part of the wicked provokes increased action on the part of the Lord in Psalm 2. The Lord laughs at them, scoffs at them, rebukes them, terrifies them, warns them and proclaims actively his judgments (vv. 4-10). The sanctuary appears again as the secure place for the righteous. In Psalm 1 the river provided a firm and prosperous environment for the righteous. In Psalm 2 it is Zion, God's holy mountain, which provides a secure, divine shelter for the righteous (v. 6). In Psalm 1:3 the righteous one is planted (Hebrew שָׁתוּלָה meaning "planted, deeply rooted") in the sanctuary. In Psalm 2:6 the righteous one is "installed" (Hebrew נִסְּךָ "to anoint") on Zion. The righteous one in both Psalms 1:1 and 2:12 is blessed (אֲשֵׁרִי "happy")

In Psalm 1 both the righteous and the wicked are depicted with similes, i.e., tree and chaff, and the sanctuary is carefully implied with the imagery of a life-giving river. These entities become personalized and more concrete in the time of conflict between good and evil in Psalm 2. The chaff becomes "the nations and the kings of the earth" (vv. 1, 2 and 10). The righteous tree is depicted as the righteous king (v. 6) or even more intimately as "my Son" (vv. 7 and 12). The life-giving river becomes Zion, the Lord's holy hill (v. 6). The destinies of the righteous and the wicked are synonymously described in both psalms, i.e., the righteous are blessed (Pss. 1:1; 2:12) and the wicked destroyed (Pss. 1:6; 2:9, 12).

3.2.3 The Sanctuary in Psalms 1 and 2 and the Shaping of the Psalter

The themes of the conflict between the wicked and the righteous and of the sanctuary as the firm shelter and place of help that are presented in Psalms 1 and 2 are revisited elsewhere in the Psalms (e.g. Pss. 76:2, 3). Jacobson (2011:124) rightly asserts that the confession of the Lord's faithfulness "led Israel to develop a set of expectations about what the Lord's fidelity would or ought to look like." The crisis of faith occurs when the world does not seem to be in harmony with what Psalms 1 and 2 claim. In the general plan of the Psalter the chief crisis seems to take place in the middle of the Psalter, in Psalms 73 and 74. A number of scholars depict Psalm 73 as a canonical

marker of the Psalter, acknowledging the central canonical and theological role of the psalm in the Psalter (e.g., Brueggemann, 1991b:81; McCann, 1993:143; Brueggemann & Miller, 1996:45,46). A number of linguistic and thematic parallels between Psalms 1, 2, 73, 74 and the concluding psalms of the Psalter suggest that these psalms and their parallel motifs may have played a significant role in the shaping of the Psalter.

3.2.3.1 The Relationship between Psalms 1 and 2 and Psalms 73 and 74

A number of scholars recognize that Psalm 73 resumes and develops the conclusions of Psalms 1 and 2, i.e., that the righteous will certainly find blessing from God and the wicked will certainly perish (e.g., Brueggemann, 1991b:87; McCann, 1993:143; Clayton, 2006:125). Creach (2011:49) even suggests that “an organizing rubric may be found in the Psalter’s concern for the life and destiny of the righteous.” Boadt (2004:534) recognizes the use of “panels” in constructing Psalms 73-78 together as a group. He argues that Psalms 73-78 follow the same “panelling” or structure having two major contrasting panels and the same number of subpanels that serve as explanation of the major panels in the psalm. Each psalm also sets the stage for the psalms that follow. For example, Psalms 73 and 74 are both related to the sanctuary and the prosperity of God’s enemies; Psalms 75 and 76 continue with the cosmic victory of God over his enemies; the specific reference to the exodus at the end of Psalm 77 sets the stage for the next Psalm 78 (Boadt, 2004:541-546). Boadt (2004:548) concludes that “Psalms 73 and 78 fittingly serve as bookends to this series of proclamations of God’s cosmic rule over all nations, which ensures that divine justice will triumph.” He (2004:546) nicely observes that “[t]he movement from liturgical praise of God’s maintenance of the divine order in the universe to the hope for a new exodus to rescue the nation from exile explains the progression of Psalms 73-78.”

This study agrees with Boadt that Psalms 73 and 74 are related by theme and structure (Boadt, 2004:541). Moreover, it suggests that Psalms 73 and 74 should be studied together in their relationship to Psalms 1 and 2. Both Psalms 73 and 74 seem to parallel Psalms 1 and 2 as they deal with the problem of understanding of the reversal of the firm world of Psalms 1 and 2. Both Psalms

73 and 74 deal with the problem of the prosperity of evil. However, while Psalm 73 deals with this as a personal dilemma, as suggested by the use of the first person singular (e.g., Ps. 73:2, 13, 17, 22), Psalm 74 deals with it as a national dilemma, as supported by the use of the plural to denote those in whose name the psalm has been composed (e.g., Ps. 74:1, 4, 8). Psalm 73 demonstrates close parallels with Psalm 1. Psalm 74 seems to be closely related to Psalm 2.

Psalm 73 deals with the question of the prosperity of the wicked and seems to wonder at the reversal of what is claimed in Psalm 1. Psalm 1 claims confidently that the righteous prosper (v. 3) and the wicked perish (vv. 4-6). However, in Psalm 73 the psalmist ponders over the harsh reality that seems to imply the opposite. The psalmist claims that he saw “the prosperity of the wicked” (v. 3) and the righteous being pure in vain (v. 13). The predominant designation of the wicked in both Psalms 1 and 73 is רשעים (Pss. 1:1, 4, 5, 6; 73:3, 12). This seems to imply that the author of Psalm 73 identified himself with the righteous of Psalm 1 and trusted in “the symmetrical and congruent, reliable and well ordered world of Psalm 1” (Brueggemann, 1991b:72).

Psalm 74 discloses a number of linguistic and thematic parallels with Psalm 2. Both psalms begin with למה, “why,” and enquire about the wicked actions of pagan nations. However, in Psalm 74 the psalmist wonders about the tragic reversal of what is demonstrated in Psalm 2. In Psalm 2 the righteous king is firmly installed on Zion, the Lord’s hill that cannot be removed. In Psalm 74 Zion, the sanctuary of God lies in ruins (Ps. 74:3-8). The mention of Mount Zion in both psalms seems to be remarkable (Pss. 2:6; 74:2). In Psalm 2 Zion is the symbol of stability and strength of the king. In Psalm 74 Zion lies in ruins as the symbol of the utter defeat of Israel.

The predominant designation of the wicked in Psalms 2 and 74 is “enemies,” “nations,” “rulers” and “kings,” terms that can be understood synonymously to depict nations in war against Israel and her king (Pss. 2:1, 2, 8, 10; 74:3, 10, 18, 22). The clamour of enemies in Psalm 74 seems to echo the uproar of the nations in Psalm 2. While Psalm 1 and 73 deal with the question of prosperity, Psalms 2 and 74 deal with the nations conspiring (Ps. 2) and finally raging war against the king of Israel (Ps. 74). The parallels between Psalms 2 and 74 are highlighted by the common reference to the king of Israel. In both Psalms 2 and

74 the interest and prosperity of Israel is embodied in the king who dwells on Zion (Pss. 2:6; 74:12). Another parallel points further to the reversal of fate in Psalms 2 and 74. Psalm 2 shows how the Lord laughs, scoffs and rebukes the rebellious nations (vv. 4 and 5). In Psalm 74 the enemies mock and revile the Lord's name (vv. 10, 11, 22). In Psalm 2 the Lord rises up and speaks (v. 6-9). In Psalm 74 the Lord is mute and Israel calls to her God to rise and act (v. 1, 10, 11, 19-22). The parallels between Psalms 2 and 74 require further analysis, but the analysis offered here seems to suffice for the intention of relating the two psalms together.

3.2.3.2 The Sanctuary Experience in Psalms 73 and 74

In both Psalms 73 and 74 the sanctuary emerges as the place where the conflict and the solution reach their peak (Pss. 73:17; 74:3-8). While most scholars take verse 17 to be the turning point in Psalm 73 (e.g., Allen, 1997b:6), some scholars rightly see verse 15 as the pivot of the psalm (McCann, 1993:141; Crenshaw, 2001:117). In verse 15 the psalmist realizes that if he keeps on talking the same way as in the past, he would be unfaithful to his community of faith and might cause them to go astray. It is remarkable that it is the psalmist's sense of belonging to his community of faith that led him closer to God and to the sanctuary where the genuine transformation took place. This illustrates how communal piety and personal integrity are interwoven. A significant question begs to be answered: What kind of knowledge or experience in the sanctuary marked the transformation of the psalmist in both psalms?

Scholarly interpretations of the psalmist's experience vary and may be classified in four general approaches as suggested by Clayton (2006:127,128). The first approach, which is implied by the New Jerusalem Bible, takes *מקדשי אל* ("the sanctuaries of God") to refer to the ruined pagan sanctuaries which serve as a tangible proof of God's judgment over the wicked. Similarly Birkeland interprets the phrase to refer to the illegitimate sanctuaries in Israel in contrast to the sanctuary in Jerusalem (quoted by Clayton, 2006:128). This interpretation does not seem to fit the structural and thematic design of the related group of psalms to which Psalm 73 belongs, i.e., Psalm 73-78 as was discussed before.

Moreover, the plural *מקדשי אל* (literally “the sanctuaries of God”) in Psalm 73:17 is interpreted by the majority of scholars to refer to the multiple holy precincts within the sanctuary or temple complex as in Psalm 68:35 (e.g., Tate, 1990:229; Bratcher & Reyburn, 1991:640; Davidson, 1998:234).

The New Jerusalem Bible translation “the sanctuaries of the gods,” does not seem adequate for at least three reasons. First, the holy places in verse 17 are not described as ruined. Verses 18 and 19 speak of God ruining the wicked rather than their temples. Second, verse 17 pictures the psalmist entering the holy place and receiving a new understanding or revelation there. In the holy place the psalmist gains a new sense of God’s presence: “Yet I am always with you” (v. 23); “But as for me, it is good to be near God” (v. 28). This experience is more appropriately related to God’s sanctuary than to ruined pagan temples. Third, the psalm ends with the psalmist’s resolution “I will tell of all your deeds” (v. 28) which could fit a religious festival taking place in the sanctuary of God (e.g., Pss. 26:7; 91:2; 105:2; 107:22; 145:4, 6, 11).

The use of the plural to refer to the sanctuary of God may function to intensify the holiness of the place or it could reflect a common Canaanite practice of designating holy places with plural forms (Tate, 1990:229). It seems best to take the term to mean “the holy places of God,” which may designate the sanctuary in all its manifold parts as illustrated by Jeremiah 51:51 and Leviticus 21:23 (Tate, 1990:229; Bratcher & Reyburn, 1991:640; Davidson, 1998:234). It is still very hard to discern whether the reference is to the Solomonic temple or the postexilic temple (Tate, 1990:229) or the heavenly sanctuary of God as taken by New American Bible and Dahood (Bratcher & Reyburn, 1991:640).

A second group of scholars contends for a more spiritualized meaning and suggests that *מקדשי אל* means “holy things” or “the mysteries of God” (Davidson, 1998:234). Davidson (1998:234) rightly argues that “there is no other place in the Old Testament where the word means mystery.” Thus the psalmist’s problem cannot be seen “to lie in shallow rationalism that has not probed deeply enough into the mysteries of God” (Davidson, 1998:234).

The third approach presents a more literal understanding of *מקדשי אל* and interprets the phrase to refer to the sanctuary. Goulder (1996:59) contends that the psalmist looks at the ruins of the destroyed sanctuary when the

conviction comes to him overwhelmingly that the enemy has gone too far and so sealed their ruin at the last judgment of God. This interpretation has its appeal especially in the light of the relationship between Psalms 73 and 74. However, it seems very unlikely that the sight of the destroyed sanctuary could have provoked such strong feelings of the closeness of God that are found in the latter part of the psalm, after the psalmist entered the sanctuary (e.g., vv. 23-26, 28). Phrases such “it is good to be near God” (v. 28), “my refuge” (v. 28), “my portion forever” (v. 26) and “I will tell of all your deeds” (v. 28) are best understood in the context of the sanctuary as in other psalms. The references to the community of faith (vv. 18 and 28) reinforce the notion that the psalmist is entering the sanctuary at the time of one of the great festivals in Israel and confirm that “there is a strong communal dimension to the psalmist’s experience” (McCann, 1993:141).

The psalmist experiences his remarkable transformation probably through sharing in one of the great Hebrew religious festivals, such as the Passover or the New Year festival (Davidson, 1998:234). McCann suggests that the psalmist could have experienced “a priestly oracle of salvation, some sort of festal presentation, a Levitical sermon, or some kind of mystical experience” (quoted by Clayton, 2006:124). Bratcher and Reyburn (1991:640) argue that “the language suggests a special revelation from God, either in a vision or through the inspired word of a priest” and that “[p]erhaps some ritual was involved.” McCann (1993:141) points to the communal aspect of the psalmist’s experience. He writes,

What brings the psalmist through his crisis of faith is apparently the sense of identity as a member of God’s people. This sense of identity, this sense of belonging to God and thus belonging to God’s people, is solidified in worship (vv. 16-17).

The cultic piety certainly strengthened the personal piety in the moments of crisis. The cult provided the place for those who were troubled to pour out their thoughts and emotions before the Lord (e.g., 1 Sam. 2). It was customary for the afflicted to receive a response in God’s name from the temple personnel (Allen, 1997b:6). Mays (1994a:243) nicely remarks that on entering the sanctuary, the psalmist entered the sphere of the powerful presence of God and “[t]he certainty he was given was not merely belief in the doctrine that the wicked perish; it was more certainty of God as his God.” Worship in the temple

during the festivals revived the memories of God's great acts in the past. However, Allen (1997b:7) rightly observes that in Psalm 73 "[t]here is a 'personal' application of Yahweh's ancient threat and execution of judgment to the contemporary situation of moral and religious chaos." The presence of God brought the certainty of faith where the uncertainty of understanding existed in the past. The transformation of the psalmist has to do with the "effect of God's presence, as God lifts the ungodly out of despair over evil" (Clayton, 2006:132). Mays (1994a:243) asserts that the possibility of experiencing the presence of God was the ministry and mystery of the sanctuary as demonstrated in other psalms (e.g., Pss. 26:8; 27:4; 43:3; 65:4; 89).

In the fourth interpretive tradition, the scholars relate Psalm 73 to the wisdom schools and argue that the psalmist arrives at his transformation, not by means of religious faith, but through a scholarly wisdom discussion (Clayton, 2006:129). They base their views on the presence of a number of wisdom elements in the psalm. For example, verse 1 is presented in proverbial form since it is addressed neither to God in prayer nor to the congregation which is mentioned in the third person as "Israel" (Allen, 1982:114). Allen (1982:114) rightly observes that the proverbial saying in verse 1 is undoubtedly based on the liturgical formula used in a thank-offering service (e.g., Jer. 33:11). He provides a number of indications that make it difficult "to deny that the psalm was composed for cultic testimony" (Allen, 1982:118). These include allusions to the contents of the entrance liturgy form. He argues that Psalm 15 and Isaiah 33:13-16 provide striking points of contact with the description of the wicked in Psalm 73:2-12 and thus contends that Psalm 73 depicts the wicked as unworthy of cultic participation (Allen, 1982:117). The psalmist's confession of a wrong attitude to God in Psalm 73 corresponds to the expressions of regret encountered at times in thanksgiving songs (Allen, 1982:116). However, "[t]he wisdom elements in the psalm present no obstacle to cultic usage since wisdom and cult need not be regarded as mutually exclusive entities" (Allen, 1982:118). Clayton (2006:132) rightly remarks that this point provides a theological link to the eschatological trajectory of the sanctuary in the psalms. The sanctuary in the eschatological hope of Israel is discussed in more detail in Chapter 5 of this study.

In Psalm 74 the destruction of the sanctuary provokes the people to re-examine their ways and renew their alliance with the Lord. In the presence of the burned sanctuary they fear that the Lord has rejected them forever (v. 1). The present misery can be explained only in terms of God's anger (v. 1). "Perhaps it is the smoke rising from the burning sacred sites throughout the land (cf. v. 8) that gives added poignancy to the metaphorical use of the word "smoke" in the phrase "Why does your anger smoke?" in verse 1 (Davidson, 1998:237). They remember that they are the people that God purchased of old, the tribe of God's inheritance and the people whom God redeemed (v. 2). It is clear in the psalm that the nation acknowledges that their whole existence is rooted in the initiative of God (Davidson, 1998:237) though there is no sign of repentance and remorse for the sins which caused the destruction of the sanctuary and God's departure from them. The frequent use of words "you" and "your" (e.g., vv. 2, 4, 7, 22) and numerous calls to God to act demonstrate the people's surrender to the Lord (e.g., vv. 2, 3, 11, 22).

Clayton (2006:124) asserts that "certainty on the precise nature of the experience in the sanctuary is not possible." However, one thing is certain in Psalm 73. Crenshaw (2001:123) nicely describes it:

Of one thing we can be certain. The fresh insight has something to do with a place. Here is identified as a sacred spot, presumably the temple, but the decisive thing concerns a relationship that blossoms in that holy environment ... Regardless of the actual manner by which inner renewal came about, a change is apparent. The burden is lifted, and the psalmist proceeds to tell others what is now certain.

Smith (1974:163) remarks that Psalm 73 represents "inquiry into the nature of man's communion with God, and the problem of suffering is really only the occasion of departure for this." This comment is true also of Psalm 74. In both Psalms 73 and 74 the sanctuary brings the psalmists closer to God though some questions are still unresolved.

3.2.3.3 The Sanctuary in Psalms 1 and 2 and the Concluding Psalms of the Psalter

The concluding psalms of the Psalter seem to revisit the major concerns expressed by Psalms 1, 2, 73 and 74 that have been discussed before. An

attempt is made here to point to certain linguistic and thematic parallels between Psalms 1, 2, 73, 74 and the concluding psalms of the Psalter.

The righteous in Psalms 1 and the final psalms of the Psalter engage in similar activities. The righteous in Psalm 1:2 delight (חִפֵּץ meaning “delight,” “pleasure”) in the law of the Lord. The righteous in Psalm 149:2 rejoice (שִׂמְחָה meaning “to rejoice,” “to be glad”) and are glad (Hebrew, גִּיל meaning “to exult,” “to rejoice”) in the Lord. Since the righteous in Psalm 1:2 delight in the law of the Lord, the Lord delights (רִצָּה meaning “to delight,” “to take pleasure in”) in his people in Psalm 149:4. The psalmist in Psalm 73:28 acknowledges that “it is good to be near (קָרַב) God.” The righteous in Psalm 1:2 meditates (הִגִּד meaning “to meditate,” “to murmur,” “to speak”) on the law of God. The righteous in Psalm 145:5 meditates (שִׂיחָ meaning “to meditate,” “to declare”) on God’s wonderful works. Psalm 145:18 says that “the Lord is near (קָרַב) to all who call on him.” Psalm 148:14 depicts Israel as “the people close (קָרַב) to his [God’s] heart.” The law of God is a prominent part of the identity of the righteous in both Psalm 1 and the final psalms (Pss. 1:2; 147:19, 20).

Both Psalms 1 and the final psalms of the Psalter tell of the final destruction of the wicked at the Lord’s judgment (e.g., Pss. 1:4-6; 145:20; 146:9; 149:7-9). The Lord’s judgment is described in similar terms in Psalm 1 and the concluding psalms of the Psalter. In Psalm 1:6, “the Lord watches over (יִדַּע) the way of the righteous, but the way (דֶּרֶךְ) of the wicked (רָשָׁעִים) will perish.” In Psalm 145:20, “the Lord watches over (שָׁמַר) all who love him, but all the wicked (רָשָׁעִים) he will destroy.” In a similar way, in Psalm 146:9, “the Lord watches over (שָׁמַר) the alien and sustains the fatherless and the widow, but he frustrates the ways (דֶּרֶךְ) of the wicked (רָשָׁעִים).”

In Psalm 2:6 Zion stands as the unshakable guarantee of the prosperity of Israel. In Psalm 74:3, 4 Zion lies in ruins as the symbol of the utter destruction of Israel by her enemies. Psalm 147:2 expresses new hope in rebuilding Jerusalem and the temple, and reaffirms the promises of Psalm 2:6. The glorious prospects of the king ruling over his enemies from Zion in Psalm 2:6 are severely questioned by the rule of enemies in Ps 74:4-8; 18-23. Psalm 146:10 reaffirms that “the Lord reigns forever, your God, O Zion, for all generations.” Psalm 149:2 gives hope that the people of Zion will be glad in

their king. The Lord is subject to shame in Ps 74:18-23 but he is exalted forever in Psalms 146-150. In Psalm 2:6, 7 the Lord's son (בן) is honoured as the king on Zion. In Psalm 149:2, 4 the Lord honours (פאר meaning "to honour," "to crown," "to glorify") the people (בן) of Zion.

The introductory psalms (Pss. 1 and 2), the psalms found in the middle of the Psalter (Pss. 73 and 74) and the final psalms of the Psalter (Pss. 145-150) may be brought together by their common concerns for the law of God (Pss. 1:2; 147:19, 20), the king (Pss. 2:6; 74:12; 149:2), Zion (Pss. 2:6; 74:2; 149:2) and the people of God (Pss. 2:7; 74:19; 149:2).

The possible parallels between Psalm 1, 2, 73, 74 and the final psalms of the Psalter certainly deserve further study. However, the discussed parallels seem to be sufficient to suggest that the concluding psalms of the Psalter confirm the certain world of Psalms 1 and 2 and reply to the concerns of Psalms 73 and 74 in regard to the prosperity of the wicked and destruction of the sanctuary. McCann (2011:71) rightly remarks that the effect of these parallels is to recall both Psalms 1 and 2 and the theological heart of the Psalter.

According to Jacobson (2011:111) the dominant theological confession of the Psalter centres on the faithfulness of the Lord. A number of scholars agree that this question lies at the heart of the crisis of faith expressed in the Psalter (e.g., Smith, 1974:162; Brueggemann, 1991b:71-75; Allen, 1997b:1-9). Jacobson (2011:132) recognizes three means in the Psalter through which God's fidelity is made available to Israel and the world: "These three means are the Davidic king, the city of Jerusalem, and the people of God." Creach (2011:59) argues that the three subjects, i.e., the king, Mount Zion and torah, represent tangible signs of God's sovereignty and may be understood as organizing rubrics of the Psalter. Without going into the details of Jacobson's and Creach's arguments, the study of parallels between Psalms 1, 2, 73, 74 and the concluding psalms of the Psalter reveals that the motifs of the law of God, the king, the city of Jerusalem or Zion and the people of God are crucial in these psalms. Psalms 1 and 2 proclaim the prosperity of the king, Zion and the people of God. Psalms 73 and 74 express a crisis of faith when the king, Zion and the people of God are put to shame. Psalms 147-150 restore the faith in the proclamation of Psalms 1 and 2 and celebrate the victory of the Lord.

However, the message of the concluding psalms is not a simple repetition of what was declared in Psalms 1 and 2. Allen (2002:397) remarks that Psalm 149 is most probably “an eschatological hymn that looks forward to a future victory wrought by Yahweh on Israel’s behalf.” He rightly asserts that the “new song” of verse 1 praises “the coming dynamic intervention of Yahweh into history in an unprecedented and final manner.” He points to the parallels between Psalm 149 and Isaiah 61 which prophetically proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour. Kraus (quoted by Clayton, 2006:133) comments on the new dimension brought in the final psalms of the Psalter, by noting “what in this world can no longer be demonstrated empirically is cleared up *prophetically*.” The role of the sanctuary in the eschatological hopes of ancient Israel is discussed further in Chapter 5.

3.2.4 Sanctuary at the Vantage Points of Break between the Five Books

Each of the five books of the Psalter opens with a psalm depicting a sanctuary scene or imagery. Psalm 3 for Book I depicts the Lord answering from his holy hill (v. 4).

Psalm 42:2, 4 opens Book II with the psalmist’s longing to meet with God and his memories of leading the procession to the house of God. Psalm 43:3, 4 follows with the same yearning of the psalmist to visit the altar and God’s holy dwelling.

Psalms 73:17 and 74:2-8 open Book III with the psalmist entering the sanctuary to understand the end of the wicked and the psalmist’s concerns for God’s sanctuary being defiled by the enemies.

Psalms 90:1, 91:1 and 93:5 open Book IV with depicting the Lord as Israel’s true dwelling place and shelter, and admiring the holiness and beauty of the Lord’s house.

Psalms 107:22, 32 opens Book V with the call to God’s people to exalt God in the holy assembly with thank offerings. Psalm 108:7 depicts God speaking from his sanctuary.

The concluding psalm of the Psalter, Psalm 150, calls the worshipers to praise God in his sanctuary (v. 1).

Wilson rightly argues that the appearance of royal psalms at three out of four of the significant junctures which mark the boundaries between the five books of the Psalter cannot be accidental but displays an apparent theological development. In the same way, the appearance of the sanctuary motif in every psalm which opens a new book of the Psalter and in the Psalms 1 and 150 which open and close the Psalter as a book cannot be accidental. Rather, it seems plausible to conclude that the opening psalms of each of the five books of the Psalter promote the sanctuary motif.

An attempt to understand the “narrative” told by the sanctuary motif as it progresses through the Psalter and its relation to the piety of the psalmists and final editors is made in Chapter 5. This attempt seems to promise fruitful results, as the sanctuary is not an ordinary place of worship, as discussed above. The intentional mention of the sanctuary at the opening of each of the five Books of the Psalter seems to suggest that such a “narrative” exists.

3.3 The Sanctuary in the Torah Psalms

James L. Mays (1987:3,9; 1994b:128-135) understands the torah psalms as the key to the final form of the Psalter, insisting on Psalms 1, 19, and 119 as introduction (Ps. 1) and conclusion (Ps. 119) of the original book of Psalms to which editors added later material. He suggests that the book of Psalms should be viewed through the torah psalms because of their specific locations in the Psalter. The torah psalms “provide the central clue to the way the Psalms, individually and as a book, were read and understood at the time of their composition and inclusion” (Mays, 1987:3).

Mays suggests that the Psalms should be interpreted in the context of the torah piety. He (1987:12) argues correctly that “this piety was quite different from any self-righteous, single-minded legalism. Its basic religious commitments were the devotion to the instruction of the Lord and trust in the reign of the Lord.” In the light of torah piety, “[t]he psalms are the liturgy for those whose concern and delight is torah of the Lord” (Mays, 1987:9; 1994b:134).

Mays acknowledges the correlation between the reading of the psalms (worship) and piety. He writes that “[t]he Psalms were reread in the light of this

piety and it in turn was constantly shaped by the use of the Psalms” (Mays, 1987:12).

Whybray seems to follow in the same direction, though he argues that “there is no tangible evidence of a consistent attempt to link the whole collection of psalms together by editorial means” (Whybray, 1996:84). He contends that editorial glosses or editorial interpolations of wisdom material that are dispersed throughout the Psalter (e.g., Pss. 18:21-25; 19:8-15; 27:11; 32:8, 9; 86:11) may reflect an attempt to reinterpret the psalms in the light of torah piety. Whybray’s hypothesis sheds additional light on the significance of torah piety in the Psalms, though Crenshaw (2001:103) rightly objects that his approach is problematic since it lacks objective criteria for recognizing editorial glosses in the psalms.

Mays believes that Psalms 1, 19 and 119 do not stand isolated in the Psalter. Expression of torah piety can be found scattered throughout the Psalter, primarily in Psalms 18, 25, 33, 78, 89, 93, 94, 99, 105, 111, 112, and 147. He argues that “this harvest of texts contains a profile of an understanding of the Lord’s way with people and the world that is organized around torah” (Mays, 1987:8).

An attempt is made here to demonstrate that torah piety is not alienated from the sanctuary. It has already been demonstrated that Psalm 1 points to the sanctuary as the best place for the righteous to dwell and the ultimate goal of the torah instruction.

In Psalms 19 and 119 the Lord is depicted as the redeemer (Pss. 19:14; 119:154). The motif of God’s redemption appears throughout the Psalter (e.g., Pss. 72:14; 78:35; 103:4; 107:2; 119:154). For the ancient Israelites the idea of redemption was inevitably related to the sanctuary (e.g., Lev. 25; 27; Num. 35), and the Year of Jubilee (Lev. 25) as the time of ultimate redemption of the people and the land.

Psalm 19 opens with the description of the glory of God which fills the heavens, which are called in Hebrew אהל, which means the “tent” or “tabernacle” (Ps. 19:1, 4[5]). This description is strikingly reminiscent of the depiction of the glory of God filling the tabernacle in the time of Moses in the wilderness (Exod. 40:34, 35) and of the glory of God filling the temple of Solomon at the time of its

consecration (2 Chr. 5:14 and 7:1-3). Though the “tent” in verse 4 most likely refers to the wedding canopy or the room in which the marriage is consummated, as suggested by the description of the sun as the bridegroom (Craigie, 1983:181; Davidson, 1998:71), the association of the אהל (tent) with כבוד (God’s glory) strongly suggests more than that, i.e., an image of a celestial temple or sanctuary. It seems that for the psalmist the whole heaven is the temple of God. This conclusion can be drawn also from the parallelisms in Psalm 20:2, 6 where the words “sanctuary,” “Zion” and “holy heaven” are used interchangeably to describe the same destination, i.e., the dwelling of the Lord.

Psalm 19 closes with the psalmist’s prayer to be forgiven and protected from various errors and sins. The terms used to define the various aspects of sinful human nature and practice reveal the psalmist’s great dependence on how sin was defined by the cult. “Errors” in verse 12 (v. 13 in Hebrew) is the translation of Hebrew שגיאות, which refers to sin through ignorance. Similarly the following term, “hidden faults,” is the translation of Hebrew נסתרות נקני, v. 12 (v. 13 in Hebrew). The Hebrew נסתרות נקני is not to be taken as faults which the psalmist purposely conceals, but ones which are unknown to the psalmist, i.e., ones that he is unaware of doing (Bratcher & Reyburn, 1991:195). The psalmist is fully aware of unintended errors which are dealt with in Leviticus 4 and 5, as Mays (1994b:130) points out, but also in other numerous places in the Five Books of Moses (Lev. 22:14; Num. 15).

“Wilful sins” in verse 13 is the translation of Hebrew זדים (v. 14 in Hebrew). This phrase is not clear since the Hebrew only says “the presumptuous (ones)” (Bratcher & Reyburn, 1991:195; Craigie, 1983:178; Wood, 1980:239). The Hebrew זדים can also be translated as “the arrogant (ones)” (Bratcher & Reyburn, 1991:195; Wood, 1980:239), “insolent (ones)” (Brown *et al*, 1996:267), “proud (ones)” (Wood, 1980:239). In the adjective form it refers twelve times to people and once to sins (Wood, 1980:239), if the instance in Psalm 19:13(14) is interpreted as referring to sins. However, a number of interpreters and translators translate the word as “presumptuous persons” (e.g., Craigie, 1983:178; Davidson, 1998:73; “TOB, FRLC, GECL, NJV footnote,” Bratcher & Reyburn, 1991:195) relying on the use of this word elsewhere (e.g. Pss. 86:14; 119:51, 69) (Davidson, 1998:73).

However, the context which speaks about various aspects of sin seems to support the translation provided by the majority of English versions which take the Hebrew adjective to describe sins (e.g., “wilful sins” [NIV], “presumptuous [sins]” [KJV, ESV, NASB, RSV, ASV, WEB], “deliberate sins” [NLT]). The psalmist begins by looking at the heavens and reflecting on the torah, and these evoke praise; but as he turns from these glorious revelations of God to himself he becomes aware of his own insignificance (Craigie, 1983:182). Beginning in verse 12 the psalmist describes his own unworthiness by listing the various aspects of sin. His ultimate desire is to “be blameless, innocent of great transgression” (v. 13). The culmination of his desires is found in the conclusion of the psalm, in verse 14, where he wishes that both his mouth, i.e., his outward actions, and heart, i.e., his inner being, be pleasing to his God. The psalmist uses various terms to describe his desire that all the aspects of his being may be free from all the sins.

The priestly legislation of the Torah recognizes two main categories of sin: a sin unintentionally committed either on account of ignorance of the law or mistaken assumption about the nature of the offense, and a sin performed in the full awareness of its illicit nature (Sarna, 1993:93). As shown before, the Hebrew נסתרות נקני in verse 12, translated as “hidden faults,” refers to faults which are unknown to the psalmist, i.e., ones that he is unaware of doing. Immediately following in verse 13, the Hebrew word זדים seems to best refer to the sins of which one is fully aware or the deliberate violation of the Torah, in contrast to “hidden faults” in verse 12 (Bratcher & Reyburn, 1991:195). Having in mind that only in the case of sins unintentionally committed does the Torah prescribe expiation by means of sacrifice (Sarna, 1993:93), it becomes clear why the psalmist is asking God to forgive his “hidden faults” and *keep him from* זדים, “wilful sins.” The Hebrew word השך translated as “keep from” (NIV, NLT) or “keep back from” (KJV, ESV, NASB, RSV, ASV) means also “restrain,” “do not allow,” “don’t let” (Bratcher & Reyburn, 1991:195), “hold back,” “preserve,” “save,” “deliver” (Davidson, 1970:279), “hinder,” “refrain” (Brown and others, 1996:362). These terms reveal the psalmist’s plea to prevent the initiation of such sin.

The interpretation of זדים as “wilful sins” seems to be strongly supported by the immediate mention of blamelessness and innocence of great transgression as

the motivation for the deliverance from זרים. The motif of blamelessness mentioned in Ps 19:13 is closely related to sin and the cult (e.g., Exodus 34:7; Numbers 5:28, 31; 14:18; Deuteronomy 5:11). Moreover, Sarna (1993:95) rightly points out that in asking that his words gain acceptance before God (v. 14), the psalmist employs terminology characteristic of the priestly legislation concerning sacrificial cult. If the prescribed norms are not observed, the sacrifice is said to be unacceptable and the relationship with God that it intended to restore remains broken (e.g., Exod. 28:38; Lev. 1:3; 7:18; 19:7; 22:19-21, 23, 25, 27, 29; 23:11). The “great transgression” (בַּשֵּׁעַ רָבָּה in Hebrew) in this context may refer to gross sin in general (Craigie, 1983:183).

In the light of the previous interpretation the title גֹּאֵל, i.e., “redeemer,” given to the Lord in verse 14 gets a new connotation. The word was used to describe God who delivers his people out of slavery in Egypt (Exod. 6:6; Ps 77:15) and Babylon (Isa. 43:1; 44:22-23), and from all that threatens life (Job 19:25; 33:28; Ps 103:4) (Davidson, 1998:74). In Psalm 19:13 the psalmist portrays sins as “living beings, or powers, that can rule a person” (Bratcher and Reyburn, 1991:195) and God as his redeemer who can deliver him from the slavery to sin. Though this word is never used before in connection with salvation from sin (Sarna, 1993:96), the context seems to suggest that the psalmist is using the word with that new connotation in mind.

Psalm 19:12-14 illustrates how the psalmist describes himself using the cultic designations for sin. He also calls himself “your servant” (v. 13) which is “the liturgical designation of one who belongs to the Lord and is dependent on the Lord” (Mays, 1994a:99). Furthermore, he describes the torah with the Hebrew word תְּמִימָה (v. 8 in Hebrew), meaning “perfect,” “without blemish,” that is, the word which is also characteristic of the priestly legislation pertaining to sacrifice (Sarna, 1993:95).

Mays interprets the psalmist’s offer of his words and meditations of his heart (v. 14) as the acceptable sacrifice to accompany his prayer. In other words, “the recited psalm performs a cultic function without the cultic procedure of sacrifice” and it becomes “the primary medium of worship” (Mays, 1994b:130). Sarna (1993:95) explains that by

drawing upon the formulaic phraseology of the sacrificial cult, the psalmist very subtly intimates that the utterances of the heart in spiritual, prayerful communion with God perform the same function as does sacrifice. This conviction is reiterated explicitly in a later psalm (141:2), where the psalmist pleads that his prayer might be as favourably received as the incense-offering, his outspread hands as acceptable as the evening meal-offering.

However, this does not necessarily mean that the psalm bears an anti-cultic notion of any kind. It may be understood as the supplication of the psalmist who is unable to visit the temple or as an expression of the true piety which understands that a cultic act of sacrifice must be accompanied with the sacrifice of the heart.

The association of cult and worship of heart is clearly demonstrated in the Pentateuch. The physical circumcision had to be accompanied by the circumcision of the heart (Deut. 10:16). The circumcision of the heart was by no means intended as a replacement of the physical circumcision. The biblical sense of torah has to be differentiated from a modern understanding of law as a requirement of the state. Torah is primarily the way of life in personal commitment to God (Mann, 1988:157-161). Torah is designated even as a source of life, as clearly stated in Leviticus 18:5a: “Keep my decrees and laws, for the man who obeys them will live by them.” Decrees and laws are not to be understood legalistically here. The ideas of obedience to God’s demands and loving him from the heart were viewed as the single concept of a “covenant of love” (Deut. 6:3-5; 7:9, 12) (Selman, 2003:512-513). Selman (2003:499-500) rightly argues that torah incorporates both narrative and law of the Pentateuch, i.e., it cannot be restricted to the laws of the Pentateuch, but it must be viewed in the context of the Pentateuch’s entire narrative framework. The Book of Leviticus is a manual of cultic instructions on how to remain fit for being in the presence of God, and it is also a major stage within the plot of the Pentateuchal narrative about Israel living in God’s presence (Mann, 1988:113). Selman (2003:511) nicely observes that “[t]he immediate aim of the *tora* was to enable Israel to live as Yahweh’s covenant people, or, as Pentateuch puts it, as ‘a kingdom of priests and a holy nation’ (Ex. 19:6).” Meditating on torah refers to grasping the religion of torah which involves also meditating on cult as its inalienable aspect.

The piety of the psalmists can hardly be restricted to torah piety if this designation is understood to limit the piety to the study of the torah and the worship of the heart that is alienated from the cult. The psalmists' vocabulary, which relies heavily on the cult, betrays a particular piety which cannot be understood apart from the cult. The psalmist's heavy dependence on cultic language seems to suggest more than just the psalmist's attempt to transfer the blessings of the cult to the study of the torah and the worship of the heart. On the contrary, it seems that by relating the cult and the worship of the heart, the psalmist is revealing a deeper spiritual meaning of the cult.

Mays develops his idea that the shape of the Psalter betrays the idea that the Psalms should be read as meditations on the torah by showing the crucial role of the torah psalms in the literary structure of the Psalter. While agreeing with this idea, it has been shown that the psalmists' vocabulary, even in the torah psalms, relies heavily on the cult and likewise betrays a particular piety which cannot be understood apart from the cult. This seems to suggest that the "thought world" of the sanctuary cult is an inseparable part of the torah psalms and torah piety, and by means of these to the shape of the Psalter and the piety of the psalmists. A closer examination of torah piety in its relation to the sanctuary cult is presented in Chapter 5.

3.4 The Sanctuary and Implementation of God's Justice and Righteousness in the Psalter

Relying on Wilson's theory, J. Clinton McCann (1993:41-50; 2009:159-165), finds Psalms 93, 95-99 to be the theological heart of the Psalter. He recognizes the theological relationship between these so-called enthronement psalms and Psalms 1 and 2 which serve as a paired introduction and provide an interpretive agenda for the whole book. He argues that the two Hebrew roots (שפט "to judge" and צדק "to be just, righteous") that constitute a concise summary of God's will in Psalms 1-2 are found in Psalms 93, 95-99 as key terms expressing God's will for God's world (e.g., the root שפט in Pss. 96:13 [2x]; 97:2; 98:9; 99:4 [2x], and צדק in 96:13; 97:2, 6, 11, 12; 98:2, 9; 99:4). These two roots describe "the effects of God's reign, the most prominent of which is the establishment of justice or setting of things right on earth" (McCann, 1993:45).

In the rest of the Psalter McCann finds examples of the implementation of God's justice (שפט) and righteousness (צדק) which results in peace and happiness for the needy, the poor and all nations (e.g., Ps. 72). When these are not being implemented the psalmist finds refuge in God and expresses his hurt and hope in prayer.

McCann's insightful observations provide an additional key for examining the relationship between the sanctuary cult and the Psalms as the Hebrew roots שפט and צדק are the key terms for sanctuary theology. In Leviticus 19:15 and Deuteronomy 1:16; 4:8; 16:18, for example, both roots appear together. In these texts, the leaders are admonished to judge (שפט) in righteousness (צדק) (Lev. 19:15; Deut. 1:16; 16:18) having in mind that God is the ultimate judge of all (Deut. 1:17).

The sanctuary was designated as the place of divine judgment as indicated by the judgment of Urim (Num. 27:21) and by the breastplate of judgment of the high priest (Exod. 28:15, 29, 30). The cultic decrees are called "righteous judgments" (Deut. 4:8). Accordingly a number of psalms depict God as the one who sits enthroned ready to judge the world and relates this imagery closely to the sanctuary (e.g., Pss. 9:4, 7, 8, 19; 50:2, 6, 8, 23; 96:6, 10, 13).

The sanctuary was also the place of cleansing and forgiveness of sin (e.g., Leviticus 4:26, 31, 35). The purpose of the cultic acts was to restore the worshiper's righteousness as indicated by the name of "sacrifices of righteousness" (Deut. 33:19; cf. Ps. 4:5[6]).

Not surprisingly, therefore, McCann finds the two key concepts of God's justice (שפט) and righteousness (צדק) at the theological heart of the Psalter, i.e., Psalms 93, 95-99, which portray God ruling in or from his sanctuary as demonstrated before in this study (e.g., Pss. 93:5; 96:6, 9; 99:7, 9).

McCann rightly argues for the eschatological nature of these psalms in the light of the historical context which includes the exile, the loss of the land and the monarchy. For example, Psalm 96:13 proclaims that the Lord is "coming to judge" and "will judge". He points to the close parallels between the enthronement psalms and Isaiah 40-55, which also represents a response to the apparent situation, that the Lord did not reign, and highlights the common call in both scriptural references to respond with obedience and a "new song" to

the proclamation of God's reign (e.g., Isa. 42:10; Pss. 95:3,7; 96:1) in a context in which it appears that God does not reign (McCann, 1993:45-47).

The important moment in the above mentioned historical context is also the loss of the temple. McCann agrees with Mays that the enthronement psalms might have been used in some temple festival to celebrate or re-enact the enthronement of the Lord, but in the final form of the Psalter they function differently, i.e., eschatologically. "They no longer refer only to what happened in the cult, but as well as to what was promised in the prophecy" (Mays, 1987:10). What was promised in the prophecy, i.e., the "new thing" (Isa 42:9; 43:19; 48:6; 52:7; Ps 96:10) which the Lord is doing, McCann (1993:46) accurately relates to God's reign (Isa 42:1; 45:22-23; 49:1-6; 52:10; 55:4-5; Ps 96:7, 10, 13). The "new thing" which the Lord is doing involves God's reign which goes beyond the present historical state of Israel in the prophets' and psalmists' days. It involves the reign over all nations and peoples.

The reign of God is never separated from God's throne, God's dwelling place, the temple. The loss of the temple in Jerusalem did not mark the end of the sanctuary in the prophetic message. On the contrary, the new temple is a significant part of the eschatological hope of the full reign of God pictured by the prophets.

As the new reign of God envisioned by eschatological passages involves the reign that goes beyond the present state of Israel, the new sanctuary of God goes beyond the present Jerusalem temple, i.e., it involves all nations (Isa 56:7). The new temple supersedes the previous one in glory (e.g. Haggai 2:7, 9). The whole city of Jerusalem becomes God's temple (e.g., Isa. 54:11-13; 2 Chr. 3:6; Exod. 39:10-13). The prophet proclaims the glorious future restoration in the vision of a future glorious temple (Ezek. 47:1-12).

The sanctuary is given an eschatological meaning in the enthronement psalms and prophetic texts. This leads to the conclusion that the sanctuary continued to exist in the hopes and expectations of the people and continued to impact their piety even when the Jerusalem temple was laid in ruins. The future restoration of Israel's faithfulness to God which will result in the restoration of the land is always understood as part of the great future restoration of the temple (e.g., Isa. 33:5, 20-24; 35:10).

McCann understands the two Hebrew terms שפט “to judge” and צדק “to be just, righteous” as key terms expressing God’s will for God’s world and convincingly argues that the rest of the Psalter provides examples of situations in which these are being implemented or violated. It has been shown that these two Hebrew terms are crucial for the sanctuary. The sanctuary is the place of God’s judgment and righteousness. By bringing to attention the importance of these two concepts for the structure of the Psalter, McCann provides new ways of showing the importance of the sanctuary in the Psalter.

McCann (2011:65,66) points to a radical new accent to the relationship between divinity and the poor given in Psalm 82:3, 4. The radicalization is seen in the contrast between the Ancient Near Eastern understanding of the role of gods and the understanding of the divinity in Psalm 82. “In ancient Near Eastern texts the obligation to protect orphans, widows, and the dispossessed rested only on individual ‘law deities’” but Psalm 82 “makes this obligation of protection ... the essential characteristic of divinity pure and simple.” It cannot be missed that the sanctuary in the Psalter played that role (e.g., Pss. 14:7; 20:2; 68:5, 6).

The psalmists’ understanding of how God’s justice and righteousness were displayed in the sanctuary, how they were implemented in the affairs of the individual and the community, and the impact of the eschatological vision of the sanctuary on their piety are discussed in Chapter 5.

3.5 The Sanctuary and the Motifs of Happiness and Holiness in the Psalter

Mark D. Futato (2007:58-95) follows the general view of modern scholarship that Psalms 1 and 2 have been intentionally placed at the beginning of the Psalms as an introduction to the whole. From Psalm 1 he discerns the overarching purpose of the book of Psalms: the instruction for happiness and the instruction for holiness. He understands Psalm 2 to provide the clues to discover the overarching message of the Psalms which speaks of God as the king who is coming and who destined his people for glory.

Psalm 1:1-2 promises blessings to those who delight in the Lord’s *torah*. The Hebrew word תורה has a range of meanings. Futato (2007:60) classifies them in

three groups: 1) instruction or teaching, 2) an established instruction or law, 3) the summation of God's laws. In wisdom texts the word is commonly understood as "instruction or teaching." This meaning is applied to Psalm 1:2 by a number of scholars (e.g. Seybold, 1990:27; McCann, 1993:15-15, 26-27; Mays, 1994b:121-122).

However, Futato (2007:60-61) rightly points out that the word *torah* does not occur in isolation in Psalm 1:2, but occurs in the phrase תורת יהוה, meaning "the instruction of the Lord." Futato continues, effectively showing how this phrasing affects the understanding of the word תורה. In 2 Chronicles 34:14 and Ezra 7:6 the phrase undoubtedly refers to the Five Books of Moses. It is widely accepted that the Psalter had reached substantially its present form by the fourth century B.C.(Craigie, 1983:31), the same time as the writing of Chronicles and Ezra. So the phrase תורת יהוה in Psalm 1:2 naturally refers to the Five Books of Moses.

Mays (1994b:122) argues differently that the phrase תורת יהוה in Psalm 1:2 implies that "the hymns and prayers are to be read as torah of the Lord." He reinforces his point by relating the fivefold division of the Psalter to the five books of Moses. To him this proves the intention of the editors of the Psalter to present the Psalter as a "Davidic Torah." Though appealing, this argument seems to overlook certain points. The righteous in Psalm 1 as well as the righteous of Psalm 119 delight in the *torah of the Lord*, a phrase that is never applied to anything else but the Five Books of Moses. It seems very unlikely that the psalmists referred to their writings as the תורת יהוה. However, Mays rightly observes that the five books of the Psalter correspond to and refer to the five books of Moses. Yet this correspondence and response to the five books of Moses may also be understood as the expression and outcome of the psalmists' careful and devoted meditation on the torah of the Lord and not necessarily as a parallel or even rival "Pentateuch." As Futato (2007:61-62) puts it nicely, "the book of Psalms invites believers to meditate on the Five Books of Moses as a source of instruction for experiencing the joy/blessings (v. 1) and prosperity/success (v. 3) held out in Psalm 1," rather than pointing to itself as an independent or alternative source of pious meditation.

Futato's emphasis on the instructions for happiness and holiness as central to the shape of the Psalter proves to be very insightful for this study. The

instructions for happiness (blessedness) and the instructions for holiness are also crucial aspects of the purpose of the sanctuary. The sanctuary was a holy place and everything in it, including the priests who served in it, was consecrated (e.g., Exod. 29; 40; Num. 7; 2 Chr. 5-7). The sanctuary was also the place of blessings (e.g., Num. 6:22-27) and the place of refuge (1 Kgs. 1:49-51). Moreover, in the Old Testament the sanctuary is pictured as the place where God is coming to meet with his people and his glory is revealed (e.g., Exod. 25:8; 29:42-46; 40:34-38; Num. 12:4,5; 2 Chr. 6:2,21).

The twofold character of instructions in the Psalter seems to correspond to the twofold character of instructions of the Torah concerning the nature of Israel. Torah was given to the people of Israel to enable them to live as a kingdom of priests (Exod. 19:6). Selman (2003:511-513) describes the twofold character of the priesthood of Israel, i.e., it involved holiness (Exod. 22:31; Lev. 19:2; Deut. 26:16-19) and blessings (Deut. 7:14; 28:8). Israel's holiness was to be comprehensive, uniting worship with ethics and exercised in all aspects of life (Deut. 11:8-17; 28:38-64). Life under the authority of Torah would bring special blessings to the people of Israel (Deut. 28:8; 30:19, 20) who would then pass God's blessings on to other nations (Gen. 12:2, 3; Deut. 4:5-8; 26:19). A fine balance exists between blessing for obedience and curse for disobedience (Lev. 26:3-45; Deut. 27:12-28:68).

Selman (2003:512) remarks that the priesthood of Israel was to be based on the imitation of God who was holy (Lev. 19:2) and the source of blessing to others (Exod. 22:26, 27; Lev. 19:33, 34; Deut. 16:18-20). He nicely asserts that Torah was a means by which Israel could fulfil its own potential, i.e., live a life of holiness in the presence of God and bring the covenant blessings to other nations. Holiness and blessing are the essential characteristics of the priesthood of Israel.

Similarly, the instructions for holiness and happiness serve a unique purpose in the Psalter which seems to correspond to the twofold purpose of the priesthood of Israel. The instructions for holiness are given to instruct the worshiper how to abide in the presence of the holy God. A constant yearning for abiding in God's sanctuary is depicted throughout the Psalter (e.g., Pss. 15:1; 26:8; 27:4; 42:2; 43:3-4). Holiness is described as a mandatory requirement for entering the presence of God. The instructions for holiness in the Psalter view worship and

ethics as inseparably bound together (e.g., Pss. 15; 24:3-5; 101:7). Instructions for blessing in the Psalter are given to lead the worshiper to obedience to torah (Ps. 119:1). Blessings in the Psalter are bound to righteousness and obedience to God (e.g., Pss. 1; 5:4-12; 11:4-7; 119:2). The psalmists desire to testify about the goodness of God to others and extend the blessings of God to other nations (e.g., Pss. 35:18; 40:10; 96:7; 148:11). Curses for wickedness balance blessings for righteousness (e.g., Pss. 129:5-8; 137:8, 9), as was observed earlier in the Pentateuch.

The correspondence between the instructions for holiness and blessings in the Pentateuch and the Psalter seems to suggest that the Psalter intends to be a means of enabling the worshiper to fulfil the priestly role. The Psalter seems to give instructions for entering the sanctuary, the place of holiness and blessings, and abiding in the presence of the holy God. This is probably the reason why the Psalter ends with a picture of all creation praising God in his sanctuary (Ps. 150).

3.6 The Role of the Sanctuary in the Move from Obedience to Praise

Walter Brueggemann (1995:190) argues for a structure of the Psalter which in stylized form portrays the nature of the torah piety introduced in Psalm 1. This piety follows a progression from “hesed” (Hebrew, חֶסֶד) doubted (as in Psalm 25) to “hesed” trusted (as in Psalm 103) (Brueggemann, 1995:204). Brueggemann (1995:193) bases his argument on the conviction that “Psalms 1 and 150 provide special framing for the collection” and “assert the issues that should inform one’s reading and singing the Psalms.” Thus, Psalm 1 issues in obedience and Psalm 150 in praise at the perimeters of the Psalter. Brueggemann (1991b:68) further contends that

The entire Psalter lives between the pious, trusting, confident boundaries of obedience and praise. Not only are these Psalms the two boundaries of faithful living, but the sequence cannot be reversed. Faith is always obedience towards praise, and not praise toward obedience. From the perspective of torah piety embraced by the shapers of the Psalter, it would not do to open the Psalter with Psalm 150, nor to close it with Psalm 1. Obedience is the unavoidable initiating point of praise, and praise is the appropriate culmination of obedience.

The most important question in the Psalter is “how to move from Psalm 1 to Psalm 150, from glad duty to utter delight” (Brueggemann, 1995:196). The structure of the Psalms provides the answer.

Brueggemann (1991b:66) contends that Psalm 1 has a specific canonical purpose in the Psalter to set a tone for the reading of the rest of the collection. He asserts that the psalms can be properly understood only when they are read or sung by those who gladly participate in this community of obedience set forth by Psalm 1. “Those who fall outside this sturdy and confident conviction will find little of sustenance or value in the songs to follow.”

Brueggemann (1995:196-213) explains that because the world of Psalm 1 is not universally true, i.e., obedience is not always rewarded with prosperity, the psalmists face a crisis with only one solution and that is “to depart from the safe world of Psalm 1 and plunge into the middle of the Psalter where one will find a world enraged with suffering” (Brueggemann, 1995:197). Brueggemann (1991b:66) writes,

It is obvious that there is considerable tension between the claims of Psalm 1 and what follows in the Psalter. That tension makes clear that Psalm 1 intends to insist on a certain reading of the Psalter which seems against the grain of the poems themselves. When read unencumbered by Psalm 1, many of the other Psalms assert that the wicked are not cut off from the community, and that even the righteous have doubts about these claims. Psalm 1 wants, however, as much as possible to preclude such an awareness. That indeed is its canonical purpose.

According to Brueggemann and Miller (1996:45) Psalm 73 serves as the canonical marker of the Psalter. Psalm 73 stands at the centre of the Psalter in a crucial role of providing a linkage from obedience to praise and enacting the transformation necessary to make a move from doubting God’s “hesed” (חסד) to trusting it. McCann (1993:143) agrees with Brueggemann that “Psalm 73 embodies the theological message of the Psalter.”

Brueggemann’s designation of Psalm 73 as the centre of the Psalter is significant for this study because Psalm 73:17 clearly indicates the sanctuary (Hebrew, מקדשי אל meaning “the sanctuaries of God”) as the place where the transformation from doubt to trust, from obedience to praise, takes place. Without going into a long discussion about the meaning of the Hebrew term אל

מקדשי, here it is taken that the term refers to the sanctuary of God, for the following reasons: 1) the psalmist says that he “entered” (אָבִיָּא אֵל, meaning “I entered into”) which clearly indicates going into a place; 2) the Hebrew plural “the holy places” may designate the manifold parts of the one sanctuary as illustrated by Jeremiah 51:51, Ezekiel 21:7, and Leviticus 21:23 and may reflect the common Canaanite practice to designate dwellings with plural forms (Tate, 1990:229; Bratcher and Reyburn, 1991:640). 3) Though the use of the plural for the sanctuary is unusual, it appears elsewhere in the Psalter (Ps. 68:36). Thus, the sanctuary becomes central to the overall message of the Psalter, as the place where the psalmist obtained the necessary understanding which enabled him to move from doubt to praise.

Creach (1996a:17) may be right in observing that “[t]he main weakness of Brueggemann’s study is that the research assumes a general character of the Psalter (i.e. a movement from obedience to praise) without providing sufficient legitimation for such a reading.” Creach’s remark, however, may be brought as the critique for this and other research that assumes the general character of the Psalter and just illustrates the burden and challenge of the Psalter-shaping approach.

However, the move from doubt to praise is evident in the psalm itself. Psalm 73:1 opens with a clear declaration of belief in God’s goodness, but immediately in verse 2 and before coming into the sanctuary in verse 17, the psalmist apparently expresses his doubts. Phrases like “my feet almost slipped” (v. 2), “surely in vain have I kept my heart pure” (v. 13), “when I tried to understand all this, it was oppressive to me” (v. 16) undoubtedly reveal his struggles to follow in his faith. Verse 17 marks the turning point in the psalm, and without giving any details about the psalmist’s experience it clearly points to the sanctuary as the place where the transformation happened. The second part of Psalm 73 follows in a progressive praise of God which culminates in the psalmist’s affirmation of God’s goodness, his desire to be near God and his promise to declare of all God’s deeds (verse 16). These last three elements of the psalmist’s praise point to the cultic setting as illustrated by other passages in the Psalter (e.g., Pss. 23:6; 26:8, 12; 40:9).

Brueggemann contends that other psalms of the Psalter bring a new twist to God's *hesed* (חסד) apart from the notion of *hesed* celebrated in the concluding psalms. He (1995:200) points to Psalm 103, and writes:

This Psalm refutes the affirmation of Psalm 1 that the wicked perish. This Psalm instead affirms that the *hesed* of Yahweh will override guilt and permit the guilty to live, and even to prosper. To be sure, this remarkable offer of steadfast love is "to those who fear him", the obedient ones envisioned in Psalm 1.

The *hesed* (חסד) trusted has thus a specific reason to be the *hesed* celebrated as it provides forgiveness and a new beginning. The sanctuary is undoubtedly the place where forgiveness of sins could be obtained and the blessings of God mediated and celebrated (e.g., Pss. 35:17, 18; 48:9; 65:3, 4).

3.7 The Sanctuary as Refuge in the Psalter

While greatly indebted to the works of Wilson and Mays, Creach departs from them methodologically and "instead of examining the Psalter from the perspective of a certain type of psalm (i.e., Mays) or from the vantage point of breaks between collections (i.e., Wilson)," his study "evaluates the shape of the book in the light of a common and recurring idea ('refuge') that appears early on as an apparent part of an editorial plan" (Creach, 1996a:18).

In his search for the original points of reference for the Israelite metaphor of refuge, Creach (1996a:59-73) proposes three possible origins of the metaphor: 1) the sanctuary as a place of safety and asylum, 2) the protection of the mother bird, and 3) natural hiding places in the Palestinian countryside.

Creach (1996a:60-62) provides a number of examples that illustrate the role of the sanctuary as the refuge in the ancient Israelite support the idea that Yahweh as refuge arises from the identification of the sanctuary as the source of security and protection. Israelite sanctuary was the place of asylum, because it was the place where God abodes and afforded protection (e.g., 1 Kgs. 1:49-53) as illustrated by a number of references in the Psalms (e.g., Pss. 23:6; 61:5; 73). Also, temples were constructed to withstand an enemy attack and were looked upon as God's fortresses (e.g., Pss. 31:2; 61:3). Thus, the references to refuge "in the shadow of your wings" (Pss. 57:1; 61:4; 63:7) serve as allusions to the cherubim of the Ark of the Covenant in the Holy of Holies. In the Psalms

there are examples of “equation of Yahweh’s refuge with a paradisiacal existence in the temple precincts (Pss. 36:8-10; 61:5).”

Having said this, however, Creach (1996a:62, 63) argues that “a majority of references to Yahweh as refuge may be allusions to the Palestinian landscape,” but admits that “a degree of uncertainty surrounds the original point of reference for the refuge metaphor.” Most likely, all “[t]hree images possibly contribute to the portrait of Yahweh as refuge.”

It is notable, however, that the motif of refuge appears in a number of cases in the context of the sanctuary (e.g., Pss 31:20; 36:7, 8; 61:3-4; 63:2, 7; 91:1, 2, 9). In Psalm 31:20[21] “the shelter of your presence (סֹתֵר פְּנִיךָ)” stands parallel to “your dwelling (סִכְּוָה).” The Hebrew word סִכְּוָה means “booth” and is most associated with the Feast of tabernacles (e.g., Lev. 33:34, 42, 43; Deut. 16:13; 2 Chr. 8:13) and the sanctuary (e.g., 2 Sam. 11:11; 22:12; Isa. 4:6). The Hebrew word סֹתֵר means “secrecy,” a “hiding place” and can be also translated “under the cover of/protection” as in this case (Tate, 1990:447). The word often refers to the idea that God abides in the secret, hidden place (Pss. 18:11[12]; 27:5; 31:20[21]; 91:1). Psalm 27:5 uses this word to describe the sanctuary as a hidden, secret and consequently secure place of refuge.

In Psalm 36:7, 8 “the refuge in the shadow of your wings” clearly refers to the Ark of the Covenant since the psalm describes the feasting on the abundance of the Lord’s house. Keel (1978:190) nicely observes that in Psalm 61:4 “the shelter of your wings” stands in parallel to “your tent,” i.e., the Lord’s temple. In a similar way Psalm 63:2, 7 juxtaposes “seeing God in his sanctuary” and “singing in the shadow of God’s wings.” Kraus (1992:18, 26) links the concept of “the shelter of your wings” to the wings of the cherubim extended over the Ark of the Covenant. He (1992:31) contends that the metaphor of “refuge” bears a special relationship to the role of Jerusalem as the place where God functioned as the righteous king and provided protection and justice to the accused and persecuted.

Keel (1978:190-192) demonstrates that the motif of protecting wings may be most likely traced to Egyptian temples where the image of gods in the form of birds with outstretched wings was a frequent motif.

Psalm 91:1, 2 employs the same imagery as the psalms that were mentioned before. Again the words “shelter” and “shadow” in verse 1 may be references to the temple (Bratcher & Reyburn, 1991:801-802). Hugger argues that the expression *אתה מחסי*, “you are my refuge” (vv. 2 and 9), is an emphatic cultic formulaic statement of trust in Yahweh, a more formulaic declaration than the expression *היית מחסי*, “You have been my refuge” (as in Ps 61:4), which is a testimony of experience (quoted by Tate, 1990:447). Hugger points to the other three references where the phrase *אתה מחסי* occurs, i.e., Psalms 71:7[4]; 142:5[6] and Jeremiah 17:17. The hypothesis has probability especially if the psalm was originally part of a larger liturgy, for which there are some strong indicators in the psalm, such as the alternation of first and second persons in the psalm (Mowinckel, 2004, II:44, 50-51; Tate, 1990:450-452).

Even though the origin of the metaphor is not always clear, a number of examples show that Yahweh as refuge is pictured in the context of the sanctuary. In that way it brings the motif of refuge in connection to the sanctuary experience.

3.8 Conclusion

Creach (1996a:18-19) expresses the three basic methodological approaches to examining the shaping of the Psalter: 1) the vantage point of breaks between collections (e.g., Wilson), 2) the perspective of a certain type of psalm (e.g., Mays), and 3) a common and recurring idea as an apparent part of an editorial plan (e.g., Creach, Brueggemann).

This study is indebted to Creach’s threefold classification as it provides a systematic way to summarize the results of this chapter.

Firstly, the approach of examining the vantage point of breaks between collections has been followed in this chapter. Though references to the sanctuary may seem to be randomly dispersed throughout the whole Psalter, it has been demonstrated that there is an order in their appearance in the Psalter. Following Wilson’s methodology, it has been shown that the sanctuary motif appears in every opening psalm of the five books of the Psalter as well as in the Psalms 1-2 and Psalm 150 which open and close the Psalter as the

whole book. The linguistic and thematic parallels between the introductory psalms (Pss. 1 and 2), psalms that appear in the middle of the Psalter (Pss. 73 and 74) and the concluding psalms of the Psalter (Pss. 145-150) cannot be accidental. They rather serve “to recall both Psalms 1 and 2, as well as the theological heart of the Psalter” (McCann, 2011:71) where the sanctuary occupies a significant place.

The opening of each of the five books of the Psalter directs the reader’s attention to the sanctuary where God can be met and worshiped in accordance with his revelation and will. The Psalter opens with the image of the righteous deeply rooted in the sanctuary, and closes with the righteous dwelling in the sanctuary and praising God.

Secondly, the perspective of a certain type of psalm has been pursued. Special attention is given to Wilson’s and McCann’s analyses of the enthronement psalms and Mays’ analysis of the torah psalms. An attempt has been made to see how the sanctuary functions in relation to the kingship of the Lord and to the torah piety in the Psalter. The results seem to suggest that the kingship of the Lord is inseparable from the sanctuary. The torah piety seems to be closely related to the cult.

Thirdly, some of the recurring ideas proposed as central to the shape of the Psalter have been analyzed in relation to the sanctuary. Brueggemann suggests the move from “*hesed* doubted” to “*hesed* trusted” as the central motif behind the literary structure of the Psalter and Psalm 73 as the turning point in this spiritual journey. The sanctuary appears as the place where that crucial experience takes place in Psalm 73. It has been shown also that the motif of “refuge” proposed by Creach points to the sanctuary. Futato’s analysis of instructions for holiness and happiness (or blessedness) as central to the shape of the Psalter reinforces the significance of the sanctuary, as these instructions have entrance into the sanctuary and the presence of God as their ultimate goal, and the sanctuary as the place of promoting both holiness and blessedness.

Though the question of whether the sanctuary is the central motif to the shape of the Psalter requires further study, the results obtained here seem to justify the idea that the sanctuary is central to the shaping of the Psalter. The

sanctuary motif in the Psalter hints of a narrative movement from abiding in the sanctuary as an ideal in Psalm 1 to the eschatological abiding and praising God in his sanctuary in Psalms 149 and 150. The sanctuary emerges as the place from where the Lord reigns and blesses his people (Pss. 93-99). It is the place where the psalmist experiences a significant transformation from doubt to trust (Ps. 73). The sanctuary seems to be an integral part of almost every major concern in the Psalms. This seems to suggest that the cultic elements in the Psalms are not just leftovers of the old-fashioned cultic religion in Israel which was succeeded by the new, more spiritualized and reformed piety of the prophets. On the contrary, this seems to imply a piety strongly related to and impressed by the sanctuary.

This study turns now to examining the specific nature of the relationship between the cult and piety.

4.0 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CULTIC AND PERSONAL PIETY IN THE PSALMS

The conclusions of the previous chapters strongly suggest a significant presence and importance of the sanctuary cult in the Psalter. An attempt is made in this chapter to understand how cultic or communal and personal or individual piety relate to each other. The main objectives of this investigation are twofold: 1) to find out to what extent cultic and personal piety are related or compatible, and 2) to attempt to understand what provides the vital link between cultic and personal piety.

Scholarly studies are divided in regard to the question of compatibility between cultic and personal piety in the psalms. The task of relating the cultic and the personal piety in the psalms proves difficult since it is not always clear whether a psalm reflects communal or individual piety. Wendland (1994:34) formulates the question that lies at the heart of the problem that one encounters upon reading a psalm: "Does the 'I' of this psalm represent an individual or a communal voice, or can the former be viewed as merging with the latter as the song develops, from either a synchronic or diachronic perspective?" This chapter attempts to shed some light on this complex issue through a study of the creative aspect of cult.

This chapter is divided into the following six major sections.

- 1) The opposing views of Gunkel and Mowinckel on the compatibility between cult and personal piety are assessed together with Gerstenberger's attempt to find a "middle road".
- 2) The significance of the sanctuary is assessed in relation to personal piety (e.g., the dwelling place of God, cultic ceremonies, critique of cult).
- 3) The role of imagery in Hebrew poetry is examined in order to understand the impact of cultic imagery in the psalms.
- 4) The Old Testament concept of solidarity is examined in order to understand the relationship between the individual and the community in the Old Testament.
- 5) The Old Testament theocentric worldview is assessed in order to understand the relationship between the common and the sacred from this perspective.

6) The creative aspect of cult is studied as the possible link between personal piety and the cult.

Cultic and personal piety are evaluated and compared based on the division of communal and individual psalm genres. The dominant position of Hermann Gunkel on form critical matters in the Psalms is still acknowledged by modern scholarship, though there is always scope for disagreement about the details (e.g., Westermann, 1980:13; Brueggemann, 2007:ix; Day, 1995:14). The main outlines of Gunkel's system of classification are followed in this chapter.

It is assumed here that the hymn and the communal complaint song express communal piety, and the individual complaint song and individual thanksgiving song demonstrate the personal piety of an individual unless there is strong evidence to the contrary. The royal psalms may be considered to reflect communal piety since they were most likely performed at some type of court festivity (Gunkel, 1998:101).

Rather than repeat the extensive list of hymns, communal complaint songs, individual complaint songs and individual thanksgiving songs in the Psalter, here the classification of the Psalms by Gunkel is assumed. Gunkel (1998:22-222) differentiates five major types or genres of Psalms: (1) hymn (e.g., Pss. 145, 147, 148, 150), (2) communal complaint song (e.g., Pss 79, 83, 80, 44), (3) royal psalms (e.g., Pss.2; 18; 20; 21; 45; 72), (4) individual complaint song (e.g., Pss. 3, 13, 54, 88), and (5) individual songs of thanksgiving, initially sung to accompany a thanksgiving offering for deliverance out of great misery (e.g., Ps 30). Apart from these five major types Gunkel (1998:222-250) distinguishes a number of smaller genres (e.g., the pilgrimage song [Pss. 84; 122], the victory song [e.g., Pss. 46:9; 48:13; 66:5-7; 76:4-7], the torah psalms [Ps. 50]).

4.1 The Question of Compatibility between Cult and Piety

It is usually assumed that cult and piety are somehow related. Those who argue for incompatibility between communal and personal piety insist that the "I" of the psalms refers to the individual unless the context obviously says otherwise. Those who advocate compatibility between communal and personal piety argue

that in most cases the “I” of the psalms refers to the king or some other representative of the community. A short review of the discussion between these two opposing views is given in the following lines.

4.1.1 Cultic and Personal Piety as Incompatible

Gunkel (1998:122) argues that the “I” in many psalms, especially in laments, is the individual worshiper, who pours out his heart to God in private and outside the cult. He (1998:13) clearly distinguishes between cultic piety and individual piety and contends that

the pious individual did not sing the first psalms in order to pour out his most personal thoughts before God. Rather, the priest composed these psalms and preserved them at the sanctuary in order to use them at appropriate occasions.

Though he argues for the cultic origins of the Psalms, Gunkel (1998:123,306-307) believes that the Psalms in their present form are loosened from their cultic elements, i.e., they are just imitations of the original cultic psalms. Having said that, the majority of the Psalms could be classified as laments, which he (1998:13,122-123) divides between community laments, which are cultic in nature, and individual laments, which demonstrate personal life and represent a later developmental change under the influence of the prophets and their critique of the cult. He made this division basically according to the Psalms’ use of “we” and “I.” Gunkel (1998:123) argues that under no circumstances, unless it is clearly indicated in the psalm itself, could the “I” of the poet be merged into the “I” of the community. Gunkel (1998:210) contends that the later psalms are liberated from the cult and reveal the individual that “steps before God, liberated from the bonds of the cult.”

However, a number of scholars argue that the subject of many individual complaint songs (e.g., Pss. 9/10; 30; 73; 56, 59) is the king who speaks on behalf of the nation based on the representation of enemies as foreigners (e.g., Mowinckel, 2004, I:225-246; Johnson, 1979:288; Goulder, 1996:54-62). They argue that the descriptions of the unnamed enemies in the individual complaint songs strongly resemble the descriptions of the undoubtedly foreign enemies in the royal or communal complaint psalms. Gunkel (1998:128,134-137) points out that a number of these psalms are psalms of illness (e.g., Pss. 6; 13) which

picture the sick-bed, and personal enemies who despise the psalmist, thinking him God-forsaken, i.e., a setting that strongly reminds us of individual sufferers like Job or Jeremiah. Day (1995:22-25) appropriately remarks that it is inevitable that there should be certain similarities between the descriptions of different types of enemies. He observes that these psalms usually suggest verbal rather than actual violence (e.g., Pss. 57:4; 64:3; 140:3, 9) which also argues for the enemies being local Israelites, as is clearly stated in some passages (e.g., Pss. 31:11[12]; 35:11; 55:12[13]-14[15]; 69:8[9], 19[20]; 88:8[9], 18[19]). Gunkel (1998:122) argues that the “I” is always the poet except in those rare cases where the poet makes it explicit (e.g., Ps. 129:1). The explanation of the “I” standing for the community is for him nothing more than the leftover of an earlier allegorical interpretation of the Scripture (Gunkel, 1998:123).

Gunkel (1998:13, 122) sees the failure to recognize the purely personal material and lively individual poetry in the Psalms and thus relate the “I” of the individual psalms to the cultic community, i.e., to interpret them as cultic songs, as the gravest mistake in Psalm research. Gunkel (1998:123-130) argues that cultic elements preserved in the individual psalms are leftovers of the original cultic psalms they derive from, or indicators that these psalms were composed at a considerable distance from the sanctuary (e.g., Pss. 16; 42/43; 55; 61; 120) or criticized the cult (e.g., Ps. 51). He points to the abundance of personal expressions in the individual complaint psalms which illustrate that “I” is differentiated from other Israelites (e.g., Pss. 22:23[24]; 27:10; 37:25; 69:9[10]; 88:9[10]). He points also to other complaint songs in the Old Testament where the “I” of the song is clearly the individual author (e.g., Job, Jeremiah, Hezekiah, Hannah).

Gunkel (1998:122) insists on this distinction because for him “individual poetry pulls Israel’s heart strings more than communal poetry.” He argues that individual piety, which is non-cultic and even hostile to the cult, is superior to the cultic, communal piety which borrows much from it. Consequently, individual poetry, which Gunkel describes also as spiritual, is so much more richly developed with power to move the heart that it found its way into the worship service of the royal temple (Gunkel 1998:13,122).

However, Gunkel (1998:127) admits that occasionally the individual complaint songs express a desire for Zion and for meeting the Lord in his temple. He says that “[t]his kind of passionate desire could only arise in a heart of one who is painfully lacking what he most desires at the present time,” i.e., Zion and the temple of God. Gunkel (1998:137) also maintains that one of the common reasons why the psalmist creates the complaint song is the internal distress that arises from being removed from Zion and his great longing for the shaded environs of the holy mountain of God. This seems to contradict his firm views on the non-cultic nature of individual piety.

Westermann (1980:13-14) goes one step further, claiming the Psalms did not originate in the cult but in the worship of individuals which sprang forth as a natural, spontaneous response to God in times of crisis and rescue in harvest fields, battlefields, wilderness, homes, on sickbeds, and in the streets.

Sabourin (1974:33) rightly indicates that some of Gunkel’s conclusions are tainted with arbitrariness. This is especially true of Gunkel’s attempt to trace the inner history of the types; he assumes that the community-inspired compositions preceded those of a private character. In that way Gunkel arbitrarily implies that communal cultic piety is more “primitive,” and personal piety is more recent, associated with a purified and spiritual religion, influenced by the preaching of the prophets. Sarna (1993:131) argues that “a literary work had little chance of preservation in the ancient world unless there was repeated occasion for its public recital over quite a period of time.” This seems to be particularly true of the Psalms, which found great acceptance in Jewish and Christian worship over the centuries. Mowinckel (2004, I:14) even accuses Gunkel of a lack of understanding of the cult and its real essence. Having this critique in mind it becomes necessary to reconsider Gunkel’s sharp, even alienating distinction between cultic and personal piety.

4.1.2 Cultic and Personal Piety as Compatible

The essence of cult for Mowinckel (2004, I:17) is the encounter and communion of God with the congregation and also of the members of the congregation among themselves. The boundary between the words and acts of God and

those of the congregation is not sharply defined in the mutual relationship that is set up and developed in the cult. In the same way the boundary between communal and personal experience cannot be too sharply defined.

Mowinckel (2004, I:14, 15) argues that “there is no real incompatibility between ‘traditionalism’ and ‘personality’ in religious poetry.” He points out that “traditional ‘sacred’ forms and expressions may often carry a richly personal content.” He explains that cultic songs are “words saturated with experience.” They store the religious experience of the generations and have become symbols conveying more than they seemingly contain. For that reason they need only to be mentioned to release a series of associations, experiences, and emotions of both community and the individual.

Mowinckel (2004, I:14) rightly points out that insisting on the “incompatibility between the personal religious note in so many of the psalms, and the ‘impersonal’ character of the ‘liturgical formula’” works against “the psalmists’ strong dependence on all the conventional forms of old cultic style.” Since the latter cannot be ruled out, the most obvious solution of the problem lies in re-examining and redefining the former.

Gunkel convincingly argues that a great number of psalms, particularly individual laments, cannot be interpreted as communal cultic songs used in the actual cult services (e.g., Pss. 34, 51, 52, 54, 42, 43, 55). He bases most of his conclusions on the assumption that the Psalms in their present forms are loosed from their original cultic background. However, his conclusion that such psalms are automatically non-cultic or even anti-cultic seems to be premature. Even the psalms which were clearly composed a considerable distance from the sanctuary unwaveringly express the psalmist’s yearning for the sanctuary and his desire to meet with God *there*. The piety of the individual in these psalms is clearly colored by the cult as illustrated by numerous cultic formulas and references (e.g., Pss. 43:3,4; 51:7[9]; 52:8[10]; 54:6[8]; 55:14[15]). Eaton (1975:4) maintains that “[t]he cult might operate away from the temple during military campaigns, or at outlying stations on processional routes” (e.g., Joshua 3,4,6; 1 Sam. 4:1-11). Miller (1983:34) observes that

[t]he individual laments are in many ways strongly stereotypical. That is, one can move from one lament to the other and encounter within them much of the same structure and content, with some variation in the

images and primary metaphors used. The enemies themselves are talked about in very typical stereotyped language. Clichés of all sorts are used throughout the psalms. The opponents are described in stark terms, usually with strong language and negative imagery ... The laments become appropriate for persons who cry out to God in all kinds of situations in which they may encounter various kinds of opposition.

Gunkel's claim that cultic elements in such psalms are just leftovers of the original cultic psalms sounds like an arbitrary explanation.

Contrary to Gunkel, Mowinckel highlights the Israelite emphasis on the community over the individual. He assumes that the Psalms as we have them were actual cultic songs used in the cult. For that reason he has to demonstrate how various psalms functioned in different cultic ceremonies. However, it seems that he has arbitrarily gone too far in attempting to reconstruct particular cultic situations and how various psalms fitted specific cultic occasions.

A vital question seeks to be answered in this context: What is the cause of their arbitrariness? It seems that one common assumption led Gunkel and Mowinckel to a point when they had no other choice but to exercise a certain degree of arbitrariness in their final conclusions, i.e., the assumption that a psalm is cultic only when it is directly used in a cultic ceremony. Starting with this assumption, Gunkel proclaims the Psalms to be non-cultic, because he believes that the present Psalms were not used in cultic ceremonies. As a result, Gunkel has to arbitrarily explain the cultic references in the Psalms as leftovers of the original Psalms. Mowinckel argues that the present Psalms were actual cultic songs. Consequently, he seeks to make many of the Psalms fit the cultic ceremonies that he has reconstructed, many times arbitrarily.

4.1.3 Erhard S. Gerstenberger's "Middle Road"

Gerstenberger proposes what seems to be the middle road between Gunkel's incompatibility and Mowinckel's compatibility between communal and personal piety. He argues for the existence of small groups in Israel which were autonomous in their religious practices (Gerstenberger, 1988:6-9,21,22,30-34). These small groups possessed a great deal of ritual knowledge, but, though their ceremonies were partly overlapping with the ceremonies of the main

official cult, they were spontaneous, i.e., initiated by the necessity of the moment (e.g., a personal crisis such as sickness of an individual).

Though he still maintains that such rituals “would not eliminate traditional elements, and the words spoken and actions performed in this setting would be anything but spontaneous” (1988:9), Gerstenberger clearly seeks to “soften” the cultic setting of these small groups by ascribing “a greater flexibility” to them. He firmly emphasizes the idea that the employment of an outside seer or a specialist in ritual affairs (e.g., 1 Samuel 9; 2 Kings 4) on special occasions would not limit the general autonomy of the family in religious affairs. What is more, he claims that the small groups carried out and promoted personal religion *contra* the official cult, i.e., secondary organizations including tribal, monarchical, and temple authorities, which provided more universal religion (1988:21). He argues that these two often existed in “antagonistic collision” as these secondary organizations, which were larger and centralized, early began to impose themselves upon the small groups, as illustrated by Deuteronomy 18:9-13 and Ezekiel 13:18. Gerstenberger (1988:22) assumes that the Psalms originated in the postexilic times as “a result of the perennial tension between familial and official religious institutions.”

It seems that Gerstenberger has found a plausible solution for the problem of compatibility between the cultic and personal piety in the Psalms as well as a reasonable explanation of the cultic elements in the Psalms by differentiating between the faith of private families and the faith of the official cult and ascribing the origins of the Psalms to the small private groups. The small family groups were cultic enough to account for the cultic elements in the Psalms, but “flexible” and private enough to account for the personal elements in the Psalms at the same time.

However, apart from other questions that it may leave open, this theory seems not to have advanced the question of compatibility between communal and personal piety much beyond the point where it was left by Mowinckel. Though Gerstenberger attempts to personalize the small group so that it can be a carrier of a more personal piety, one cannot escape the notion that the small group, no matter how “small” it is, is still a *group* and thus its piety resembles

more closely communal piety than personal piety. Butler (1984:388) even accuses Gerstenberger of having gone too far in maintaining “the priority of community ritual led by a specialist over private individual prayer, since such prayer is learned through the model of public worship.” In addition to this, it appears that Gerstenberger relies too much on the Near Eastern healing practices that were conducted under the guidance of shamanistic ritual experts and might well have taken place at or near the house or the village of the patient (Gerstenberger, 1988:164). One would expect more clear references to such professionals and rituals in the Old Testament if they were so widely spread as Gerstenberger argues.

This calls for a new investigation of the relationship between communal and personal piety in the Psalms. An attempt is made in the following lines to shed some light on this issue through the study of the significance of the sanctuary for personal piety in the Psalms.

4.2 The Significance of the Sanctuary for Personal Piety in the Psalms

The cultic elements, including cultic images in the Psalms, are assessed here in relation to the piety of the psalmists. The two main objectives here are: (1) to seek to understand how the sanctuary met the needs of the individual primarily since it is assumed that cult nourished the communal piety, and (2) to seek to understand further whether communal and individual piety complement each other or stay in tension.

There are numerous references to God’s dwelling place in the Psalms. The major ones include: tent (אהל, e.g., Pss. 15:1; 27:4-6), tabernacle (משכן, e.g., Pss. 26:8; 43:3; 74:7; 84:1[2]), sanctuary (מקדש, e.g., Pss. 68:35[36]; 73:17; 74:7; 78:69; 96:6), temple (היכל, e.g., Pss. 5:7[8]; 11:4; 18:6[7]; 27:4; 29:9; 48:9[10]; 65:4[5]; 68:29[30]; 79:1; 138:2), Zion (ציון, e.g., Pss. 2:6; 9:11[12], 14[15]; 14:7; 20:2[3]; 48:2[3], 11[12], 12[13]; 50:2; 51:18[20]; 53:6[7]; 69:35[36]; 74:2; 76:2; 78:68; 84:7[8]; 87:2, 5; 98:8), holy *hill* or the *hill* of the Lord (הר, e.g., Pss. 2:6; 3:4[5]; 15:1; 24:3; 43:3; 48:1[2], 2[3], 11[12]; 68:15[16]).

These terms are used synonymously in most instances. Koester (1989:18) rightly observes that in the Psalms the terms “tent” and “tabernacle” are “poetic

descriptions for the temple or Mt. Zion, and Ps 46:4[5] may speak of Jerusalem itself as ‘the holy tabernacle of the Most High’.” He also points out that the occasional references to God’s tent and tabernacle suggest that the temple was understood to be the successor to the ancient tent sanctuary in the wilderness, and that the memory of the wilderness tabernacle was kept alive in part through cultic activity in the temple. Thus the tabernacle provided continuity with the past in the times of transition and the means by which God continued to speak to Israel after the departure from Sinai (Koester, 1989:21). Psalm 68:16[17]-18[19] emphatically speaks of Mt. Sinai as the mountain of God’s choice and of God’s movement from Sinai into his sanctuary. Thus the sanctuary cult became the symbol of God’s continuous presence in the midst of his people through all the generations (e.g., Lev. 26:11; Ezek. 37:27-28; Ps. 68:18[19]).

It is obvious that the numerous references to the dwelling place of God tell about the living God encountered in worship (Bellinger, 2001:37). The primary concern here is twofold: 1) to see how the sanctuary affected the personal piety of the individual, and 2) to seek to understand how the cult was related to the daily life of the people and of individuals.

4.2.1 The Sanctuary as the Revelation of God

Terrien (1952:22-23) acknowledges the dual character of the sanctuary. Inasmuch as the ancient Israelites refused to represent God through the means of man-made images (e.g., Exod. 20:4), they were aware that God whom they adored was beyond all human encompassing and was not limited to a fixed shrine. At the same time they were certain that in a very real sense God dwelt among them and walked with them (e.g., 2 Sam. 7:6). God’s presence was made visible as a pillar of cloud and a pillar of fire (Exod. 13:21). The Ark of the Covenant served as a concrete presence of God among his people (e.g., Num. 10:35; 1 Sam. 4:21, 22; 2 Sam. 6:5, 14; 1 Kgs. 8:4, 10, 11).

4.2.1.1 The Sanctuary as the Place where God Resides

The sanctuary was known to the ancient Israelites as the Lord’s house (Ps. 93:5), the place of his throne (Ps. 99:1, 5), the place where the Lord dwells (Ps.

11:4). God's presence is represented by his glory filling the sanctuary (Exod. 25:8; 29:42, 43; 40:34-38; Ezek. 44:4). The parallelism in Psalm 26:8 equates the house where the Lord lives with the place where his glory dwells: "I love *the house where you live*, O Lord, *the place where your glory dwells*" (emphasis supplied). The enthronement psalms inform us that the Lord's kingly splendor is revealed in his sanctuary (Ps. 96:6). The parallelism in Psalm 101:7 equates the Lord's presence and his house, i.e., the sanctuary: "No one who practices deceit will dwell *in my house*; no one who speaks falsely will stand *in my presence*" (emphasis supplied). These texts clearly demonstrate that for the psalmist the sanctuary is the place where people met with God (Ps. 74:4). When prevented from coming to the temple the psalmists worship God facing toward God's temple (Pss. 5:7[8]; 138:2; also, Dan. 6:10; Jonah 2:4), because God dwells in his temple.

The sanctuary serves as a unique revelation of God as the place where the people could meet with God. The psalmist proclaims that holiness adorns the Lord's house (Ps. 93:5) and calls the people to "worship the Lord in the splendor of his holiness" (Ps. 96:9). The Hebrew word קדש translated in Psalm 96:9 as "holiness," referring to God's holiness, also means "sanctuary" (e.g., Pss. 63:2; 68:5; 150:1) since it denotes things and places filled with holiness (Naude, 1997b:877). Thus Psalm 96:9 can be translated also as "worship the Lord in the splendor of his sanctuary." The sanctuary was the place where the Lord's glory was displayed. Sarna (1993:109) rightly contends that the sanctity of the Israelite sanctuary did not connote the mythological notion of intrinsic, "natural," primeval sanctity of place that was characteristic for the other cultures of the Ancient Near East. The holiness of the sanctuary derived from the presence of the Lord who abode in it.

Though the Hebrew word קדש connotes the idea of separation, the sanctuary cult demonstrates that God's holiness "could nevertheless operate within the world as long as its integrity was strictly maintained" (Naude, 1997b:879). The maintenance of the integrity of holiness was a function of the sanctuary cult.

It is clear in the Psalms that there are other sources of God's revelation, i.e., heavens (Ps. 19:1[2]), human beings (Ps. 8:5[6]) and the Lord's mighty acts of

deliverance and compassion for his people (Ps 145:5-12). What makes the sanctuary a unique revelation of God superior to other sources of God's revelation?

The heavens declare (ספר) and proclaim (נגד) the glory of God (Ps. 19:1[2]). Human beings are crowned with glory and honor. Psalm 145 declares that the mighty acts are reported (נגד, vv. 4 and 5), spoken about (אמר, v.11) and told (דבר, v. 11) to others that they may know the glory of the Lord through their testimony (Ps 145:4, 5, 11, 12). All these expressions convey the idea of reflecting the glory of God or pointing to it. The Hebrew verb ספר (declare, reckon) finds its explicit theological relevance in the Psalter where it constitutes a verbal act of worship and praise (e.g., Pss. 9:1[2]; 26:7; 40:5[6]; 75:1[2]; 96:3) (Diamond, 1997:284).

However, the sanctuary has a unique testimony, as it is designated as the place where the glory of God actually dwells (Ps 26:8). The Hebrew מִשְׁכַּן כְּבוֹדֶךָ literally means "the place of dwelling of your glory" (Ps 26:8). The Hebrew word מִשְׁכַּן ("dwelling") derives from the Hebrew root שָׁכַן which means "settle, stay, stop, rest, settle (to live), live in, inhabit, dwell" (Wilson, 1997:109), "abide" (BDB, 1996:1015). The word שָׁכַן underscores the idea of nearness and closeness. The Lord dwells (שָׁכַן) in Jerusalem (Zech. 8:3), among his people (Exod. 25:8), on Mount Zion (Ps. 74:2), in the land (Exod. 24:16; Ps. 85:9[10]) (Hamilton, 1980b:925). The sanctuary is denoted as the place that God chose as a dwelling for his name (Deut. 12:11; 14:23; 16:2, 6, 11). The word מִשְׁכַּן is most frequently used in the Old Testament to refer to the tabernacle, i.e., the sanctuary (e.g., Exod. 25:9; 26:1, 6, 7, 12; 27:9, 19; Lev. 8:10; 17:4; Num. 1:50; 3: 7, 8; Jos. 22:19; 1 Chr. 6:32, 48; 21:29; 2 Chr. 1:5; 29:6). Guardini (1968:23) rightly asserts that in the sanctuary "God dwelt, not merely experienced psychologically but in actuality, living and abiding there in person."

The word שָׁכַן reflects dwelling that is consistently more temporarily than יָשַׁב (sit, dwell) which most likely maintains God's freedom (Wilson, 1997:109,110). "God's presence with Israel is at once close, real, and yet never permanently guaranteed" (Wilson, 1997:110).

Sarna (1993:127) points to the particular meaning of the Hebrew word כבוד which is most often translated “glory”. He writes,

The dictionaries define “glory” as “lofty praise, honor, admiration, high renown, worshipful praise, great beauty, splendor, aureole, radiance.” In truth, none of these terms does justice to the Hebrew behind the word “glory” – *kavod*, when used of God – for it is most frequently associated with the idea of His self-manifestation, often as indicated by some visible symbol of His presence.

The glory of the Lord (Hebrew, כבוד יהוה) is a technical term for God’s manifest presence with his people (Collins, 1997a:581). Sarna points to the pillar of cloud and of fire which accompanied the Israelites in the wilderness after the exodus from Egypt as a visible symbol of God’s presence among his people. The manifest presence of God was not limited to that time: God’s presence was to continue through the sacrificial worship (e.g., Exod. 29:43; 40:34, 35; Ps. 63:2[3]) and was mediated through the Ark of the Covenant as suggested by the name *Ichabod* (No glory) when the Ark was taken from the Israelites (1 Sam. 4:21,22) (Collins, 1997a:581). The prophets often expect God’s glory to return to Zion after a period of chastisement (e.g., Isa. 24:23; 35:2; 40:5; 59:19; 60:1, 2, 13) (Collins, 1997a:582).

Sarna (1993:127) contends that “[t]his picturesque language is intended to convey that at a particular moment, the people experienced a heightened consciousness of the immediacy, or immanence, of the divine Presence.” In the same way the sanctuary was the place where the people could observe the glory of the invisible God that was revealed in a unique way. This was achieved by at least three means: the visible phenomena of God’s glorious presence, the sanctuary furniture and cultic rites, and the character of God as related to the sanctuary.

4.2.1.2 The Visible Phenomena of God’s Presence in the Sanctuary

Firstly, the sanctuary is a splendid place adorned with the most expensive materials (Exod. 35:4-29; 2 Chr. 2-5). The magnificence of the sanctuary testifies to the majesty of Israel’s divine king. The parallelism in Psalm 96:6 supports the idea that the splendor of the Lord himself is displayed in the

sanctuary: “Splendor and majesty are *before him*; strength and glory are *in his sanctuary*” (emphasis supplied). The Hebrew word הוֹר (“splendor”) connotes the idea of radiance which accompanies God’s theophany (e.g., Hab. 3:3, 4) (Sarna, 1993:54). When used of God, this term often denotes the revelation of God’s majesty to his people, where God will make the Assyrians hear the majesty (הוֹר) of his voice, thereby terrifying them (Isa. 30:30,31); where in a theophany God has covered the sky with his majesty (Hab. 3:3); where God has set his majesty over or upon the sky, which leads the psalmist to wonder at the high position God has given to humans (Pss. 8:1[2], 3-4[4-5]; 148:13) (Collins, 1997b:1016).

The Hebrew word תפארת that is translated in Psalm 96:6 as “glory” means also “beauty” or “beautiful.” This word is used to describe both physical beauty (Isa. 28:1; Ezek. 16:12, 17, 39) and the beauty that goes beyond physical aesthetics (Prov. 17:6; Isa. 46:13). The word תפארת is used to describe the beauty of the Lord’s temple (2 Chr. 3:6). The psalmist uses תפארת to describe the beauty of the Lord (Ps. 71:8) and the beauty of his sanctuary (Ps. 78:61). It seems that the beauties of the Lord and of his sanctuary are merged. The sanctuary is a beautiful place primarily because the beauty of the Lord shines through it. As with כבוד, “this specialized usage is possible because God’s presence with his people in the cult reveals his own inherent glory and importance” (Collins, 1997c:574).

Kraus (1992:42) argues that the glory of Yahweh, i.e., the manifestation of Yahweh’s holiness, is “the phenomenon of light that streams out in all the awesomeness of the majesty of God the king.” Sarna (1993:54-56) finds this idea embedded in the concept of God’s splendor (Hebrew, הוֹר) or the effulgent radiance that was thought to emanate from God’s being (Pss. 96:6; 104:1; 111:3; 145:5; 148:13). He points to several biblical examples that demonstrate that God’s splendor embraces the notion of light (e.g., Ps. 104:1, 2; Hab. 3:3, 4) and could be reflected even on human agents (e.g., Exod. 34:29-35). Sarna mentions also several biblical passages that poetically depict God as being suffused with light (Num. 6:25; Isa. 2:5; Ezek. 1:27; Pss. 4:6[7]; 31:16[17];

36:9[10]; 44:3[4]; 67:1[2]; 80:19[20]; 89:15[16]; 104:2; 118:27; 119:135; Job 27:3).

Various texts in the Psalms that mention the glory of the Lord shining forth from the sanctuary (e.g., Pss. 4:6[7]; 50:2; 67:1[2]; 80:1[2]) appear to refer to a visible phenomenon. Kraus (1992:104) is correct that the people obviously had some tangible proof of an encounter with God which provoked their response in the form of festal shouts and many acts of joy, excitement, dancing, and happiness (Pss. 81:1[2]-3[4]; 95:2; 98:4-6; 149; 150). However, Craigie (1983:227-228) observes that

the presence of God in the sanctuary differed radically from the experience of God's presence in theophany. The phenomena accompanying the theophany were so awe-inspiring that the worshiper was immediately aware of his unworthiness and insufficiency. Moses, Job, Isaiah and others, in their encounter with God in theophany, were struck by the awesome nature of the divine presence. But the divine presence in the temple, though no less real, was not accompanied by such awesome phenomena; hence, there arose the danger of familiarity.

There is no doubt that the people could perceive the divine presence and the glory of Yahweh more intimately in the sanctuary than in any other place. The psalmist exclaims in Psalm 63:2[3]: "So longing, I have seen you in the sanctuary beholding your power and your glory" (Tate, 1990:123). The psalmist says that he has seen the Lord in the sanctuary. The Hebrew verb *חָזָה* means "to see," "to have a vision." The word for "seer" comes from this root (Naude, 1997a:56). The same verb is used in Psalm 27:4[5]. The visionary experience is not described in detail, but "it may have involved some sort of rite using fire, smoke, and the blowing of a horn (cf. Exod 19), or it may have been more verbal or mental, combined with the rich symbolism of the temple, producing an internalized apprehension of the divine presence" (Tate, 1990:127).

The Hebrew verb *חָזָה* is utilized to express seeing God or seeing God's face (e.g., Pss. 11:7; 17:15) (Naude, 1997a:57). Some scholars argue that this language reflects the vision of God that every believer will have upon awakening from death. Dahood (1966:71,99) argues that certain passages in the Psalms (e.g., Pss 11:7; 16:11 ; 17:15; 21:7; 27:4,13; 36:10; 42:3; 61:8; 63:3; and 140:14) reflect Israelite belief in the beatific vision in the afterlife. Some scholars argue that the vision of God refers to the resolution of a judicial ordeal

in the morning following a time of testing (Naude, 1997a:57). Smith (1988:175,176) argues that “a number of psalms that use the language of the light of God's face do not fit easily into the context of a night vigil or a morning theophany (such as Psalms 22, 68, 80, or 119); furthermore, the evidence is mostly circumstantial.”

Kraus (1992:42) describes the experience as a cultic theophany, as mentioned before. Smith (1988:181) argues that seeing God in the temple was related to solar imagery as is suggested by certain biblical texts (e.g., Deut. 33:2; Ps. 84:12; Isa. 58:8; Mal. 3:20). A number of psalms mention the light of God's face or God's face as shining (e.g., Pss. 4:7; 31:17; 89:16; and 90:8). However, Smith contends that the experience of God in all these texts is never reduced to solar language. The solar theophany was transformed “to magnify the impact of the experience of the divine.” “Seeing God” was related to “the experience of Paradise with the elements of cherubim, palm trees, gold, water, and abundant food, etc., and this included the divine presence.” The Psalms do not provide sufficient details that will allow a more specific description and understanding of the experience described with the phrase “seeing God”. However, Smith (1988:181) argues that the phrase “seeing God's face” refers to divine presence and “represents the culminating experience in the temple.” He concludes,

Pss 11:7; 17:15; 27:4; and 63:3 may resemble the prophetic visions of Isaiah and Ezekiel, whose "seeing" (*hzh*) the divine incorporates the language of light (see especially Ezek 1:27; cf. seraphim in Isaiah 6). What the psalmists experienced of the divine in the temple was too great to reduce to natural phenomenon, although they adapted the language of light to capture one aspect of experiencing the divine. Perhaps the psalmists experienced God just as Moses, Isaiah, and Ezekiel did (1988:182).

The psalmist expresses a similar experience of beauty in Psalm 27. He seeks to see the Lord's beauty in the sanctuary: “One thing I ask of the Lord ... to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord” (Ps. 27:4). The Hebrew word נָעַם (“beauty”) is used to describe both the physical, material beauty and the beauty that goes beyond aesthetic beauty, i.e., pleasantness, sweetness, delightfulness (Wilson, 1980:585). Thus, נָעַם describes the physical beauty of persons (2 Sam. 1:23; Song 1:16; 7:6; Ezek. 32:19), the beauty of the land (Gen. 49:15; Ps. 16:6), the taste of bread (Prov. 9:17), music of the lyre (Ps. 81:2[3]), the beauty of words (Ps. 141:6; Prov. 15:26), of knowledge (Prov. 2:10; 22:18), of the ways of

people (Ps 133:1), of wisdom (Prov. 3:17). Psalmists use this word to describe the Lord himself (Pss. 90:17; 135:3) and the beautiful, sweet praises that are to be ascribed to his name (Ps. 147:1). The beauty of the Lord that the psalmist seeks in the sanctuary is both tangible, visible beauty and beauty that supersedes mere sight.

4.2.1.3 The Sanctuary Furniture and the Cultic Rites

The objects, materials and colors of the sanctuary are intended to teach the theological principles by visual means (Exod. 26-28; 36-39). Oswalt (1996:756) urges caution when attempting to explain the visual symbolism in order to avoid speculations. However, the main principles are clear. He points to a careful choice of colors in the sanctuary: 1) the color white that calls attention to the purity of God and the purity of those who wish to approach God; 2) blue that speaks of God's transcendence; 3) purple that along with the accents of gold and silver speaks of God's royalty and of the riches of God's kingdom and its blessings; and 4) red that speaks of blood that has to be shed if the holy God is to abide in the midst of sinful people.

Oswalt (1996:756) argues that the most significant symbolism is that found in the arrangement of spaces and objects that highlights the theological idea of separation between God and the sinner and reinforces the idea that God can be approached only in the ways God has dictated.

The Ark of the Covenant, above all other objects in the sanctuary, symbolized the immediacy of the divine presence. The Ark of the Covenant is placed in the most holy place in the sanctuary (Exod. 25:18-22; Num. 7:89; 1 Kgs. 6:23-28). It is explicitly stated that God will meet with Moses and give him all his commands for the Israelites "there, above the cover between the two cherubim that are over the Ark of the Testimony" (Exod. 25:22). Further it says that "when Moses entered the Tent of Meeting to speak with the Lord, he heard the voice speaking to him from between the two cherubim above the atonement cover on the Ark of the Testimony" (Num. 7:89). The divine presence was conceived as settling in the space between the two cherubim above the Ark and this place was imagined to be the throne of the invisible, noncorporeal God (Sarna,

1993:127,128). The cherubim are mentioned as early as 1 Samuel 4:4 and 2 Samuel 6:2 as components of the Ark of the Covenant (Kraus, 1992:18).

The Psalter's only explicit mention of the Ark of the Covenant is in Psalm 132:8 where it is called "the ark of your might" (Hebrew, עֲזָרָתִי) probably because of its military function which is attested by a number of biblical texts (e.g., Num. 10:35; 14:39-45; Josh. 6:6-13; 1 Sam. 4:3-7). Sarna (1993:131) argues that the epithets of God used in verses 8 and 10 ("strong and mighty," "mighty in battle") strongly suggest that Psalm 24 "could be interpreted as reflecting a victory procession after the defeat of an enemy in battle, when the Ark was returned to its regular abode in Jerusalem."

However, the Ark was never meant to be the Lord himself. Oswalt (1996:756) asks an interesting question: "Why would the Hebrews use something as mundane as a box to convey the presence of the almighty God?" He rightly asserts that a box cannot be worshiped as God, since it is neither a human figure nor a natural object, but at the same time it can remind people of God's real presence while underscoring the prohibition of images. Broyles (2005:145) observes that the phrasing "you and the ark of your might" in Psalm 132:8 makes it clear that Yahweh is not to be identified with this cultic object.

Broyles (2005:146) argues that the reference to the Lord's strength (Hebrew, עֲזָרָתִי) in a number of psalms "could point to more than simply a divine attribute," i.e., "it may indicate that the symbol of the ark was visible to the congregation." He points to Psalm 105:4, "Look to the Lord and his strength; seek his face always." The inclusion of this psalm in the chronicler's account of David's bringing the ark into Jerusalem (1 Chr. 16:8-22) appears to strongly support the notion that the ark was visible to the congregation at some points. Broyles (2005:147,148) further points to Psalm 99:5 which calls the worshipers to "worship at his footstool" in an identical way as in Psalm 137:7. The mention of Samuel along with Moses and Aaron as those to whom the Lord spoke "from the pillar of cloud" (Ps. 99:7) clearly depicts "worship at his footstool" as bowing down to the Lord before the Ark of the Covenant, since the pillar of cloud is located at the ark elsewhere in the Old Testament (Num. 10:33-35; Lev. 16:2; 1 Kgs. 8:6-12) (Broyles, 2005:147).

In the Psalms the Ark of the Covenant is closely related to the kingship of the Lord. The Psalms portray the Lord as the king who “sits enthroned between the cherubim” (Ps. 99:1). In Psalm 80:1 also God sits enthroned between the cherubim. Psalms that celebrate the Lord’s kingship point to a procession where the ark “ascends” into the sanctuary (e.g., Pss. 47; 68; 97) (Broyles, 2005:147). However, the Ark of the Covenant is not only the Lord’s kingly throne, but also the most sacred cultic object in the sanctuary (Lev. 16:2, 13). It appears that the kingship of the Lord in heaven is joined symbolically with the cultic dwelling of Yahweh in the sanctuary (Terrien, 2003:687). Since the Lord can never be seen on his throne (Lev. 16:13; Exod. 33:20), the cultic acts associated with the throne communicate to the people who the enthroned God is. When the Psalms speak of “seeking the Lord,” or “seeking the face of the Lord” (e.g., Pss. 24:6; 27:8), they refer to visiting him in the temple, i.e., these expressions are a technical phrase to describe a cultic rite in the sanctuary (Murphy, 1980:232).

This leads to the next point, i.e., the glory of the invisible God is revealed to the people in the cultic acts. Murphy (1980:232) contends that “[t]he presence of the Lord was not a static thing,” but “it was achieved through liturgical celebration.” Hence in a number of theophanies the Lord looks with favor on the offering, smells the pleasing aroma and delivers an oracle (e.g., Gen. 4:4, 5; 8:21, 22; 1 Kgs. 18:38). The presence of God is celebrated by people who participate in various actions. Brueggemann (1997:668,669) remarks that “the tabernacle evokes a sense of dramatic participation, so that active verbs of making and doing, bringing and offering require Israelites to be actively, physically engaged in the practice of presence.” He maintains that Israelite worship was visual, active and dramatic and a source of great joy for the people. This is particularly evident in the festal processions which are discussed later in this chapter.

The cult opened up for Israel a way of continual living intercourse with God (Brueggemann, 1997:662). The psalms more frequently portray Yahweh as a generous host who welcomes the worshipers into his fellowship (e.g., Pss. 23:5; 36:8[9]; 63:5[6]; 65:4; 103:5; 132:15) (Keel, 1978:195). Brueggemann

(1997:661) asserts that “[t]he liturgy was a series of actions whereby Israel bodily received from Yahweh the assurance of an ordered life.”

4.2.1.4 The Sanctuary and the Character of God

It is not only the splendor of the place and the cult that represent the glory of God. The glory of the Lord is associated also with his internal greatness, i.e., his character (Exod. 33:18-20; 34:6-8; Ps 145). Thus the sanctuary is also the place from where the worshiper receives help and blessing. “From Zion, God ‘shines forth,’ his theophany is manifest, help comes for the oppressed (Ps. 14:7; 20:2[3]; 53:6[7]), and Yahweh’s blessing goes forth (Ps 128:5; 134:3)” (Kraus, 1992:73). The sanctuary is a place of safety (Pss. 31:20[21]; 36:7[8]). The sanctuary provides a shelter to the troubled psalmist (Ps. 27:5; 31:20[21]) and the abundance of feast (Pss. 36:8[9]; 65:4). The sanctuary provides spiritual blessings (Pss. 36:8, 9; 65:4; 84:4) and forgiveness of sin (Ps. 65:3). God defends the orphans and widows from his sanctuary (Ps. 68:5). God gives strength and power to his people from his sanctuary (Ps. 68:35[36]).

The Psalms sometimes use the term “tent” to depict the temple as a place of divine protection (e.g., Ps. 61:4[5]), recalling the ancient function of sacred areas as places of asylum (e.g., 1 Kgs. 1:50; 2:28) (Koester, 1989:18). Sarna (1993:108) remarks that to call the grand temple in Jerusalem, built of stone, a “tent” (e.g., Pss. 15:1; 27:6, 6; 61:5[6]; Isa. 16:15; 33:20; Jer. 10:20) seems odd, but this practice demonstrates that the Israelites kept referring the temple back to the mobile tabernacle in the times of Moses.

The psalmist hears God’s words in the sanctuary (Ps. 60:2[4]). When he visits the temple the psalmist is filled with good things (Ps. 65:4). The satisfying “goodness” of the house of the Lord is not defined in Psalm 65:4, but it most likely refers to spiritual refreshment in the forgiveness of sins along with a celebration of the divine blessings during the year (Tate, 1990:142). The good things that the psalmist experiences in the sanctuary are not reserved only for him. The same psalm describes the temple as the symbol of God’s provision of food for the whole world (Ps. 65:9-14) (Pleins, 1993:63). An active and often painful search for God leads one back to the temple, back to the concrete

center of worship (Ps. 63:1[2], 2[3]) (Pleins, 1993:47). The psalmist often exclaims that the greatest desire of his life is to live in the Lord's house (e.g., Pss. 23:6; 27:4).

Goldingay (2007:33) remarks that thirsting for God in the psalms should not be limited to an essential inward quest. Psalms 42 and 43 demonstrate that contact with God is more bodily, spacial and corporate than this understanding allows. The prayer's own balance is symbolized by its repeated references to the psalmist's נַפְשׁ (person) (Ps. 42:1, 2, 4-6, 11) and references to the sanctuary worship (Pss. 42:4, 6; 43:3, 4) (Goldingay, 2007:33).

The Lord's love (Hebrew, חסד) is experienced in the sanctuary. The exclamation "for his love (חסד) endures forever" is frequent in the Psalms, especially the hymns (Pss. 105:5; 106:1; 107:1; 118:1-4, 29; 136). This exclamation is "a praise mentioned for various occasions: first (1 Ch 16:34) and second (2 Ch 5:13) transfers of the Ark, temple dedication (2 Ch 7:3-6), Jehoshaphat's military campaign (2 Ch 20:21), oracle on the Restoration (Jer 33:11), building of the second temple (Ezra 3:11)" (Sabourin, 1974: 176). The Hebrew word חסד depicts God's steadfast love (Mays, 1994a:189), God's faithful care (Sarna, 1993:163), God's loving kindness (Craigie, 1983:351). The sanctuary is the place where the psalmist meditates (דמה) on God's love (חסד) (Ps. 48:9[10]). Those who celebrate the reign of God in Zion meditate (דמה) on God's faithfulness within the temple (Isa. 48:9[10]). The Hebrew verb דמה conveys the idea of thinking, meditating, imagining and comparing (Konkel, 1997:967). The verb is used to express the incomparability and indisputable uniqueness of God (e.g., Pss. 40:5[6]; 89:6[7], 9-12[10-13]; Isa. 40:12-26) (Konkel, 1997:967). Mays (1994a:189) contends that

The psalm [Ps. 48] views the city as a medium through which God can be known. The temple-palace of the holy city is the place where pilgrims are led to "imagine" (v. 9; NRSV, "ponder") God's acts as the great king. They are confronted by signs and symbols of God's reign. They see the temple, its architecture and furnishings, as representation of God's way in his rule – God's steadfast love (v. 9), righteousness and judgment (v. 11). The visible is transparent to the invisible and focuses mind and spirit on what cannot be seen.

Mays (1994a:189-190) further asserts that the whole experience at the sanctuary furnished the pilgrims with the material to tell a later generation about God (vv. 12-14). He recognizes the twofold instruction that is obtained through a visit to the temple: 1) God has a specific identity as our God who is worshiped in his temple, and 2) the city is a visible sign of God's commitment to his people. "What they had known only as report becomes visible to the pilgrims by the medium of the city" (Mays, 1994a:190) as it is demonstrated by Psalm 48:8[9], "As we have heard, so we have seen (ראה) in the city of the Lord Almighty."

However, this does not mean that the glory of God is limited to the sanctuary. The Israelite worshiper is aware that the glory of the Lord is indeed above all the earth (Ps. 108:5) and that even the highest heaven cannot contain God, so how much less the sanctuary (1 Kgs. 8:27). Nevertheless the worshiper is aware that the sanctuary is the place designated by God to be his dwelling place on earth (1 Kgs. 8:28-30; Pss. 74:2-7; 76:2).

God's dwelling place is in heaven (Deut. 26:15; Pss. 11:4; 103:19; 123:1), but at the same time God dwells in Zion, in the sanctuary among his people (Exod. 15:17; 25:8; Pss. 9:11[12]; 132:13-14). Psalm 11:4 says: "The Lord is in his holy temple; the Lord is on his heavenly throne." Kraus (1992:76) rightly states that these two concepts are not mutually exclusive. Taking the example of Psalm 24:7-10, he demonstrates that

in the sanctuary the dimensions of space are broken through and transcended. The gates of the temple are exhorted to lift up their 'heads,' that is, their lintels, in order to provide room for the entrance of Yahweh Sebaoth, whom earthly space cannot encompass ... The decisive factor is that Yahweh is present; and wherever he is present, the heavenly world is opened up.

These two pieces of evidence which seem in tension with each other also reflect the Hebrew concept of God who is at the same time far (Pss. 102:12, 24; 113:15) and near (Pss. 22:3; 113:5, 6; Exod. 29:43-46), everywhere (Ps 139:7-12) and to be met only in one specific place (Deut. 12:5; Neh. 1:9) (Doukhan, 1993:213-215). Israel apprehended that proximity and remoteness were inseparable within the true being of God (Terrien, 1952:23). In the cult these two apparently mutually exclusive aspects of God were brought together.

4.2.2 The Sanctuary and the Daily Life of the Individual

Westermann (1980:12-13) observes that the worship in which the Psalms originated and lived was basically different from worship as understood by the majority today, for worship in that culture was the natural and undisputed center of the entire community's life. He rightly argues that "worship was not just the place where people interested in religion gathered; rather, worship was the heart through which the life of all pulsed." Therefore, everything that happened in the life of the community and of individuals somehow inevitably was related to worship. The psalmist affirms that God in his holy sanctuary is a father to the fatherless, a defender of widows, the one who cares for the lonely in families and the prisoners, the Savior who daily bears the people's burdens (Ps. 66:5, 6, 19).

The worship in the sanctuary is not only responsive in nature, i.e., praise to God. God speaks to the people in liturgical instruction as demonstrated in Psalms 15 and 24 (Bellinger, 2001:35). When a cultic question is asked in Psalm 15:1a ("Lord, who may dwell in your sanctuary?"), the answer that is given pertains to everyday life:

He whose walk is blameless and who does what is righteous, who speaks the truth from his heart and has no slander on his tongue, who does his neighbor no wrong and casts no slur on his fellowman, who despises a vile man but honors those who fear the Lord, who keeps his oath even when it hurts, who lends his money without usury and does not accept a bribe against the innocent (Ps. 15:2-5).

Psalm 24:3b poses basically the same cultic question: "Who may stand in his holy place?" The answer is similar to that of Psalm 15:2-5: "He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to an idol or swear by what is false." Mays (1994a:121) asserts,

The adjectives "clean" and "pure" do not belong to the Old Testament vocabulary of ritual purification; they are ethical terms ... The four items in two pairs characterize a person who is faithful to God and neighbor. These qualifications did not make up a checklist to be applied to worshipers in a legalistic fashion as they enter the sanctuary; they are, rather, instruction to be read as part of the liturgy of worship ... They portray the rendered life, a life disciplined by the confession that the Lord is owner of all, including self and neighbor, and oriented toward the coming of the king of glory.

These examples clearly demonstrate that qualifications for worship deeply affect the daily life of a worshiper. Bellinger (2001:37) rightly asserts that “[s]uch a context for theological reflection and confession of faith assures a tie to real life and a tie to the dynamism of a community.” This shows that the worship was grounded in ethics and each level of worship was open to God’s justice (Pleins, 1993:91, 92).

People’s reverence for the temple was often understood as resulting in the wellbeing of the nation and the land. Haggai makes the productivity of the fields dependent on the reconstruction of the temple (Haggai 2:15-19) (Keel, 1978:176). The success in battles was attributed to the presence of the Lord that was symbolized by the Ark of the Covenant which accompanied the warriors (Num. 10:35; 14:39-45; Josh. 6:6-13). However, the Ark of the Covenant was not to be equated with the Lord himself, as it is illustrated by the defeat of Israel in the time of Samuel. The presence of the Lord could not have been manipulated by carrying the Ark of the Covenant (1 Sam. 4:1-11).

Westermann (1980:14) contends that in early Israel the holy place, the temple, was not so completely separated from the rest of the country that worship in the wider sense was possible only there. He points to those examples in the Psalms when sick people prayed from their sickbed, prisoners from their cells, soldiers in the battlefield (Ps. 118:15). These are occasions when it was not possible to present one’s prayer to God at the holy place, the sanctuary. “Worship had its power and significance precisely because it shone forth from the sanctuary upon the entire country, all of which of course belonged to God” (Westermann, 1980:14).

This proximity between the sanctuary and the everyday life of the people as a whole and of individuals in particular in the Psalms is reflected also in the ideal timing of God’s response. God hears the psalmist, wherever he may be, from his temple, from his holy hill, and responds to him directly (e.g., Pss. 3:4[5]; 18:6[7]; 20:6[7]). The Lord’s help and support come from the sanctuary, from Zion (Ps. 20:2[3]). Westermann (1980:16) concludes that

To say that the Psalms had their origin in Israel’s worship does not mean that we must limit them to the area of the temple, to the time of established worship activity, or to the circles of Levites and sanctuary personnel. The Psalms present an essential part of the people’s total life, and it was from this life that they grew.

The cultic rites that took place on a daily basis in the sanctuary contributed to the general sense of closeness of God and nearness of his sanctuary in Israel. These cultic rites involved: the evening and morning sacrifices (Lev. 9:17; Num. 28:6; Ezra 9:4, 5; 1 Kgs. 18:29; 2 Kgs. 16:15; Ps. 141:2), the lamps which provided light without ceasing (Lev. 24:1-4; 27:20, 21; Pss. 18:28[29]; 118:27), the continuous presence of bread in the sanctuary (Exod. 25:30; Ps. 36:8), and the incense on the altar of incense which burned without ceasing (Exod. 30:7-9; Ps. 141:2). Pouring a daily libation of strong drink (Num. 28:7) may also be added to this list. Averbeck (2003:723-724) observes that all these served as an invitation to the Lord to take up his manifest residence in the sanctuary, as he did in Exodus 40:34, 35. He contends that the notion of divine eating was vigorously resisted in Israel though the offerings could be referred to as the Lord's "bread, food" (Hebrew, לֶחֶם; Lev. 3:11, 16; 21:6, 8, 17; Num. 28:2, 24). This issue is discussed in more details later under the critique of the cult.

The significance of the worship in the sanctuary is not undermined by the possibility of offering praise and pleas elsewhere. On the contrary, desire for the sanctuary, as expressed in Psalm 84 among a number of others places in the Psalms, strikingly conveys devotion to the Jerusalem sanctuary (Sabourin, 1974:211). The psalmist uses emphatic terms to utter his affection for the sanctuary. He calls God's dwelling place "lovely" (v.1) and says that his soul "yearns" (v. 2) for the courts of the Lord. The words יָדִיד ("lovely") and נִכְסָף ("longing") belong to the language of love (Ringgren, 1963:8). Ringgren (1963:8) observes that the expression "my heart and my flesh" in verse 2 designates the individual as a totality and underlines the idea that the psalmist's entire person is engaged in this religious experience. Blessings and strength are reserved for those who dwell in the Lord's house and come there to appear before their God (vv. 4 and 7). In verse 10 the psalmist's thoughts are turned to everyday life as he confesses that one day in the sanctuary is far better than a thousand elsewhere.

Similar expressions of love for the sanctuary found in other psalms (e.g., Psalm 26:8; 27:4; 42:2[3]; 61:4[5]; 122) demonstrate deep affection that the psalmists had for the sanctuary. Lewis (1958:50,51) effectively describes this deep appreciation:

They long to live all their days in the Temple so that they may constantly see “the fair beauty of the Lord” (27:4). Their longing to go up to Jerusalem and “appear before the presence of God” is like physical thirst (42). From Jerusalem His presence flashes out in “perfect beauty” (50:2). Lacking that encounter with Him, their souls are parched like a waterless countryside (63:2). They crave to be “satisfied with the pleasures” of His house (65:4). Only there can they be at ease, like a bird in the nest (84:3). One day of those “pleasures” is better than a lifetime spent elsewhere (10).

In the personal psalms the references to the sanctuary appear especially strong. “To the Lord I cry aloud, and he answers me from his holy hill” (Ps. 3:4). “I long to dwell in your tent forever and take shelter in the shelter of your wings” (Ps. 61:4). “I have seen you in the sanctuary and beheld your power and your glory” (Ps. 63:2). The appeal of the individual here is to God in the sanctuary. The unity and mutual interrelation between faith, everyday life and worship can be observed clearly in the psalms as well as in the personal thanksgiving hymns outside the Psalter (e.g., Hezekiah’s thanksgiving song after his illness and recovery, Isa. 38:10-20, especially verse 20). There is no doubt that the sanctuary played a significant role in the formation and nourishment of the personal piety of the psalmist. Brueggemann (1997:659) asserts that Yahweh who reigns from his temple was an important source of consolation and assurance to individual worshipers, as evidenced in personal psalms. In the sanctuary with God, the psalmist feels more secure than with his own father and mother (Ps. 27:10).

4.2.3 The Individual and Mount Zion

The temple is located on Mount Zion (Pss. 48:2[3]; 74:2; 78:68; 125:1; 133:3), the mountain of Yahweh (Ps. 24:3), the holy mountain (Pss. 2:6; 3:4[5]; 15:1; 43:3; 48:1[2]; 99:9). “The mountain with its peak in the sky, was conceived to be the point of contact between the celestial and terrestrial spheres and the channel of communication between the world of the divine and the world of humanity” (e.g., Ps. 15) (Sarna, 1993:108,109). According to Gunkel (1998:22,55,56) Zion psalms represent a sub-category of hymns where the poet takes the opportunity to praise the sanctuary of God (e.g., Pss. 68; 84; 87; 122).

Keel (1978:113-116) points to the significance of the mountain in the Ancient Near East. Being the mountain of God’s choice, the mountain where the Lord

dwells, Mount Zion is given all the prerogatives of the cosmic mountain though in itself it was a modest hill compared with the surrounding mountains. Other mountains look down on Zion in jealousy (Ps. 68:15[16], 16[17]). At the end of time, Zion will rise above all mountains (e.g., Isa. 2:2; Mic. 4:1). Psalms 87:1 and 133:3 even mention “mountains” in the plural with reference to Zion. This plural is probably to be taken as a plural of majesty. In his comparative studies of ancient near-eastern religions, Keel demonstrates that the mountain, and consequently the temple, was the antithesis to the abyss, a dimension of Chaos. Thus going up to Zion signifies more than just climbing a hill. As Keel (1978:114) expresses it, “[o]ne goes *up* to Jerusalem (Ps 122:4), and at the temple gates one asks who may (further) ascend the mountain of Yahweh (Ps 24:3).” Going to the temple signified ascending to God. Though the psalmist knows that the Lord is always with him, he acknowledges that a special blessing and security are to be found within the gates of Zion (Pss. 122:3, 7; 147:12-17).

Pleins (1994:120-127) contends that Zion is more than the symbol of God’s presence that guarantees peace to Jerusalem. Hymns to Zion look beyond Jerusalem’s safety to see how divine presence within the city can transform the warring world beyond the walls of the city and bring peace to it (Isa. 2:2-4; Mic. 4:1-3). Pleins (1994:120) remarks that liturgy becomes “an occasion for the community to reflect on the realities of defense against war.” Liturgy actively directs worshipers to search for God who is within the temple and secures the city against its fall, but at the same time “makes wars cease to the end of the earth” because he is exalted above all the earth (Ps. 68:4, 5, 9, 10).

Brueggemann (1997:659) cites the personal psalms as “evidence that the king in Zion was a source of well-being for individual worshipers.” He remarks that the poor have special trust in Yahweh who is in Zion (e.g., Pss. 9:11[12]; 40:17[18]; 86:1-2) and suggests that Zion is a refuge even as Yahweh is a refuge (Ps. 46:1[2], 7[8], 11[12]).

The sanctuary gives a distinctive identity to the individual, not only to the worshipping community. Psalm 87:6 says: “The Lord will write in the register of the peoples: This one was born in Zion.” Pleins (1994:126,127) comments,

All who worship God in Jerusalem become residents of that city ... Worship in Zion has the power to transform the distant pilgrim into a person reborn within the gates of Zion, the city of God. Against the backdrop of the psalmist’s vision of Zion’s peace, the psalmist’s message

is clear: Only the pilgrim who is deeply rooted in Zion can carry Zion's peace to the world.

Zion becomes part of the individual's identity. Psalm 74 demonstrates that "[j]udaism without the Temple was mutilated, deprived of its central operation" (Lewis, 1958:45).

4.2.4 The Significance of Cultic Ceremonies for Individual Piety

The study now turns to the cultic ceremonies and seeks to understand their significance for the individual. Kraus (1992:141) indicates four institutions in which the individual in Israel comes into the presence of God: 1) the thanks offering accompanied by the song of thanksgiving (e.g., Pss. 30; 32; 34; 41; 116; 138); 2) the sacral judgment when the individual seeks protection in the sanctuary (e.g., Pss. 3; 17; 27; 57; 63); 3) the act of restoration after illness that includes rites of cleansing and confession; 4) the gate liturgy in which the individual is questioned at the gate of the sanctuary (Pss. 15; 24:3-6). Cultic ceremonies here refer to various rites and ceremonies that were performed on behalf of the individual in the sanctuary. Interesting details such as purification hyssop (Ps. 51:7[9]), washing of hands (Ps. 26:6), and a cup of salvation (Ps. 116:13), demonstrate that the worship in the sanctuary was much richer than the prescriptions of the law would otherwise indicate (Ringgren, 1963:15). However, there is no need to discuss all of them here. The cultic ceremonies that are evaluated here are sacrifices and festal processions.

4.2.4.1 Sacrifices

There are many references to sacrifice in the psalms. The two main types of sacrifice are the peace offerings, referred to simply as sacrifices (e.g., Pss. 4:5[6]; 27:6; 54:6[8]; 116:17) and burnt offerings (e.g., Pss. 20:3[4]; 66:13, 25) (Day, 1995:133). The Psalter mentions also the thank-offering (e.g., Pss. 56:12; 100 (superscription); 107:22; 116:17), vows (e.g., Pss. 22:25[26]; 50:14; 56:12[13]; 61:5[6], 8[9]; 65:1; 66:13; 76:11; 116:14), the freewill offering (Ps. 54:6[8]), which were forms of peace offering, and offering (Hebrew, מנחה) which originally denoted sacrifice of any kind but in the post-exilic period it denoted only cereal offerings and oil (e.g., Pss. 20:3[4]; 86:8) (Day, 1995:133).

The Psalms do not offer any proper clarification of what sacrifice means because they simply assume that the reader is accustomed to its theological meaning. The Pentateuch reveals that the purpose of the sacrifices and offerings within the sanctuary system was to provide a means of approaching the holy God who manifested himself in the sanctuary (e.g., Lev. 1:1, 2; Exod. 40:34, 35) and to maintain that presence by preserving the purity and the holiness of the sanctuary (e.g., Lev. 15:31) (Averbeck, 2003:706).

Doukhan (1993:216) remarks that the act of sacrificing reminded the Israelite that he could not approach God by himself (e.g., Jer. 30:21), but it is also used as a sign of God's proximity (e.g., Exod. 29:42). He asserts that the root of the Hebrew word קָרַב "sacrifice" (Lev. 1:2), derived from the root קָרַב meaning "near," may well preserve this dynamic.

Averbeck (2003:708,709) contends that the best theory of sacrifice is the one that treats the various aspects of sacrifice as complementary rather than exclusionary. He mentions three most important aspects of sacrifice, i.e., sacrifice as gift, as a means of communion with God and as a means of consecration. These aspects of sacrifice can be observed in the Psalms. The sacrifices are offered as gifts that expresses homage and thanksgiving (e.g., Ps. 116:12-19).

Brueggemann (1997:668) remarks that

The relationship of Yahweh and Israel is not an intellectual-cognitive one, nor is it solely ethical. It is concretely material and dramatic, and it must be embodied, not as instrumental to something else, but as the thing itself. Moses at Sinai authorizes such embodiment and provides ways for dramatic performance of the relationship. It is a thing done.

A number of individual complaint psalms demonstrate an unexpected turn or "mood swing" as Gunkel (1998:125) calls it, from lament to praise in the individual complaint psalms (e.g., Pss. 6; 13; 22; 28; 30; 31; 41; 54). This transformation has fascinated a number of scholars who have tried to explain it. Gunkel (1998:125,126) and Mowinckel (2004, II:16-18) suggest that the change was the result of an encouragement and assurance of deliverance provided by the priest who delivered an oracle or even performed a cultic act after the sufferer had expressed his complaint. Wevers (1956:82) argues that there is "no extant example of any such postulated oracles among the Psalms." He (1956:81-96) argues that this sudden change from earnest complaint to joyous

certainty in many of these psalms is the result of the psychological if not magical impact of the mention of the name of the Lord on the worshiper. However, there is no adequate evidence that the name of Yahweh has ever had any magical power in Israel's cult.

There are several interrelated theories that attempt to explain how some of the individual complaint psalms functioned in the lives of ordinary Israelites. One of these theories is that of Karel Van der Toorn, which focuses on the ordeal that the accused in a judicial process may have gone through during the night in the temple (Van der Toorn, 1992:40-42). Van der Toorn proposes that the psalmist was submitted to a drinking ordeal like that described in Numbers 5:11-31 (e.g., Pss. 11:6; 16:5; 23:6). The temple setting of these psalms is suggested because there are references to seeing God's face (Ps. 11:7) and dwelling in the holy place (Ps. 23:6). Van der Toorn (1992:40) believes that "[t]he conceptual basis for this judicial practice was the belief that God possessed a knowledge surpassing that of humans," and was a witness of crimes that might have been committed without a human witness. The guilt of the suspect was established by the reaction of the suspect to a special potion which he or she was made to drink. "The expected effect of this cup was dual: judgment upon the wicked, salvation for the righteous" (Van der Toorn, 1992:41). Van der Toorn points to evidence of similar drinking trials in Neo-Assyrian texts. He also finds evidence of a nightly ordeal that was followed by an acquittal in the morning (e.g., Pss. 3:6; 17:3, 15; 139:18). However, Creach (2008:76) argues that "it is unlikely that the references to a cup in these psalms refer to ordeals, since they connote celebration (Ps. 23:5); they symbolize God's protection (Ps. 16:5), or they refer to judgment upon the psalmist's enemies (Ps. 11:6)."

P. Kyle McCarter proposes that a group of psalms that share a common motif of river (e.g., Pss. 18 (2 Sam. 22); 66; 69; 88; 124; 144; Jonah 2) originated in river ordeals (McCarter, 1973:403-412). McCarter attempts to establish parallels between the river ordeals in Akkadian and Sumerian texts and the supposed river ordeals in the Old Testament. "Trial by river ordeal was a widespread phenomenon, in which the accused was plunged into the river, where his success in withstanding the rushing waters was supposed to determine his guilt or innocence" (McCarter, 1973:403). McCarter (1973:404,405) points to a

number of similarities between the above-mentioned psalms which appear to presuppose a situation of judgment by water. Some of these parallels are:

(1) The psalmist is beset by raging waters; (2) he is surrounded by accusers; (3) he protests his innocence and reliance upon God and beseeches God to deliver him from the waters. If the psalmist is describing a past rescue from the waters, there may be another element: (4) he is drawn out of the waters and set in a safe place. In each of these passages (Pss. 69:2,3; 18:5; Jonah 4, 6, 7), the situation depicted is clear. The life of the psalmist is endangered by the onset of rushing waters. Of course, these are no ordinary waters but rather the cosmic waters, both sweet and salt.

McCarter (1973:406) argues that the psalmist “claims to be legally innocent and pleads for deliverance from the waters.”

Creach (2008:76) contends that these theories suffer from the same weaknesses, i.e., the proposed rituals are not mentioned elsewhere in the Old Testament, and the evidence of the Psalms appear to be manipulated too much to fit the pattern of the comparative material.

Kraus (1992:142) offers four explanations which could be reflected in situations referred to in Psalms. First, the change may be the result of receiving a message of encouragement from God. The Lord’s silence has been broken when the priest or the cultic prophet transmits an answer from God. One example of that proclamation can be seen in Psalm 35:3, “I am your salvation.” Second, assurance that the prayer has been heard can also provoke the change in the mood of the individual (e.g., Pss. 22:22[23]; 34:4[5]). Third, a theophany in the sanctuary can assure the individual that the Lord is present and willing to help him (e.g., Ps. 18:9[10]-15[16]). Forth, the sufferer who is praying has received a sign from the Lord that he will be delivered. Kraus points to Psalm 86:17, “Give me a sign of your goodness” as an indication that the sufferer received something from the Lord that he understood as a sign of the Lord’s special favor to him.

Rarely is there any consensus in regard to these matters, and going over these issues in detail is beyond the scope of this study. There is insufficient evidence to come to a settled conclusion. However, what is important here is that the transformation is often marked by an experience in the sanctuary (e.g., Pss.

22:22[23]; 73:17). Psalm 116:13 refers to the cup of salvation that the worshiper lifts when he calls on the name of the Lord. Day (1995:45) contends that the cup here is most likely a drink offering rather than a mere metaphor. The lifting of the cup is followed by offering the thank-offerings and fulfilling the vows (vv. 14, 17 and 18) which are real activities and not metaphors. It is significant that the individual offers thanks in the presence of the great congregation (e.g., Pss. 34:2[3], 3[4]; 35:18; 66:16; 109:30). The individual's thanksgiving often accompanies the thank-offering (e.g., Pss. 50:14; 107:22; 116:17) and other sacrifices such as vows (e.g., Pss. 50:14; 56:12[13], 13[14]; 66:13-15; 116:14, 18) and freewill offering (Ps. 54:6[8]).

Kraus (1992:141) remarks that "sacrifice and psalm come together." It appears that a word of thanks was not sufficient to express praise in approaching the Lord. The sacrifice as a cultic act was required not only as a gift on the part of the worshiper but also as a means that makes access to the holy God possible. Attempts to explain the vows and thank-offerings as spiritual offerings seem to be inappropriate. Roberts (2001:106) contends that

The vow of praise is not a spiritualization of sacrifice nor a replacement of it. Praise and sacrifice are parallel activities, both carried out before the worshipers within the congregation. In the Psalms praise is more than a spontaneous expression of gratitude, it is expressed as a vow and presented as an offering to God.

The presence of sacrifices appears to be a reminder to the worshiper that he is "poor and needy" (e.g., Pss. 34:6[7]; 113:7) and that the Lord delivers (Ps. 40:16[17], 17[18]). Kraus (1992:153) explains that the self-description "poor and needy" depicts the individual "coming to God in truth of his human condition." The sacrifice represents an acknowledgment that the worshiper needs forgiveness of sins (e.g., Pss. 32:1-5; 51:2[4]-5[7]; 66:18) and that even his words of praise need to be purified (e.g., Ps. 19:14[15]). McCann (2009:162) asserts that "in essence, then, praise is both the liturgy and the lifestyle of those who, denying self-sufficiency and self-assertion, entrust themselves to God and commit themselves to God's ways in the world."

4.2.4.2 Festal Processions

Gunkel (1998:41) calls the reader of the Psalms to make every effort to “visualize an *Israelite festival* in order to understand the festival hymn.” Although no written rubrics for Israel’s cultic celebrations exist, many indications of cultic actions may be discerned from the psalms. The attempt to visualize an Israelite cultic ceremony is not done here with the purpose of establishing the actual cultic setting. Mays (1994a:10) remarks that the relation between the literary genre of a psalm and the corresponding occasion in Israel’s religious life does not alone determine the context in which a particular psalm should be interpreted. The intention here is to move from a literary genre and structure to imaginative reconstruction of thanksgiving ceremonies in ancient Israel in order to discern how the cultic festivals fit distinct moments in the spiritual life of the people (Endres, 2001:65)

The particular place of the singing of hymns is the sanctuary, Yahweh’s outer courts, Yahweh’s tent or dwelling place, Yahweh’s holy temple (e.g., Pss. 11:4; 76:2; 84:3[4]; 100:4; 135:2). The worshipers enter the sanctuary after a happily completed pilgrimage (e.g., Ps. 122).

The singing of hymns goes together with sacrifices and festivals. A festival brings together the people from near and far. It is an occasion of joy, eating, drinking, and celebrating. The country has been blessed by a good harvest and abundance of grain and wine (e.g., Ps. 67). So everyone is gathered at the sanctuary to thank their gracious God. The people come in their best clothes and jewelry, and the priests officiate in their festive garments. The hymn singers also wear beautiful clothes (1 Chr. 15:27; 2 Chr. 5:12). Certain texts tell of the people’s choir being decorated with greenery and flowers at the processional dance (Jdt. 15:12; 1 Macc. 13:51; 2 Macc. 10:7). The splendor of the sanctuary and of the ruler’s house is displayed and admired. The community enters into the sanctuary with loud hymn singing through the holy gates (e.g., Ps 100:4).

Gunkel (1998:41-47) provides a description of what the festivals might have looked like. The lay worshipers perform multifaceted holy actions. They pass through the holy gates (Ps. 100:4), go in the procession with shout of joy and

thanksgiving (Ps. 43:5), present their gifts to God, which they have vowed to present during the preceding year (Ps. 96:8), fall down, bow, and kneel (Ps. 95:6), and greet God with rejoicing (Ps. 95:1). The singing of hymns is accompanied by bodily movements which include dancing, lifting of hands (Ps. 63:5[6]), numerous types of prostration (Pss.95:6; 96:9; 99:5,9; 138:2; 1 Chr. 29:20; 2 Chr. 29:28) and clapping of hands (Pss. 47:1[2]; 98:8). Judith 15:13 bears witness to the weapon dance with swords swinging, whereby Psalm 149:6 becomes understandable. The highpoint of the festival is the common procession through the sanctuary (e.g., Pss. 26:6; 42:4[5]; 68:24[25]; 118:27; 149:3; 150:4). Singing and music seemed to conclude the worship service (e.g., Sir. 50; 2 Chr. 29:26).

Various musical instruments played during the hymn are often listed (2 Sam. 6:5; Neh. 12:27). Some of the instruments are: zither, harp (Ps. 57:8[9]), the "ten stringed" harp (Ps. 92:4) and the kettle drum (Exod. 15:20; Pss. 149:3; 150:4). Frequently, the instruments are mentioned at the same time (1 Chr. 15:16; 2 Chr.5:12; 20:28; 29:26; Pss. 81:2[3]; 98:5; 150:3-5). This thunderous music together with loud singing and piercing "hallelujah" sound like the surging of the sea (Ps. 98:7) or the noisy din of a battle (Ps. 42:5; Exod. 32:17; Lam. 2:7). It resounds far across the whole country (Ezra 3:13; Neh. 12:43).

There are two types of performance of the hymn: the hymn sung by the choir (e.g., Pss. 33; 65:2-9; 66:1-12; 67; 68, 81:1-6; 95:1-7; 96; 98; 100) and the hymn sung by the individual (e.g., Pss. 65:10-14; 89:1-19; 103; 104:11; 139; 146). Gunkel argues that these two types are distinguished only by their form, i.e., by their introduction, and scarcely by the content. It is also difficult to recognize in individual cases whether the choral song was sung by the sacred choirs or by groups of lay people. In later times, it is clear that the temple song was performed by choirs of professional Levites (1 Chr. 15:16-21, 25). Even when the hymns were sung by these singers, the people could participate by calling out "amen" at the end (Neh. 8:6; 1 Chr. 16:36), voicing "hallelujah" (Ezra 3:11; 1 Chr. 16:36), or singing a half-line as the recurring refrain (Pss. 136; 118:1-4).

In all of this worship activity taking place in the sanctuary, it is possible for every person present to perceive the nearness of God (e.g., Ps. 11:7) and feel the attachment to Zion the mother of all of them (Ps. 87:5). A worshiper leaves the festive worship with a longing in his heart: "I will remember you" (Ps. 42:5[6]). Gunkel (1998:42) concludes that "[i]f Judaism did not possess these festivals at the same time as a unifying bond, they would have perhaps been spiritually scattered as well."

Certain psalms betray clear signs of being associated with particular festivals, e.g., Ps. 67 was most likely a thanksgiving song after a bountiful harvest; Ps. 114, Exod. 15, and perhaps Ps. 81:2-6 should be taken as Passover hymns; echoes of Passover hymns appear in Pss. 66:6; 77:16; 78:43-53; 105:24-38; 106:8-12; 11:9; 135:8; 136:10-16.

Gunkel (1998:47) observes that "[t]he hymn was the high point of the most beautiful and most profound days of Israel during which Israel made known the majesty, greatness, and grace of its God with full delight and in deepest humility." It is not surprising, therefore, that the fundamental moods of the hymn are enthusiasm, praise, awe, gratitude, and exaltation (Gunkel, 1998:47,49). These moods are powerfully provoked by the cult. The cult provided a majestic opportunity for the community and the individual worshiper to express their gratitude and joy to God for what he had done and for what they were, i.e., his dearly loved people.

The cultic recital of Israel's past comprises an important part of the worship. Historical recitals of the Lord's glorious deeds in the past are recorded in a number of psalms (e.g., Pss. 22:4[5], 5[6]; 44; 78; 114). Murphy (1980:234) contends that "[t]he cultic recital of his saving acts is far from an antiquarian remembrance." He writes,

The original event that is recalled, whether it be the Passover (Exod. 12:1-20) or the deliverance in Egypt (Deut. 26:5-11), is *real* for the worshiper. There is a re-presentation or reenactment which wipes out time from the liturgical point of view, and the worshiper is centered on the saving act which is re-experienced. The tension between past and present disappears in Moses' words to the people in Deuteronomy 5:2-3; they are reminded that the covenant was not made with the fathers (who of course alone were present at Horeb), but "with us, all of us who are

alive here this day." Thus the command to "remember" (Deut. 8:14; 9:27f.) was not a casual recommendation of a mental exercise but a participation in a past-made-present.

The creative aspect of cult can be noted here. Creative is understood here not as magical but as resourceful to inspire an individual's sense of belonging to God as well as belonging to his community; this would not be possible outside the cult. The cult serves as an active medium through which God's past saving acts are made part of the present experience.

Not all festivals in Israel were joyful in nature. The communal complaint songs reveal in part the deep feelings of sorrow and penitence that the people expressed in times of crises. The setting of communal complaint songs is the great complaint or lament festival which the community held in response to general calamities (Gunkel, 1998:82). Gunkel (1998:86) remarks that the particular warmth of the Old Testament prayer that still moves and entralls us comes from the psalmist's assurance that his words can influence God. He (1998:48) asserts that religious thoughts become stronger when they are powerfully expressed in hymns and the individual is carried away by the general enthusiasm during the festivals. Truly "hymns, in which the entire people participate loudly, can be a great experience for the individual" (Gunkel, 1998:48).

Gunkel's statement about this seems to contradict his view on the incompatibility between the cult and personal piety. Gunkel (1998:52) says that "[t]he inexhaustible *love and faithfulness* of God toward his people Israel and toward the pious is even more dominant in the hymn" since the hymns often picture YHWH's deep interest for the ones in need, i.e., the suffering and the weak (e.g., Pss. 34:19; 68:6; 103:6; 107:41; 145:14,1) and the sinners (e.g., Pss. 64:5; 103:9). Obviously, the individual worshiper could have experienced God's presence and blessings in the cult very profoundly because what was done in the cult was closely related to his personal needs and feelings. Gunkel's claim that only personal poetry resonates with individual piety seems to be incompatible with the world of the Psalms.

Individual praise is often intermingled with communal praise in the Psalms. Psalm 145 seems to demonstrate that well, though Gunkel (1998:28,211) classifies Psalm 145 as a hymn and not as an individual thanksgiving song. The personal element in Psalm 145 seems to be intentional and not simply a part of the original formulas that are characteristic of hymns. Declaisse-Walford (2012:66) observes that Psalm 145 “leads the reader from an individual worshiper’s praise and blessing of God as king (vv. 1, 2), through the praise and blessing of the covenant partners (v. 10), and finally to the praise and blessing of all flesh (v. 21).” She argues that Psalm 145 is a masterful rhetorical composition that moves from one stage of the psalm to the next, as each successive element builds on the previous one in order to reach a climax in verse 21 where not only the individual psalmist but all flesh (including the covenant partners) will praise and bless the name of the Lord for all time.

Sarna (1993:140) argues that Israelite worship demonstrates that “the religious experience achieves its fullest expression, not in an individual, private setting, but in a public social context.” The Psalms (e.g., Pss. 48; 95; 100; 118) tell in part of “the psychological effect of a great festival on the participants, of rejoicing, enthusiasm, deep gratitude called forth by that which the cultic performance actualized” and demonstrate that experience strengthened the individual’s religious life and was a source of inspiration (Ringgren, 1963:17). It does not surprise us that the individual in Israel desires to declare praise to the Lord in the great congregation (e.g., Pss. 22:22[23]; 40:10[11]). Thus the worship becomes “a communal act that nourishes and reinforces social solidarity without in any way diminishing the spiritual, inward, personal nature of the outpouring of the human heart in prayerful approach to God” (Sarna, 1993:140).

Two theological elements can be traced in Israel’s religious festivals: the grateful and joyous commemoration of God’s salvific acts, and care for the poor and the needy (e.g., Deut. 16:11, 14). Thus “[t]he feasts were instituted not only to maintain community between God and Israel, but also to reestablish community among Israelites themselves by taking care of the widows and orphans” and by breaking through the routine, opening the individual to the

past, widening his experience, and reducing his provincialism (Bosman, 1997:872).

4.3 Cultic Imagery and Personal Piety in the Psalms

Reading and analyzing the psalms as poetry in relation to their social setting, i.e., integrating the form critical analysis with the poetic analysis, is central to their interpretation (Petersen & Richards, 1992:90). However, given the scope of this research, it is not possible to survey all the features of Hebrew poetry. The role of imagery in Hebrew poetry deserves special attention here as it seems to provide a helpful insight into how the psalmists experienced cult and incorporated its imagery and symbolism into their poetry.

4.3.1 The Role of Imagery in Hebrew Poetry

The word imagery is used here as another term for figurative language and includes numerous literary devices such as metaphor, simile, allegory and a host of other figures of speech (Strawn, 2008:306). This general term is preferred here as it allows us to refer to various figures of speech without engaging in the difficult tasks of discerning between similar figures, e.g., between simile and metaphor, which are considered to be but a small step from each other (Petersen & Richards, 1992:50). Image or imagery refers to any object or action that a person can picture or to a verbal representation of a concrete object that can evoke a kind of secondary visual representation (Strawn, 2008:306).

Watson (2006:251) observes that “poetry is at its best when composed with *thrift*, that is to say, when the poet expresses as much as he can in as few words as possible.” For example, the image of hyssop in Psalm 51:7[9] allows the psalmist to express the intensity of his appeal and emotions with only a few words, “cleanse me with hyssop and I will be cleaned” (only three words in Hebrew). The original readers and hearers of these words understood the cultic context of hyssop and could grasp the strength and emotional overtones of these words. The use of imagery helps the poet “infuse his word pictures with life and movement and make them appeal to the senses” (Watson, 2006:251).

The imagery is used for rhetorical purposes to create an effect in the listener and affect him as well (Strawn, 2008:307). Brown (2002:10) is right that this is particularly true of theologically oriented images which have their own defined scope and life within the believing community. The sanctuary imagery can be considered as being theologically oriented. The particularly rich and concentrated world of imagery is intended to challenge the reader to enter the world of the imagery and reflect upon it. It makes certain demands of the reader (Petersen & Richards, 1992:59,60). In imagery the picture and the word converge in powerful ways to stimulate reflection and emotion and “create structure in our understanding of life” (Brown, 2002:5,6). In other words, imagery is intended to “help to create an evocative setting or orienting framework” (Brown, 2002:11). An image consists in the juxtaposing of two elements that share some basic congruence: the characteristics of one set are now seen through the screen of the other one (Green, 1997:11,12).

Bellinger (2001:36,37) remarks that people view reality through constructs that guide the perception and interpretation of the experience. These constructs become a part of one’s memory that shapes how one views life. For example, Bellinger argues that the affirmation of God as creator, as given in the Psalms, can become part of one’s perspective and influence how one relates to nature. In the same way, it is believed here that the sanctuary provided numerous constructs which shaped how the psalmists viewed God and related to others, i.e., it shaped their personal piety. For that reason the sanctuary imagery in the Psalms cannot be regarded as the leftovers of an ancient cultic style of poetry or the remains of primitive cultic piety. On the contrary, the sanctuary imagery is intended to create an evocative and orienting setting, to echo Brown’s words (Brown, 2002:11).

The primary use of imagery to create an evocative setting is reinforced by Alter’s (1985:189,190) observation that “a good deal of biblical poetry imagery serves rather secondary purposes ... and in any case “originality” of metaphoric invention would not appear to have been a consciously prized poetic value.” He argues that the advantage of working with conventional images is that the attention of the reader is guided through the imagery to the message for which the imagery was introduced. Wendland (1994:32) argues that the psalmist

seeks to create and maintain a dynamic interaction with the audience by means of continuative techniques, i.e., imagery and impressions which they hold in common. He correctly maintains that the psalmist would not be able to achieve cognitive comprehension and aesthetic appreciation on the part of his audience without these continuative techniques.

The abundant use of the sanctuary imagery shows that such imagery appeared to the psalmists to be conventional and evocative. So sanctuary imagery was an essential part of the psalmists' and their readers' worldviews.

Brueggemann (1991a:21) points out that the Psalms evoke, suggest, and propose a network of symbols, metaphors, images, and memories to "make a world" which is perceived and practiced in a specific way. Perception and practice of a particular world are essentially what piety is all about.

The contemporary setting differs appreciably from the situation and circumstances that first applied to the Psalms. This difference increases problems of perception, understanding and appreciation (Wendland, 1994:30). Studies on psalmic imagery are mostly focused on the semantic value of words in their context while their visual aspect or the image behind the imagery is neglected (Klingbeil, 2008:621). Brown (2002:14) contends that exploring the iconic dimensions of the Psalms becomes necessary since the power of biblical poetry stems in part from the poet's evocative use of imagery. The literary and iconic forms are mutually indelibly wedded (Brown, 2002:14). The psalmists used iconographic motifs and employed them in the new contexts that they created (Klingbeil, 2008:623). The new context can hardly be understood without understanding the original context to which the author is referring or alluding.

4.3.2 Cleansing with Hyssop in Psalm 51:7[9]

Brown (2002:10,11) asserts that the initial contact between the poetic text and the reader lies primarily in what the poem communicates to the reader via its imagery and constellation of images that evoke and invite exploration. The poet uses imagery for particular functions (Watson, 2006:252). For example, imagery of dangerous animals is used to underscore the various threats encountered

from within the human community: bulls (Ps. 22:12[13]), scavenging dogs (Pss. 22:16[17]; 59:6[7], 14[15]), wild oxen (Ps. 22:21[22]), venomous serpents (Ps. 58:4[5]-5[6]), a swarm of bees (Ps. 118:12), a ravaging boar (Ps. 80:13[14]), and devouring lions (e.g., Pss. 7:2[3]; 10:9; 17:12; 22:13[14]; 35:17) (Brown, 2002:136). An attempt is made here to demonstrate how the cultic imagery works in relation to piety by examining the image of cleansing with hyssop in Psalm 51:7[9].

In Psalm 51 the psalmist pours out his heart before the Lord asking for the forgiveness of sin. He says in verse 7[9]: “Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.” Though the main idea of the psalm is clear, i.e., the psalmist’s prayer for the forgiveness of sins, the specific words regarding hyssop in verse 7 will most likely remain unclear and distant, and consequently empty and perverted, if they are not understood in the light of a specific cultic experience that the psalmist alludes to.

References to cleansing with hyssop clearly point to the sanctuary cult. Hyssop is first mentioned in Exodus 12:22 as the means by which the blood of the Passover lamb was put on the door frames of the Israelites’ houses. Hyssop is mentioned next in Leviticus 14 as the means of sprinkling the blood of the sacrifice mixed with water on the one to be cleansed of the infectious skin disease and pronounce him ceremonially clean (vv. 4, 6). With the same rationale hyssop was used to sprinkle objects and houses affected with mildew (Lev. 14:49-52). Next, hyssop is mentioned in Numbers 19:6, 18. Hyssop was burned with the slain red heifer, cedar wood and scarlet wool to form the ashes that were used in preparation of the water of cleansing. The water of cleansing was used as a purging offering (חטאת, v. 9) and was sprinkled with hyssop on persons who touched a corpse, human bone or grave and were made unclean (vv. 11, 16). The person being cleansed in that way had to wash his clothes and body with water (v. 19).

Terrien (2003:406) believes that washing with hyssop in Psalm 51:7[9] may have referred to the ceremony of lustration at the original Passover and implied salvation from death. However, there are some elements in the psalm that may be better explained in the light of the ceremonial cleansing in Leviticus 14 and Numbers 19. These two ceremonies share some common rites that are referred

to in the psalm: 1) the rites involve both cleansing with hyssop and washing (Lev. 14:4-8; Num. 19:17-19; Ps. 51:2[4], 7[9]); 2) they are used to restore a person, who was proclaimed unclean and banned from the community, back to his former status (Lev. 13:45-46; Num. 19:11, 16; Ps. 51:11[13]).

The Hebrew word *תְּחַטְּאֵנִי* (“cleansing me”) in Psalm 51:7[9] points to *חַטָּאת* (a purging offering) in Numbers 19:9. This, along with the mention of washing (v. 7[9]), which was done also in the rites of cleansing persons in Numbers 19, strongly suggests that the psalmist alludes to these rites of cleansing.

However, it does not seem that the psalmist is in need of any of these cultic rites, as there is no indication in the psalm that he suffers from any infectious skin disease or that he has come in touch with a dead body. The psalmist is rather concerned with his transgressions and iniquity (vv. 2-4). Cleansing with hyssop was not part of the purification of sins (e.g., Leviticus 1-7). Why, then, is the psalmist mentioning these cultic rites when he has no need of them?

The psalmist is obviously using the reference to cleansing with hyssop as an image that will evoke certain feelings in his readers who were familiar with the cult. The psalmist obviously feels that his guilt keeps him banned from the Lord’s presence in the same way as the unclean person is banned from the community as long as the state of uncleanness lasts. He obviously feels that he is cast from the Lord’s presence (Ps. 51:11[13]) and fears that sacrifices cannot restore him fully as God does not delight in them (v. 16[18]). However, the psalmist is not criticizing the cult. He affirms that God delights in burnt offerings and bulls offered on the altar (v. 19[21]) when they are accompanied with a broken spirit and contrite heart (v. 17[19]).

The psalmist understood the dread of being proclaimed unclean and banned from the community whether he once experienced that himself or knew someone who went through this distressing experience. The ancient Israelites knew that restoration could come only through the cult, i.e., through cleansing with hyssop and washing (Numbers 19:20). The cultic rites involving cleansing with hyssop must have been the source of great hope and joy for a person who had been declared unclean and lived in exile. The sanctuary cult taught the people that uncleanness and sin were never to be taken lightly. By asking for hyssop and washing the psalmist is asking to be allowed to return to God’s

presence from which he is banned at the present. The psalmist is saying that he does not need just a legal proclamation of forgiveness of sin. He wishes to be restored into the presence of God.

It has been widely assumed (e.g., Mays, 1994a:199; Crenshaw, 2001:72; Terrien, 2003:409; Alter, 2007:180) that the psalm belongs to the period after the fall of Jerusalem in 597 B.C.E. based on verses 20-21 and on the character of the psalm which represents an individual prayer of confession more common in the later literature (Tate, 1990:9). It is highly probable that the psalm belongs to the period after the destruction of the city and the temple some ten years later. It is also possible that the supplement at the end of the psalm (vv. 20-21) was added after 597 B.C.E. to re-interpret the prayer in verses 16-19 and adapt a pre-exilic individual psalm for communal use (Tate, 1990:10).

Though nothing seems to be fully decisive about the date of the psalm, the difficulty of determining the condition and identity of the speaker and the cultic purification rites point toward a composition for cultic usage (Tate, 1990:10,11). Mays (1994a:199) believes that Psalm 51 may be composed for use by the congregation in connection with the Day of Atonement. This particular festival makes sense since the Day of Atonement was a day of repentance and humble hopes and fearful expectations not to be cast from God's presence (Lev. 16:29-31; 23:26-32).

This psalm clearly demonstrates that cultic composition does not rule out profound spiritual experience. Gunkel (1998:128) is right that the psalmist's "speech about *ritual cleansing* can only be pictorial since the sins it treats are of such an internal nature that it could hardly concern the priests." However, it does not seem likely that by using this image the psalmist "has deviated from the practice of the worship service and strives to spiritualize it" (Gunkel, 1998:128). This view does not coincide with the psalmist's wishes for the prosperity of Zion (Ps. 51:18[20]). Whether this psalm was used as a liturgical text for a rite of purification or not is beyond the scope of this thesis. What is important here is that hyssop is used in Psalm 51:7[9] as an image with a specific purpose because it was familiar to the author and his audience. The image of cleansing with hyssop is used here to communicate the intense feelings of loneliness, fear, and distress that the psalmist is undergoing because he feels that his sin has caused him to be banned from God's presence. Tate

(1990:11) rightly asserts that “[c]ultic message and spiritual depth are not necessarily antithetical.” On the contrary, the sanctuary cult provided a sacred environment where a spiritual lesson could be learned and experienced in a tangible way.

4.4 Critique of Cult in the Psalms

A number of statements in the Psalms seem to oppose cult (e.g., Pss. 40:6[7]-8[9]; 50:9-13; 51:16[18]). Psalm 51:16[18], 17[19] is probably among the strongest statements of this kind: “You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it; you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.” These words seem to signify a contrast between sacrifice and obedience and emphasize God’s preference of obedience over sacrifice (Kraus, 1992:97). Kraus (1992:96,97) argues that the critique of cult in the Psalms reflects the message of the prophets, who emphasized the reality of the living God and radicalized the concept of sacrifice (e.g., Amos 5:4, 6, 21-25; Jer. 31:31-34; Isa. 57:15; 61:1; Ezek. 36:25-28).

A significant question has to be addressed now: Do these psalms intend to present a contrite heart and prayer as substitutes for sacrifice? In other words, are the statements in the Psalms that criticize cult anti-cultic?

Roberts (2001:104) argues that Psalm 51:16[18], 17[19] cannot be isolated from its larger context, including the prophets. She observes that Amos’s main point is not to be found in 5:21-23 where the Lord’s aversion for Israel’s sacrifices and festivals is described but in verse 24 which gives the reasons for such repugnance: “But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream!” “Amos is not preaching against sacrifice and worship, but against *vain* sacrifice and *empty* worship, demonstrated in social injustice and wrong doing” (Roberts, 2001:104). Amos clearly writes against those who are complacent in Zion (6:1) and the false pride of Jacob (6:8) and not against Zion itself.

Other prophets follow this same course. Isaiah 1:11-15a presents God’s great discontent with Israel’s cult but indicates clearly that the problem is not with the cult itself but with the unrighteousness of the worshipers (Isa. 1:15b-17), social

injustice (Isa. 1:21-23) and idolatry (Isa. 1:29). Isaiah pictures Zion and the temple of God as the strongholds of justice and salvation for all nations (Isa. 1:27; 2:1-3). Isaiah 4:2-6 announces that God will cleanse Zion and Jerusalem from the people's sins and describes the future glory of Mount Zion using the sanctuary language found in Exodus 40:34-38.

Jeremiah makes an accusation against the same false security that the people of his time had in relation to the temple. They were exclaiming, "This is the temple of the Lord!" (Jer. 7:4) and committing all kinds of sins and injustices at the same time.

Will you steal and murder, commit adultery and perjury, burn incense to Baal and follow other gods you have not known, and then come and stand before me in this house, which bears my Name, and say, "We are safe" – safe to do all these detestable things? (Jer. 7:9, 10).

Jeremiah points to the fatal dichotomy between cult and spirituality which became obvious in the people: "I did not just give them commands about burnt offerings and sacrifices, but I gave them this command: Obey me, and I will be your God and you will be my people" (Jer. 7:23a). When the unity between the spiritual and the ritual fell apart, i.e., when the sacrificial rites became distinguishable from meeting with God, the rites took on an independent life that quickly withered (Lewis, 1958:49,50).

Lewis (1958:49) observes that when cult and spirituality fall apart cult usually becomes even more important than it was before. He rightly remarks that sacrifices are viewed as "a sort of commercial transaction with a greedy God who somehow really wants or needs large quantities of carcasses" or as "the only thing He wants, so that their punctual performance will satisfy Him without obedience to His demands for mercy, judgment, and truth."

The corrective to these views of sacrifice is found in Psalm 50. This psalm should be interpreted against the religious background of nations which had influence on the ancient Israelites, i.e., Egyptians, Hittites and Babylonians. Gane (1992:190-191) points to a symbiotic relationship that existed between these pagan nations and their gods. While deities needed that which human beings provided, human beings were at the same time dependent upon their gods. Gane points to the sharp contrast between the pagan practices which provided the daily care and feeding for idols and the Israelite cult which resisted

this gross anthropomorphism. He specifically refers to Exodus 30:9 which prohibits the pouring of any libations on the inner altar. While the pagan deities were given food on a daily basis, the Israelite bread was placed on the table only once a week and was not consumed (Gane, 1992:199). Averbek (2003:724) asserts that the continual offerings represented the Lord's continual presence in the sanctuary. The Lord was not to be thought to be physically eating the offerings, as in the case of pagan deities. Psalm 50 gives witness to the fact that the Israelites at times confused the Lord with pagan deities. Verses 12 and 13 particularly demonstrate this: "If I were hungry I would not tell you ... Do I eat the flesh of bulls or drink the blood of goats?"

Terrien (1952:24-25) observes that the ancient Israelites at times were not able to respond correctly to the tension between God's transcendence and God's cultic immanence. He argues that at the heart of the critique of cult there is not deficiency of cult, but the popular superstitions which found in the presence of Yahweh in the temple a reason for shallow optimism. While they scoffed at their contemporaries for finding security in the temple (Jer. 7:4; Isa. 66:1), the great prophets of the eighth to sixth centuries B.C. proclaimed that the faith and hope of Israel could not be separated from Zion and the temple (Isa. 56:7; Ezek. 47:1-12; 48:21). The critique of cult in the Psalms reflects "a religion which cannot take ritualism as an end in itself without utterly corrupting the adoration of Yahweh" (Terrien, 1952:25).

This notion is clearly expressed in Psalm 40. The psalmist says in verse 6[7]: "(1) Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, (2) but my ears you have pierced, (3) burnt offerings and sin offerings you did not require." This verse is obviously written in chiasm. The first and third lines stand in parallelism, while the second line stands at the peak of the chiasm. Konkel (1991:6) argues that the primary motif of this psalm is the theme of obedience. The use of "ears" in Hebrew points to the motif of obedience as it is implied by the Hebrew word שמע which means "to hear" and "to obey." The second line also parallels the motif of obedience in verses 7 and 8 which speak of the delight of fulfilling the will of God. Konkel (1991:4) contends that "the desire for obedience in Psalm 40 was probably expressed as part of a larger liturgy of a prayer to God." He asserts that the psalm affirms that the sacrifices alone are not enough. The psalmist acknowledges that God's requirements are within his heart (v. 8[9]) which is "an

acknowledgement of the deeper and spiritual requirements of the Torah of kings” which was required by Deuteronomy 17:14-20 (Konkel, 1991:4). That the psalms do not bear an anti-cultic notion seems to be evident from the psalmist’s desire to reveal God’s love and truth to the great assembly (v. 10[11]).

Far from being a rejection of cult, Psalms 40, 50 and 51 are rich with liturgical language and cultic acts. The psalmist in Psalm 40 expresses his desire to praise God in the great assembly of God’s people (vv. 9[10] and 10[11]). Psalm 50 describes Zion as the place perfect in beauty from which God shines forth (v. 2). It clearly indicates that God is not rebuking his people for their sacrifices and burnt offerings for they are always before him (v. 8) but for their wickedness and acts of injustice (vv. 17-21). Moreover it calls the righteous to sacrifice thank offerings to God and fulfil their vows to him (v. 14). These psalms show that “[t]he right attitude of the heart is critical, but only as the active responses flow from it” (Roberts, 2001:107).

Psalm 51 invokes the prosperity of Zion and envisions “righteous sacrifices” and burnt offerings on the altar (vv. 18[20] and 19[21]). It has been widely assumed that the last two verses of Psalm 51, i.e., verses 18[20] and 19[21], were added by a later reviser who wanted to adapt the psalm for communal use in the post-exilic period (Tate, 1990:29) and so may not be a reliable witness to the positive attitude to the cult in the whole psalm. However, the mention of washing and cleansing with hyssop in verses 2[4] and 7[9] demonstrates the psalmist’s affinity with cultic language. The redactor calls the sacrifices that he envisions in the future “righteous sacrifices” or “sacrifices of righteousness” (זבחי צדק). When the redactor refers to righteous sacrifices he has in mind sacrifices which will be offered, not merely along lines which are right according to cultic law, but primarily in what God will find to be the right spirit and sign of the worshiper’s true dedication (Tate, 1990:30). This shows that the redactor understood the psalm to be addressing the flaws of the worshiper and not the deficiency of cult.

The critique of cult is never directed to the abandonment of cult and never suggests making a correct attitude a substitute for cult. Kraus (1992:96) asserts that the object of critique is not the cult as such, but the fact that the people have forgotten the majesty and reality of their God. When the people forgot their God the rituals that were given to provide communion with God became empty and worthless and provided false security.

4.5 The Old Testament Concept of Solidarity and Personal Piety

Examination of the Old Testament concept of solidarity is important for this study because it highlights the relationship between the individual and the community in ancient Israel. Grogan (1998:159,160) shares a well-elaborated definition of solidarity in the Old Testament:

It is seen in kinship, marriage, common residence and occupations, covenants and, more subjectively, in affection. It applies to Yahweh's relationship with Israel in terms of covenant and representation and has many-sided consequences and implications ... In particular, solidarity highlights the way in which God has given humanity in general and his people in particular a common life with common concerns and responsibilities, so that the actions of one may deeply affect others for good or ill.

The concept of solidarity refers to the identification of the individual with his group (e.g., the family, the tribe and ultimately the people). It is often associated with the concept of corporate personality which indicates “the corporate aspects of a group, conceived as one person” (Grogan, 1998:163). “This corporate solidarity was reinforced by the fact that the entire community (past ancestors and future members) was viewed as one personality” (Wilson, 1989:187). The concept of corporate personality refers to a common notion in the Old Testament when the ancient Hebrews thought of an individual who was the representative of the community, or whose experience was typical of that of the community, as identified with the community so he could use the first person singular when he was speaking in the name of the community (e.g., the Suffering Servant of Deutero-Isaiah) (Rowley, 1956:507). In other words, it involves corporate responsibility (e.g., Achan’s punishment in Joshua 7) and corporate representation (e.g., the corporate “I” of many of the psalms) (Rogerson, 1992:1156).

However, it would be wrong to assume without further investigation that the Israelites perceived the relation between the individual and the community in terms of “corporate personality.” The term “corporate personality” is avoided in this study because it seems that this concept tends to fit Old Testament texts into simplistic categories that undermine individual responsibility that was fundamental from the earliest times, and insists on seeing the mentality of

ancient Israelites as “primitive”, such that a remote dead ancestor could embody the group in such a way that a living member could feel identification with the ancestor (Rogerson, 1992:1157). Such closeness and almost mystical identification are hardly seen in the Old Testament, though the significance of the fathers of the nation of Israel cannot be denied. Porter’s explanation of Joshua 7 that is discussed later demonstrates that the punishment upon the group, i.e., Achan’s family, need not depend upon corporate personality. Further critique of the concept of “corporate personality” is assessed later in this section of the study.

It is equally wrong to suppose that the ancient Israelites regarded a group simply as a collection of individuals. It is generally assumed that the culture of ancient Israel was a traditional, clan-based, and kin-oriented society (Matthews, 2003:292). Meyers (1997:21-33) points to socio-economic setting that contributed significantly to the establishment and development of corporate solidarity in ancient Israel. The survival of the individual was dependent on the survival of the family and vice versa. All residents of the family household were bound together by their mutual goals, needs, and tasks. Meyers remarks that whatever sense of individual agency a person may have had was derived from his or her contribution to household survival rather than from individual accomplishment. The welfare of the individual was inseparable from that of the community. He further asserts that in agrarian settings, such as early Israel, individualistic elements of human existence, including a person’s range of psychological processes, were subordinate to the person’s role in the family. “A person was not an autonomous entity but someone’s *father, mother, daughter, son, grandparent*, and so forth” (Meyers, 1997:22).

Israel’s social structure was corporate in its internal relationships (Williams, 1996:243). Whatever their size, these communities perceived themselves as totalities, bound together through internal activities which made their presence felt in each individual member (Williams, 1996:243).

This is clearly demonstrated in the use of the name Israel to refer to the whole people. The most common designation for the people in the Psalms when gathered for worship is “Israel” (e.g., Pss. 22:3[4]; 50:7; 81:8[9]; 115:9; 118:2;

124:1; 129:1; 130:7) (Kraus, 1992:68). The name “Jacob” is sometimes used in the same way (Ps. 14:7; 53:6[7]). The Israelites are also the posterity of Abraham (Ps. 105:6), or of Jacob (Pss. 22:23[24]; 105:6). “Ancient Israel understood itself as God’s people, a people in partnership with the God of covenant, a people who yearned for communion with God” (Craven, 1992:133).

There are numerous examples of corporate solidarity in the Old Testament: Adam, the name of the first man, will become the generic name for humanity (e.g., Gen. 6:6,7; Exod. 9:19); there is an identification between the forebear and his descendants (e.g., Gen. 10; 12:3; 25:26); the covenant, including blessings and curses, with one man concerns his family and his descendants as well (e.g., Gen. 9:9-10,16; Deut. 5:9-10); the organic link between the group and its members is such that individual choices affect the whole group (e.g., Gen. 3:19; 9:25-27; Josh. 7); the corporate personality is even reflected in Hebrew grammar in the usage of the so called “collective singular” (e.g., Num. 24:22; Hosea 12:7; Isa. 13:20) (Doukhan, 1993:212).

Grogan (1998:161) maintains that “social phenomena, like kinship, marriage, common residence, common occupation or covenant, involved solidarity.” He points particularly to Levirate marriage, in which a close relative stood in for the deceased, but also to other features of family life in general. For example,

Even a resident alien was often associated with a particular family and, if circumcised, could eat the Passover (Ex. 12:43-49; Dt. 10:18-19). In the wider family, the terms ‘father’ and ‘son’ may refer to any in the line of direct descent (Nu. 1:10; Jos. 21:4, 5,10). ‘Seed’ can refer not only to progeny but to kinsmen generally, including collateral connections (Est. 10:3). A ‘brother’ was any male relative (Gn. 16:12; Nu. 25:6), a member of the same tribe (Nu. 8:23-26; Judg. 18:2, 8) or nation (2 Sa. 2:27; Je. 34:9ff), even simply another person (Gn. 9:5). The terms ‘household’, ‘fathers’ house’, ‘clan’ and ‘tribe’ are sometimes used to identify groups much larger than they would today. ‘People’ occasionally applies to a group smaller than a nation (Dt. 33:7; Jos. 17:14-17; 2 Sa. 19:40), even being used of one man’s descendants (Gn. 48:19; Dt. 33:7).

Grogan (1998:162) observes that corporate solidarity existed not only at the human level but also at the divine-human level. The Jewish religion is characterized by peoplehood (Wilson, 1989:187). An examination of terms used in the Psalms to identify those who gathered to worship the Lord reveals that the Israelites viewed themselves as the congregation (קהל) or the people of God. Kraus (1992:67-71) gives a systematic overview of these terms to support this idea which is briefly presented here.

The people of God is called “great congregation” (קהל רב) and this name refers to the gatherings of the community that takes place at the time of the three great annual festivals of Israel at the holy place in Jerusalem (e.g., Pss. 22:25[26]; 35:18; 40:9[10]-10[11]; 107:32). Other designations include: “children of Israel” (בני ישראל; Ps. 148:14), “children of Zion” (בני ציון; Ps. 140:2), “Zion” (Ps. 97:8; 147:12), “my people,” “your people” (Pss. 3:8[9]; 28:9; 29:11; 33:12; 50:7; 79:13; 80:4[5]; 81:8[9]), “children of Yahweh” (Pss. 79:13; 95:7; 100:3), “saints” (חסידים; Ps. 30:4[5]), “righteous” (צדקים; Ps. 32:11), “assembly of the pious ones” (קהל חסידים; Ps. 149:1). The individual feels so connected with his fellow citizens that he expresses his praise in the midst of the great congregation (e.g., Pss. 22:22[23], 25[26]; 26:12; 35:18; 40:9[10], 10[11]; 52:9[11]). The “great congregation” (קהל רב) is Yahweh’s cult community. Ringgren (1963:21) asserts that “God’s gracious help is not a private matter; it concerns not only the individual, but the whole congregation.”

There is a tendency in the Psalms to erase the limits of the people of Israel in order to include the whole reality in praising Yahweh. “Let everything that has breath praise the Lord” (Ps. 150:6). The Lord has declared his mighty deeds and salvation to all nations (Pss. 96:3; 98:2) and for that reason all nations should praise him (Ps. 96:7), fear him and proclaim his works (Ps. 64:9[10]). The psalmist calls the whole earth to tremble before the Lord (Ps. 96:9). Kraus (1992:68) observes that the congregation, gathered on Zion to worship, corresponds to the congregation of the holy ones in the heavenly world (Ps. 89:5[6]). In Psalm 148 the heavenly and earthly congregations function as an antiphonal choir caught up in the praise of God (Kraus, 1992:68). In the same way an individual sees himself as part of the congregation in whose midst he shares his testimony (Pss. 22:22[23], 25[26]; 35:18; 40:9[10], 10[11]; 107:32). “Israel’s consciousness of national solidarity became firmly based on its corporate covenant with Yahweh” (Grogan, 1998:162).

The lack of fellowship or solicitude is perceived as evil in the Psalms (e.g., Ps. 102:6, 7). The psalmist suffers when he is abandoned by his friends and the community (e.g., Pss. 31:11, 12; 35:11-16; 41:9; 88:8, 18). Ringgren (1963:24) contends that lack of fellowship in the Psalms is “not only a social fact; it is also of religious importance, since it means that the poor man is deprived of the

normal background of the worshiping congregation as he prays.” The psalmist poignantly remembers when he “walked with the throng at the house of God” with his friend who has now turned against him (Ps. 55:12-14). “To be placed outside the cult community means to be excluded from the sphere within which God reveals himself without restriction” (Ringgren, 1963:25).

Lattey (1951:271-274) points to some additional examples of corporate solidarity retained in Israel’s worship. He mentions the offering of firstfruits, which are representative of all that from which they were taken, Yahweh’s claim that all the firstborn belong to him, and the sacrifice of the scapegoat, which carried away all the iniquities of the children of Israel (Lev. 16).

The concept of corporate solidarity may be taken “to imply that, in certain spheres and on certain occasions, the individual is considered as indistinguishable from the group to which he belongs” (Porter, 1965:361). Consequently, corporate responsibility becomes an expression of corporate personality in certain circumstances. Reward for proper behaviour or punishment for disobedience might also affect members of the family (e.g. Gen. 6:9; Josh. 7:24-26) (Matthews, 2003:293). This is justified because “whatever the individual does is considered as being done by the whole group and the group is necessarily involved in the consequences of his action” (Porter, 1965:362).

Porter argues that the term “corporate personality” should be used with some precautions and limitations especially with references to the realm of Hebrew legal practice and common responsibility. As he points out, “it is necessary to distinguish clearly between, on the one hand, the regular legal punishment for an individual, under the provisions of a recognized body of custom or law, and, on the other, the punitive consequences to others that may result from a person's own sin,” as illustrated by 1 Samuel 14 (Porter, 1965:362-364). Porter examines six examples chosen by Wheeler Robinson in support of his view of corporate personality in its legal aspects of corporate responsibility, i.e., the story of Achan in Joshua 7, the episode of the Gibeonites and the descendants of Saul in 2 Samuel 21, the institution of the Levirate marriage in Deuteronomy 25:5-10, the law of the responsibility of a whole city for undetected murder within its area in Deuteronomy 21:1-9, the second commandment in the

Decalogue with reference to iniquity extending to the third and fourth generation in Exodus 20:5 and Deuteronomy 5:9, and, finally, the law of unlimited blood-revenge in Genesis 4:15,24.

Porter arrives at the conclusion that “the basis of all Israelite law-codes is the responsibility of the individual, and it may be questioned whether the principle of communal responsibility really appears in them at all” (Porter, 1965:365). Porter (1965:368) contends that cases like the story of Achan may be explained with the patriarchal family in view, when in ancient Israel a man was the lord and owner of his entire household, human beings as well as material possessions. Porter (1965:368-369) writes,

[W]hat happened to Achan's household might be no different in principle from the custom of ancient warfare, when the wives of a defeated and slain king would become the property of his conqueror ... Yahweh was the offended party in Achan's case and thus all Achan's possessions would be forfeit to him: the judgment in Jos. vii would then, in fact, be just the severest form of punishment possible for Achan himself, and no such concept as "corporate personality" would be involved.

Porter offers another solution, which he finds more probable. Achan stole objects which were holy, קדוש (Joshua 6:19). Porter argues that in the Old Testament (e.g., Exodus 29:37; 30:29), the holy is charged with a mysterious, quasi-physical force, which is certainly physically contagious, and, when it is handled improperly, renders unclean those who come into contact with it. Porter (1965:369) draws the conclusion that “the punishment is hardly a matter of strict legal retribution at all; rather, it is a question of expunging the entire source of infection from the nation.”

Joyce (1989:80) agrees with Porter that the term “responsibility” or “collective responsibility” has to be used with some caution, especially for the relation of the group to the crime of an individual. He argues that this relation can depend on a number of factors other than “responsibility.” He (1989:81) points to 2 Samuel 24 that tells of pestilence that was sent on Israel after David’s census of the people. Joyce argues that disease is sent upon Israel not because people shared in David’s responsibility, but because they are seen as his property and it is David who was punished by the death of his people.

Joyce (1989:82) asserts that in the Old Testament collective and individualistic elements are often combined. He points to Joshua 7, which is often cited to demonstrate collective responsibility because of the striking verses 24 and 25, where not only Achan but also his family and household were destroyed. Joyce points to verses 16-19, where Joshua attempted to identify the guilty party by gradually narrowing the area of responsibility from Israel to Achan. This seems to demonstrate individualistic elements in the narrative. Joyce argues that a similar example of individualistic elements can be seen in Genesis 18, especially verse 25, which views it as inappropriate for Yahweh to destroy the righteous of Sodom together with the wicked. Joyce (1989:83) concludes that collective and individualistic elements are found side by side as part of a complex picture.

Joyce (1989:81,82) argues that because of the special nature of language about God's punishment of human sin in certain texts, collective punishment appeared to be more emphasized than was the realm of individual responsibility. He contends that this happens because ideas about God's punishment of sin start with the recognition of a particular state of affairs and proceed to attribute this state of affairs to divine displeasure. Moreover, because the causal relationship between sin and divine punishment is not always obvious, the tendency is often to take a broad view, which lends itself to language of collective responsibility (Joyce, 1989:81,82).

Though the limits of this thesis do not allow an in-depth discussion of the issue of corporate responsibility, this problem sheds some additional light on the complexity of the concept of corporate personality. The relationship between the individual and the community is not that of simple equivalence as the term "corporate personality" seems to imply. This is especially important when the question of corporate responsibility is in view. Lattey (1951:270) points to the prophets' critique of the common proverb in Israel which assumes collective responsibility, "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth will be set on edge" (Jer. 31:29; Ezek. 18:2). Lattey remarks that the prophets insist that whatever the individual's advantages and disadvantages, "as a rule he is mainly responsible for himself: he should make use of his opportunities, struggle against his disadvantages, lead a moral life."

Rowley (1956:491,492) contends that it is a gross exaggeration to imagine that the prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel were the first to recognize the importance and the worth of the individual. He points to pious individuals like Enoch, Noah and Hannah to demonstrate that there was “individual piety and sin, and individual reward and punishment, long before the days of Jeremiah.” Rowley (1956:496) argues, however, that Jeremiah does not advocate a rigid individualism. He writes,

In declaring that while their fathers' sins had not brought their misfortunes, their sins would bring misfortunes upon their children, Jeremiah was certainly not teaching a consistent doctrine of the rigid equation of desert and fortune. Moreover, the New Covenant of which he prophesied, while it was to be written on men's hearts, and thus to be an individual covenant, was at the same time a covenant with the house of Israel, and thus a collective one.

Rowley (1956:509) points also to Naboth's episode that clearly demonstrates that an invasion of the rights of the individual provoked the prophet to vigorously denounce the king because the rights and duties of both community and individual rested on the will of God. The inalienability of the patrimonial domain (Lev. 25:23) was based on the idea that the land of Israel belonged to Yahweh who, as landlord and head of the household, leased it out in fief to the twelve tribes (Blenkinsopp, 1997:54). This seems to confirm that “in no period of the life of Israel do we find extreme collectivism or extreme individualism, but a combination of both” (Rowley, 1956:492).

Joyce (1989:83-87) challenges the developmental theory that attempts to depict a gradual but steady shift from a tendency to think of responsibility in collective terms to an increasingly individualistic emphasis, which took place during the course of the history of ancient Israel, especially in the period of the exilic prophets (e.g., Ezekiel). He (1989:83) points to “the individualistic elements which may be discerned in relatively early material and, conversely, the collective elements to be found in relatively late material.” Joyce (1989:81,83,84) sees evidence of individual responsibility in criminal law, established in Israel from very early times (Exod. 20-23; Deut. 24:16), and early narratives of God's punishment of human sin such as the Flood narrative (Gen. 6-9) and destruction of Sodom (Gen. 18), which clearly demonstrate that God looks for the individual because he does not destroy the righteous with the wicked. Joyce (1989:84) is aware that dating of Old Testament texts represents

a challenge but maintains that it can at least be asserted that “neither in criminal law texts nor in materials concerning God’s punishment of human sin are there to be found any grounds for regarding individualism as an exclusively or even a distinctively late phenomenon.”

Strongly collective elements are to be found in relatively late materials (e.g., Dan 6:24; Esth. 9:7-10). This leads to the conclusion that “throughout the history of ancient Israel the complexities of the relationship between the one and the many were fully experienced and reflected in the language” (Joyce, 1989:85). There seem to be developments both in the direction of an increased emphasis on individual responsibility (e.g., the ceremony to be performed by the elders of the city nearest to which a dead body was found, Deut. 21; emergence of a belief in personal resurrection reflected in Dan. 12:2) and also in the opposite direction, towards a more collective emphasis (e.g., Amos’ message of judgment to the nation of Israel as a whole) (Joyce, 1989:85).

The complexity of the discussion about collective and individual responsibility in the Old Testament clearly demonstrates that the issue of the relationship between the individual and community in the Old Testament cannot fall in one simple pattern. However, it can at least be asserted that in the Old Testament there is not to be found any grounds for regarding the piety of the individual as exclusively distinctive or even alienated from the piety of the community.

This discussion on corporate personality in the Psalms and the rest of the Old Testament clearly demonstrates the force of the covenantal community which strongly united past, present and future generations. The covenant provides a basis for understanding the concept of corporate solidarity. Corporate personality is understood here as portraying the individual and the community as an organism which is closely knit together and the individual as the center of the common will of the community (Porter, 1965:362). “It remains likely that Israelites saw society as an aggregate of groups rather than as a collection of individuals, that in worship the king could embody the aspirations of the whole community, and that individuals in worship or prayer could feel that their experiences were those of the whole group” (Grogan, 1998:160).

The biblical emphasis on one God, Yahweh, as the deity of the entire people of Israel significantly contributed to corporate solidarity. The ancestral narratives of

Genesis repeatedly use the language of family in reference to God (e.g., Gen. 31:5, 42, 53; 32:9; 46:1–2) (Meyers, 1997:39). The sanctuary cult demonstrates a balanced view of community and individual in the presence of God. This is clearly demonstrated in individual (e.g., Lev. 6:1-7) and corporate cultic rites (e.g., Lev. 16). Rowley (1956:493) rightly remarks that ancient Israelites “believed that the life of every individual concerned the whole community, but they nevertheless saw the individual as an individual, and denounced the sins of individuals as well as of society, and proclaimed the wrongs suffered by individuals.” However, ancient Israel did not insist on a dichotomy between community and the individual, public and private. They rather “preserved the sense of common heritage and destiny and helped cement the feelings of interconnectedness among households and thus of social responsibility across household boundaries” (Meyers, 1997:40).

It is in the covenant and the liturgy that this common personality or common will is best nurtured and exercised. The covenant which embraced the whole people of Israel (Gen. 15:5-21; 17:1-22) was premised, not on the goodness of the people themselves, but on that of Abraham. Through him all his descendants were to receive blessings and participate in the covenant (Williams, 1996:245). Liturgy provided the same bond. For example, each Jew at Passover is obligated to regard himself as if he personally, not simply his ancestors, had come out of Egypt (Wilson, 1989:188). Drijvers (1965:97) puts it well:

The private person acts solely as a member of the whole people of covenant in his contact with Yahweh. The fact that he has been blessed by Yahweh personally and has been privileged to experience the deliverance of his God, is not considered to have purely personal significance. This private experience of salvation is absorbed into that of the nation as a whole, and is but a very small part of it.

This is clearly demonstrated in the prayer recorded in Deuteronomy 26:5-10, which the newly settled Israelite peasant repeated when he offered the first fruits of his fields to Yahweh in the sanctuary. Terrien (1952:27) remarks that the abrupt shift in the use of the personal pronouns from “he,” which refers to the ancient ancestor and to Israel in Egypt, to “we,” which refers to the present Israel, including the one who is telling the story, speaks of the unity between the past and present generations. Here is an individual peasant who at the time of

his prosperity feels again the horrors of famine and slavery and responds with the past generations, as it were, to the mighty acts of God's deliverance. The distant past experience is liturgically made present and unites the individual with the past of his nation (Terrien, 1952:27).

A number of examples from the Old Testament demonstrate that the individual was not merely a member of contemporary society but was united with the generations of the past and of the future, as in cases when the future generations experienced the consequences of their ancestors' sins (e.g., 1 Kings 21: 29; 2 Kings 20: 19; Exod. 20: 5; Deut. 5: 9) (Rowley, 1956:502,503). The frequent expression "to be gathered to one's kin" (e.g., Gen. 25:8, 17; 35:29; 49:29, 33), or "to be gathered to one's ancestors" (Judg. 2:10) points to the strong feeling of solidarity with the ancestors in ancient Israel (Blenkinsopp, 1997:50). "Neither the Law nor the Prophets regarded religion as merely a man's private traffic with God, but something which was of social and of individual concern" (Rowley, 1956:494).

This notion has been preserved in modern Judaism as well. Ari Goldman presents a Jewish interpretation of the value of ritual and writes that "ritual acts that are specifically Jewish have the power to create and preserve the Jewish community" (Goldman, 2000:24). Ritual acts become crucial because a ritual act connects an individual with all the others who have done that ritual, both past and present (Goldman, 2000:24). Moreover, the cult is seen as a link between the past and the future (Goldman, 2000:46).

However, this does not mean that the individual praise and pleas are absolutely ignored. On the contrary, the individual also has an active role in the cult (e.g., Leviticus 1:2-9; Pss. 22:22[23]; 47:1[2]; 66:1-5; 96:8-10). Ringgren (1963:20,21) expresses the balance of communal and personal piety retained in the cult. He prefers "to regard the individual's religion as a function of the worshiping community, as piety nourished by the believer's fellowship with other believers, that is, with other worshipers of the same God in the cult community of Israel." He adds remarkably,

Thus the fact is not crucial that in a great number of psalms it is a collective – the people, the nation, or the community – that is the speaking subject, or that sometimes it is an individual who speaks in the

name of the people; it simply bears witness to the feeling of fellowship and *mutual dependence* that pervades the Psalms. The individual, for example, who laments before God over his misery and suffering feels so connected with his fellow citizens that he expresses his vow of thanksgiving in the following form: "Then I will thank thee in the great congregation; in the mighty throng I will praise thee" (Ps. 35:18). (emphasis supplied)

The private person acts always as a member of the whole people of the covenant in his approach to Yahweh. Kraus (1992:138) remarks that it is not appropriate to speak of the "Hebrew individual," but "the individual in Israel." For that reason the individual deliverance and praise are personal proofs of God's faithfulness to his covenant with the community of his chosen people (Drijvers, 1965:97).

Ringgren (1963:20) remarks that "[t]he religion of the Old Testament cannot easily be described as 'individual' or 'collective'." Communal and personal piety seem to be so intermingled and interdependent that they are most of the time hardly distinguishable in the Psalms. The reason for that may be in the nature of Israel's poetry, which is a product of the life of the whole people. As Drijvers (1965:38) expresses it, "[t]he poet is above all an interpreter of the soul of his people."

4.6 Theocentrism in the Old Testament

There is strong evidence in the psalms that betrays the psalmists' theocentric worldview. The psalmist declares that God is always before him (Ps. 16:8). God is everywhere (Ps.106:43-44; 138:6, 7). God is in control of the world because he created everything that exists (Pss. 8; 19; 104). Everything that exists should praise the Lord (Pss. 148; 150). The Hebrew concept of the world is fundamentally rooted in creation (Doukhan, 1993:96). Guardini (1968:56) asserts that the psalmist "does not behold the world scientifically nor aesthetically, but prophetically, as a countenance through which God looks at him." He observes that Psalm 148 gathers up all existence so that its fullness and also its unity carry everything before God in one song of praise (Guardini, 1968:61,62). Psalm 29 summons the creation in a similar way to join in "a cosmic liturgy" (Guardini, 1968:107).

God sees and knows everything (Ps. 139). God's knowledge implies God's personal commitment to the creation (Doukhan, 1993:194). It also implies that "[e]verything moves in the region of God's light" (Guardini, 1968:84). Psalm 139 "portrays human existence in all its dimensions in terms of God's knowledge, presence, and power" (Mays, 1994a:425). In the Old Testament God is interested in everything that relates to his creation, particularly to Israel. The psalmist confidently asserts, "From heaven the Lord looks down and sees all mankind; from his dwelling place he watches all who live on earth – he who forms the hearts of all, who considers everything they do" (Ps. 33:13-15). Thus the issues that pertain to everyday life are made part of the cult, e.g., health (Lev. 13; 14:1-32), diet (Gen. 1:29, 39; Lev. 11), childbirth (Lev. 12), mildew in a house or clothing (Lev. 14:33-57).

It is clear that "the Hebrews make no distinction between the sacred and the secular areas of life," but view all life as a unity that belongs to God's domain (Wilson, 1989:156). Shabbat observance, which embodied worship of the Creator and celebration of human life, served as "a reminder that peak religious experiences can be a regular part of life" (Goldman, 2000:188). "Everything is theological" to the ancient Israelites, as Wilson (1989:157) nicely puts it. Abraham Heschel describes this ancient Jewish mind-set: "Saintliness was not thought to consist in specific acts, such as excessive prayer ... but was an attitude bound up with all actions, concomitant with all doings, accompanying and shaping all life's activities" (quoted by Wilson, 1989:157,158).

Ringgren (1963:27) contends that the main concern in the Psalms is ultimately the advancement of God's glory and not the welfare of the psalmist (e.g., Pss. 74:18, 19; 79:9, 10; 115:1-3; 139:21, 22). Ringgren (1963:27-31) points to the fact that many psalms of lament, in which the psalmist asks for deliverance from some actual suffering, often place emphasis not on the deliverance as such, but on the glory of God (e.g., Pss. 50:15; 69:6[7]; 74:18, 19; 79:9, 10; 115:1-3). The psalmist often views his misery as the test of faith of other believers (e.g. Ps. 69:6[7]) which demonstrates the psalmists' strong sense of social responsibility and fellowship (Ringgren, 1963:29).

While the way of an individual and a community before God moves into and out of cultic locations, life in its totality is perceived as divine service (Craven 1992:133,136). The religion of the psalmist is a way of life (Ps. 1:6; 17:5). The

word of God is a light that illuminates the psalmist's path, i.e., his whole life (Ps. 119:105). The psalmist commits his way to the Lord (Ps. 37:5). His desire to dwell in the house of the Lord transforms his everyday life (Pss. 15; 101). Lewis (1958:47) describes this holistic view of life of an ancient Israelite:

He was a peasant, very close to the soil. He had never heard of music, or festivity, or agriculture as things separate from religion, nor of religion as something separate from them. Life was one.

Religious experience was inseparably and indistinguishably tied to the hearty social pleasure in corporate acts, enjoyment of hymns and the crowd, the memories of other cultic service since childhood, the well-earned anticipation of rest after harvest, and festive meals (Lewis, 1958:47). They are all one in the mind of an ancient Israelite.

Endres (2001:65) observes that "people attempt to live their lives in ways that connect to the cosmos in which they live, the people with whom they interact, all in relation to the God who creates and redeems them." This is even truer of the ancient Israelites. In the Psalms everything is committed to God, e.g., lament (Pss. 22; 102), praise (Ps. 18:1, 46), anger (Ps. 137:8, 9), curses (Ps. 109:8-15, 18-20), joy (Pss. 16:3; 21:1), enemies (Ps. 17:9-14), sin (Ps. 32:5), and victories of war (Ps. 21:1, 5). Bellinger (2001: 35) claims that the "dialogical nature of the lament and thanksgiving psalms shows that Israel's worship was connected to the rest of the life."

It seems appropriate to conclude that the ancient Israelites did not know a dichotomy between cultic and personal piety. The cultic and the personal were so interwoven that it is hard to speak of two distinct pieties in the Psalms. In ancient Israel all life was created and blessed by God and consequently belonged to God and his scrutiny.

4.7 Cult as Creative

The notion of the close relationship between cultic and personal piety leads to an important question: What provides a vital link between cultic and personal piety since it appears that the two are so closely related? This study proposes that the creative aspect of cult may serve as the possible link.

The concept of the creative or constitutive aspect of cult is not a new concept. Among the first who brought this concept and the Psalms together is Sigmund Mowinckel. Although he makes some useful remarks about it, it seems that Mowinckel does not make much use of it in his study of the Psalms. Brueggemann adopts Mowinckel's view of cult as creative and uses it more profoundly in his study of Psalms.

Brueggemann (1988:6) believes that criticism of Mowinckel has been focused in the wrong place, i.e., disputing the various details of the enthronement festival, and has missed the point of Mowinckel's hypothesis, which is the idea of constitutive and transforming elements in the cult (Brueggemann, 1988:7-12). Although it is debatable whether Mowinckel truly makes the creative aspect of cult the central point of his thesis, since he mostly writes about it only in the introduction of his book *The Psalms in Israel's Worship*, he has certainly made a contribution by discussing the creative aspect of cult in the book, which deals with origins and settings of the Psalms. By doing so he indirectly suggests the idea of connecting the cult and the Psalms through the creative aspect of cult. This suggestion is most likely unintentional on his part, because he obviously pursues another path in investigating the cultic purpose and origins of the Psalms.

As for this study, the creative aspect of cult as the possible bridge between the sanctuary cult and the Psalms is the central point. The proposal made here is that the sanctuary cult created a specific piety which found its expression in the Psalms.

4.7.1 Sigmund Mowinckel's View of Cult as Creative

The anthropological studies of Wilhelm Groenbech have made a significant contribution to the understanding of the creative aspect of cult. While exploring ritual drama Groenbech realized that rites were not mere symbols; they produced what they signified. Drama could be creative and the realities of salvation were re-presented, actualized, re-enacted and lived in the cult (Sabourin, 1974:42).

Mowinckel uses some of Groenbech's ideas in the interpretation of the Psalms. He is generally credited with bringing together the anthropological study of Groenbech and the literary study of Gunkel (Brueggemann, 1988:7).

Mowinckel (2004, I:15) defines cult as "the socially established and regulated holy acts and words in which the encounter and communion of the Deity with the congregation is established, developed, and brought to its ultimate goal." Mowinckel (2004, I:15-17) claims that from the point of view of cult the initiative lies with God, and, though it is people who seek God, it is God who revealed himself and taught them where, when and how to seek him. Cult thus has "a vitalizing function" that seeks to develop a mutual relationship between God and humanity.

Mowinckel (2004, I:17) argues that cult is creative because in the cult something happens, i.e., a relationship between God and the congregation is established and developed. Moreover, in the cult the "power" of God creates life, from the fundamental material needs (e.g., rain, sun, fertility, victory of the tribe), up to the spiritual, religious and ethical values.

Sabourin (1974:35) describes the constitutive aspect in similar terms. He claims that "through the cult, through sacrifice especially, the power of the Holy, its life or blessing, are bestowed upon the partakers, and a relationship is established or renewed between them and the deity." This takes place within a particular context and place. The sanctuary is designated as the place where God and his people met (e.g., Exod. 25:8; Pss. 74:4; 78:59-60). The sanctuary in the Old Testament is frequently called אהל מועד meaning the "Tent of Meeting" (e.g., Exod. 29:44; 30:16, 20; 1 Sam. 2:22; 1 Kgs. 8:4; 1 Chr. 6:32[33]; 9:21; 2 Chr. 1:3, 6, 13; 5:5). The Hebrew phrase אהל מועד can be understood also as the "tent *appointed* for a special purpose," since the word מועד can also mean "appointed" especially when it refers to time (Bosman, 1997:871,872) as in the following examples: Exodus 23:15; 1 Chronicles 23:33; Psalms 75:2[3]; 102:13[14]; 104:19.

However, certain conditions had to be fulfilled so that the holy God could abide among sinful people. These were achieved through a series of cultic acts with

the sacrifice as the central part (e.g., Exod. 29:38-46). The people were strongly forbidden to enter the divine presence on their own (Exod. 19:24). Even the priests and the high priest could not enter God's presence whenever they wanted or in the way they wanted (e.g., Exod. 28:43; Lev. 10:1-3; 16:2; 2 Sam. 6:6-7). These examples appear to suggest that cult is needed because the "holy sphere is inaccessible to man in his normal condition" (Mowinckel, 2004, I:17). The "normal" condition referred to here is described in the Old Testament as a "sinful" condition (e.g., Pss. 36:1[2]; 51:5[7]). In the case of the sanctuary cult in Israel, divine power comes to the congregation or an individual through the cult, and creates through the sacred acts what they need, i.e., forgiveness of sin and renewal of covenantal relationship with God (e.g., Pss. 50:5; 51:5[7]-12[14]). Even the pagan cult is viewed as creative since it produces the same false image that it embodies in its worshipers (Ps. 115:8).

Mowinckel (2004, I:19) rightly warns, however, that "this does not mean that the representation, the acts and the words, are seen as 'magic' which by itself creates life and renewal." It is Yahweh who acts through the cult. The cult becomes "sacramental" only in the sense that these particular cultic deeds, made institutional by God, bestow the blessings and life of salvation upon the partakers. However, various examples from the Old Testament prove that cult may become ineffective and even offensive to God when the relationship between God and the congregation is broken because of their rebellion and idolatry (e.g., Ps. 50; Isa. 1:11-17).

Mowinckel (2004, I:18) further says that "the 'fact of salvation' is actualized in the cult, mainly when the reality of the divine saving deeds is symbolically represented by a 'dramatic' re-enactment of the past." Which past event was dramatically re-enacted by the sanctuary cult? Some of the festivals have specific historical events clearly indicated as their background (e.g., the Passover, the Feast of Tabernacles). Mostly they have to do with the various aspects of one and the same historical event – the Exodus. The historical background of other festivals (e.g., the Day of Atonement) is not so clearly expressed. The same applies to the daily sacrifices. It seems that the sanctuary practices pointed equally to the future as to the past. Brueggemann (1988:5) points out that "cult and eschatology together mediate an alternative which

critiques the present world and invites liberation from it.” The eschatological dimension of the cult is examined in more detail in the next chapter.

The creative aspect of cult is an inherent part of the cult. As Brueggemann (1988:10) effectively argues,

Mowinckel is not suggesting that cult ought to do this creative work, nor indeed that the cult ought not to do this. It simply does. It does indeed, as every serious pastor knows. Every serious pastor knows as he listens to parishioners that what happens in sacramental activity has a reality that the outside world does not understand, but nonetheless is a reality. The problem is not in the cultic act, but in our poor language that can scarcely say what it is that we do.

Mowinckel (2004:20) believes that “the power inherent in the act is also concentrated in the word; the holy word is effective and creative,” and that “word and act co-operate in the creation of reality”. To prove his point Mowinckel (2004, I:20-21) points to the significance of Isaac’s blessing given to Jacob (Genesis 27), the blessing given to the daughter on her wedding day (Genesis 24:60), and a few other similar examples (e.g., Numbers 10:35; 1 Samuel 4). However, these examples prove only the significance and importance of blessing in general, when they are uttered as the accompaniment of certain ceremonies and acts. The cultic acts were explained in detail and prescribed by strict cultic laws. However, the words were not given any sacramental significance, in the sense that they were stipulated and instituted by God directly. The only exceptions are the “Aaronic blessing” (Numbers 6:22-27) and the words accompanying the test for an unfaithful wife (Numbers 5:19-22). Though the Old Testament does not provide evidence for the existence of sacramental words used in the sanctuary cult (except the two examples mentioned above), the words spoken in the cult played a significant role. Other scriptural and extrabiblical references point to the use of psalms in the service (e.g., 1 Chr. 16:8-36; 2 Chr. 5:11-13; 7:3-6). This issue is discussed later in this chapter.

Mowinckel (2004, I:14) criticizes Gunkel’s view that the Psalms were only a private imitation of old cult. He effectively brackets out the asserted incompatibility between the personal religious note in many psalms and the “impersonal” character of the cultic formula advocated by Gunkel. Mowinckel (2004, I:14-15) asserts,

There is no real incompatibility between 'traditionalism' and 'personality' in religious poetry ... traditional 'sacred' forms and expressions may often carry a richly personal content. True enough they can become worn out and petrified by use. But through all the various experiences and emotions associated with them through generations, they may also be able sometimes to store the religious experience of the generations and become symbols and 'ideograms', 'words saturated with experience' as V. Gronbech calls them, words which only need to be mentioned to release a series of associations, of thoughts, experiences, and emotions. The words convey more than they seemingly contain.

Mowinckel is right in his criticism of the view of cult as "impersonal", a view which uncritically assumes the separation between cultic and personal elements in religion. Cultic deeds when performed release a series of associations, experiences, and emotions, as the previous study of the significance of the sanctuary in the Psalms suggests. As "the stereotyped phrase may express a personally experienced and genuine religion, both for the poet and for those who use the psalm in worship" (Mowinckel 2004, I:15), so stereotyped cultic acts may create and nourish personal piety.

Awareness of the creative power of cult has its practical implications, as Brueggemann (1988:7) contends:

To the extent that praise, and worship more generally, is constitutive, awareness of this constitutive element will permit greater intentionality and will permit the agents of the liturgical drama – priests and pastors – to be more knowingly critical of what they themselves do. As long as cultic acts of praise are taken to be only responsive and not constitutive, the agents of the drama are likely to be neither intentional nor critical. Lack of such awareness in itself, however, will not prevent the inevitably ongoing work of construction.

The work of construction is achieved through the creative power of the cult. Though it may often look as though the worship lies with the congregation, on the human side, consisting purely of the worshiper's response to God, it is rather the other way round. Response from the worshiper is created and inspired by God through the cult as one of the central means. The cult in Israel was "a sacramental meal, in which both Yahweh and the congregation take part, where the congregation are guests of Yahweh, and where fellowship and covenant both with him and amongst the members of the congregation are renewed and strengthened" (Mowinckel, 2004, I:18).

As mentioned before, the word “sacramental” is always taken here with a critical reserve. It does not imply magic or inherited power in itself. It is always God who acts and fulfills his will through the cult.

4.7.2 Walter Brueggemann’s View of Cult as World-Making

Brueggemann (1988:12) observes that the issue of the dynamic of cult has been neglected in scholarship for a long time because historical-critical methods are not responsive to certain categories of knowledge, including the dynamic of cult. He points to an obvious epistemological shift that is happening in our generation, the shift of scholarly investigation generally, the shift in scripture study from historical to literary, and the shift from the valuing of facticity to the celebration of imagination. These shifts reflect the failure and loss of confidence in conventional modes of historical-critical investigation which is excessively preoccupied with facticity and assumes that the world is a fixed, settled object that can be characterized, analyzed, and finally controlled in any objective way. It has become increasingly clear, however, that reality is not fixed and developed. Brueggemann, (1988:12) explains:

We do not simply respond to a world that is here, but we engage in constituting that world by our participation, our actions, and our speech. As participants in the constitutive act, we do not describe what is there, but we evoke what is not fully there until we act or speak. The human agent, then, is a constitutive part of the enterprise, which means that the shape of reality in part awaits our shaping adherence.

However, Brueggemann (1988:25) agrees with Mowinckel that liturgy does not create God, but creates world, i.e., cult does not reshape the ontology of God, but it does decisively shape the life-world in which individuals and communities encounter God. For that reason the sanctuary cult was governed by meticulous and specific laws (e.g., Leviticus 22:17-31). The sublime influence of God here reaches so deeply into the everyday that the two realms of the divine and the human are not only unseparated but basically inseparable (Mann, 1988:9).

The sanctuary cult is a “place” where the creative activity of God takes place. Moreover, the sanctuary cult is a “place” where human agents, as creatures in God’s image, share in God’s activity. Such discernment moves our understanding of reality away from a settled absoluteness to affirmation of the

dynamic character of creation which asserts “that God is still operative and exercises choices along the way; that the world is still open and we are not fated” (Brueggemann, 1988:12).

Brueggemann uses a postcritical method of interpretation to depict the cult as creative. The postcritical method combines the insights of two major traditions of interpretation: the devotional tradition of piety acutely attuned to the needs and possibilities of profound faith and the scholarly tradition which tends to be critical, working beyond the naïveté of the devotional tradition (Brueggemann, 1984:15-16).

Brueggemann attempts to further develop Mowinckel’s idea of cult as creative and not merely responsive: “If the cult is creative, then what was done in the cult is constitutive” (Brueggemann, 1988:6). In other words, in the public worship Israel is engaged in constructing a world in which Israel can viably and obediently live. What was done in the cult was praise. Praise not only celebrates God but portrays the world given by God (Brueggemann, 1988:6). Brueggemann is aware that, theologically, such a view is problematic, because of synergism, wherein the community, or at least the king and priest, share in God’s creative work, or indeed, do God’s creative work. That theological question notwithstanding, he finds the idea of the constitutive power of praise to be anthropologically and sociologically still most plausible and important (Brueggemann, 1988:7).

Mowinckel (2004, I:16,35,51) claims that world-making is done by God, but through human activity which God has authorized, and in which God is known to be present. Brueggemann (1988:11) further suggests that the purpose of the cult is “to maintain and transform the world, obtain a blessing that would not be obtained, maintained, or transformed except through this routinized and most serious activity authorized by God and enacted by human agents.” Brueggemann (1988:11) is aware that this argument may create a problem because it suggests that God’s creation and sovereignty depend on ritual activity. In Brueggemann’s words, “we are not so naïve as to imagine that there is no world there until the moment of praise” (Brueggemann, 1988:26).

However, that already-existing world is “an unshaped world waiting to be invested with shape and meaning” (Brueggemann, 1988:26).

This appears to be an accurate description of what was taking place in the sanctuary cult. For example, if a member of the community committed a sin, he was supposed to follow the cultic prescriptions in order to be forgiven (e.g., Leviticus 4:27-35). He had to bring a lamb or goat without defect to the entrance of the sanctuary, lay his hand on its head and slaughter it. After the priest completed his part, “the priest will make atonement for him, and he will be forgiven” (Leviticus 4:31, 35). The cultic procedure, of course, did not exclude or underestimate the inner response of the individual (e.g., 1 Kings 8:33, 38).

What is important here is the relationship between the “unshaped world” of forgiveness and the “shaped meaning” of forgiveness. The “unshaped world” of forgiveness, i.e. the possibility of obtaining forgiveness, already existed. However, the “shape and meaning” of forgiveness, i.e. the actual forgiveness, were given to the sinner at the particular moment in the cult and not before it. God forgave sins, but he did that through the cult. This is not to suggest that there was no forgiveness apart from the sanctuary cult (e.g., the allusion in Amos 5:25), but to point out that God intended to be so as a general rule.

Evidently the cult is “not a response to a world already fixed and settled, but it is a responsive and obedient participation in a world yet to be decreed and in process of being decreed through this liturgical act” (Brueggemann, 1988:11). This is nicely demonstrated in the case of forgiveness of sin in the sanctuary.

Brueggemann (1988:11) is aware of another problem that may arise when the creative power of cult is misinterpreted, i.e., when the cult is given an efficacy that assigns more to liturgy than is intended, a kind of uncritical *ex opera operato*, as if it is effective in itself. Cult never has authority and power in itself. God works through cult and human agents. However, the cult is criticized and even rejected by God (e.g. Ps. 50; Amos 5:21-24; Isa. 1:11-15) when human agents become disobedient and insolent (e.g., Lev. 10:1-7) or when the liturgy becomes an ideology used to hide the reality of social life (e.g., Jer. 7:9-11). In its altered, corrupted form the cult creates a world in which individuals and the community are led to misinterpret and misunderstand God, so ultimately God

becomes like an idol to them. "An idol in Israel," Brueggemann (1988:106) explains, "is not a nonexistent god, but a god who has no power, has done nothing, has no story, no recital of transformative acts."

Brueggemann's argument clearly demonstrates the inescapability of world-making by the cult. He (1988:123) rightly observes that,

World-making is a constitutive human activity. In Israel, faithful world-making is designed to form and sustain a world of celebrative liberation, hopeful homecoming, and glad obedience. Israel's world-making was not always faithful, however. At times Israel distorted the world entrusted to it through its life of praise, and perverted the process of world-making to which it was summoned.

The changes that are made in the cult are reflected in the piety of individuals and the community. Cult and piety are strongly related: when the cult is perverted, the piety, the response to God, becomes perverted as well (Brueggemann, 1988:105).

Brueggemann consistently uses the words "world" and "world-making" to describe what results in the cult. With these terms Brueggemann (1988:13) describes reality as "structure, system, and arrangement of social life that is known, perceived, relied upon, and judged to be true." Reality is not a flat, frozen, given, particular formation, but consists of many alternative worlds, as many as there are societies and even individuals who are asserting their world as authoritative (Brueggemann, 1988:12-28). Because of the choices that are made in world-construction, however, it is this one particular world, and not some other, which exists in this community.

Obviously Brueggemann wants to resist the notion that what is done in the cult is simply a subjective reading of the world that in fact exists apart from the cult. He (1988:9) clearly argues that the world constructed in the cult does not exist apart from the cult. He calls it a primitive "realism" in the cult that imagines that priests form rocks and trees by their rituals. Brueggemann (1988:10) affirms:

The cult has a realism that is more than subjectivism, but it is not the kind of realism that caters to the technological modes of modernity. What happens in the cult is realistic, but it is not realism of technique ... what happens in sacramental activity has a reality that the outside world does not understand, but that nonetheless is a reality ... The liturgy is the festive act of enthroning and the obedient act of submitting more and more areas of life to that newly wrought sovereignty. The world may think this is subjective self-deception, but the assembly which credits the

speech and action knows that the reality of God is not a reality unless it is visibly done in, with, and by the community.

Though Brueggemann is right in observing that it cannot be assumed that terms “reality,” “truth” and “objectivity” mean or should mean exactly the same thing, for the psalmist they are obviously more than just related. The psalmist uses these concepts to describe the revelation of Yahweh with boldness and confidence (e.g., Ps. 119:86, 96, 128, 142, 160). The psalmists’ declaration does not build on scepticism and sentimentalism but on firm theological certainty (Terrien, 1952:xii, xiii). The Old Testament does not describe the world constructed in the cult as the reality which exists only for the believing community. The sanctuary cult is not portrayed as one among many theoretical worlds. Rather it is understood that the world which is created and reflected in the cult is universal and only “true” reality. The alternative worlds created by other (i.e., pagan) cults are considered to be false, not parallel realities (e.g., Deut. 16:21 – 17:7; Ps. 115:4-8; Jer. 10:1-16).

Brueggemann (1988:29) observes that “the distinctiveness of Israel’s world-construction is derived from the distinctiveness of Yahweh.” For the biblical authors realism and authenticity are part of that distinctiveness. Yahweh is the only and true God who gave the revelation of the sanctuary cult to his people (Deut. 4:35, 39; Exod. 25:8, 40; 26:30). For an ancient Israelite what took place in the cult was a subjective experience of the world that certainly existed apart from the cult. The cult was perceived as the place where the believer could engage in that other world. For that reason, the world-creation necessarily includes delegitimation of other worlds (Pss. 76:1-2; 115:4-8; 148:13).

Delegitimation of other worlds does not only include delegitimation of other gods, but delegitimation of other cults as well. The Israelites were strongly forbidden to worship “in their way,” and commanded to “be careful to obey all these regulations” given to them by God without adding anything to them or taking anything away from them (e.g., Deut. 12:28-32; Ps. 16:4).

Delegitimation of other worlds is not only a natural result of true piety but the condition for it as well (e.g., 1 Kgs. 9:4-9). As Mann (1988:8) expresses it effectively, “the Scripture stories ... seek to subject us, and if we refuse to be subjected we are rebels”. The sanctuary cult with its rhetoric of command clearly demands total commitment, loyalty and trust as the prerequisite of true

piety. It appears that the world of the Psalms commands its own conditions, refusing to be subject to the rules coming from the outside. Entertaining the idea that the world of the Psalms is one among parallel worlds seems to put one off the track of grasping and understanding the piety of that world (Pss. 40:4[5]; 76:1-2; 119:97-104).

Brueggemann's concept of world construction provides an insightful description and explanation of how cult works. Cult inevitably creates something which can be described as a world in which believers engage and live. In the Old Testament cult is a place designed by God to create an environment where God and his people can meet and abide together with all the implications of that communion. As McCann (1993:21) puts it, "[!]iturgy inevitably is instructional" and it "shapes minds and hearts; it moves and transforms; it creates a new vision of reality."

The world created by cult does not only refer to the outward, observable, communal environment. This communal environment is possible and sustainable only because of the inward world of personal piety which produces and reinforces it. Cult plays a unique role in shaping and fuelling both of these "worlds." Through cult personal piety was shaped in the light of communal piety and communal piety in turn was constantly shaped by the piety of the individual.

The world of the psalmist does not lack realism, certainty and determination. Truly, when stripped of its facticity and "primitive" realism the world of the psalmists ends essentially in imagination and subjectivism which contradicts the testimony of the Psalms themselves. Imagination is, of course, a valid tool that can be used to contemplate and even evoke reality. However, when it is viewed as a substitute for reality, imagination becomes nothing else but fantasy and self-deception. Contrary to that, one finds in the Psalms an exclusive realism which claims authority and validity only to its own world. This exclusivism is an important attribute of the piety of the psalmists.

The character of Israel's experience cannot be grasped without decisive reference to God. Brueggemann (1991a:32) asserts that "the Exodus is sure to be misunderstood without acknowledgment of the cruciality of God." This, of course, refers to all Israel's experience. Since "the miraculous quality of Israel's past is not later attributed, but is immediately discerned as intrinsic to the act

and the experience,” one needs to listen carefully to the experience recorded. Otherwise, one will be dealing with an event which “could not be the event that Israel experienced and remembered” (Brueggemann, 1991a:33). This is especially important in attempting to understand piety in its unique relationship to the cult.

4.8 Conclusion

Several conclusions attained in this chapter strongly suggest that the piety of the psalmists cannot be finally depicted by either of the two opposing categories represented by Gunkel and Mowinckel. Gunkel’s notion that cultic piety is related only to the worship setting and is incompatible with personal piety seems to be unreasonably restrictive. The sanctuary, as the revelation of God, played an important role in the individual’s understanding of God and relationship to him. The cult clearly provided a religious framework for the individual to experience and to express his devotion to God even outside the cultic service. This is demonstrated in the psalmists’ use of cultic imagery. The psalmists’ reliance on cultic images to express their personal piety in non-cultic settings seems to demonstrate the profound power of the cult to shape the personal piety of the individual and to guide the individual’s perception of God and life. This study has pointed to the significance of the sanctuary for the daily life of the individual in the Psalms. In the Psalms Zion becomes part of the individual’s identity (e.g., Ps. 87:6).

The Old Testament concept of solidarity and its theocentric worldview appear to further reinforce the idea that the clear distinction between the individual and the community and between the common and the sacred did not exist in ancient Israel as it seems to exist today. The sanctuary played a crucial role for the personal piety of the psalmist because it served as the revelation of God and provided a context where a sinful individual could approach the holy God, obtain forgiveness and renew a living relationship with God. The sanctuary was not separated from the individual’s daily life since the ancient Israelites had a strong sense of community and a theocentric worldview. This seems to imply that personal piety can hardly be distinguished from communal piety, as

demonstrated in the difficulty of clearly distinguishing between the “I” of the individual and the “I” of the community in the Psalms. The study of the cultic elements in the individual psalms and of the significance of the sanctuary for personal piety points toward a conclusion that the sanctuary has equal importance in both communal and individual psalms.

The study of the creative aspect of cult strongly suggests that the creative power of cult may serve as an explanation for the close relationship between cultic and personal piety in the Psalms. The role of the cult was not only to provide a framework for the people’s response of lament and of praise to God but also to create that very response by enacting a living relationship between God and his people. Cult is perceived as a gift from God and a powerful channel of his grace that makes God’s real presence among his people possible and creates new life in the worshipers.

The results of the investigation of the relationship between cultic and personal piety in the Psalms seem to suggest that the two are so intermingled and interdependent to the point where they become inseparable and indistinguishable. However, this does not mean that the individual was not perceived outside of the community. Gunkel (1998:129) rightly observes that Mowinckel’s insistence on the communal character of most psalms tends to overlook those creative sentiments of the individual poet that were “not typical of the normal mood of religiosity of the time.” However, the presence of these “not typical” moods of the individual does not necessarily represent an anti-cultic agenda in the Psalms.

This study now reaches the point where an important question seems to be inevitable: If the sanctuary cult is so significant for the piety of the psalmist, does it mean that the Psalms in their present form were used in actual cultic ceremonies as Mowinckel claims? Not necessarily, since there are not enough indications in the Psalms that allow reconstruction of any festival as Mowinckel and others contend. Moreover, a number of cultic references in the Psalms serve as imagery and depict the psalmist as not being present in the temple.

These remarks lead to another question: If it is not likely that the Psalms in their present form were actual liturgies but were merely drawn from cultic forms and language, does it mean that the Psalms present an anti-cultic agenda as Gunkel and others claim? Not necessarily, as is evidenced by the close relationship between cultic and personal piety and the importance of the sanctuary for the editorial agenda of the Psalter that was discussed in the previous chapter of this study.

These remarks point to the conclusion that the study of the relationship between cult and piety in the Psalms seems to evade the categories set by Gunkel and Mowinckel. An important question needs to be considered here: What is the common issue of Gunkel and Mowinckel that seems to account for the restrictiveness of their theories? Their definition of a cultic psalm seems to be that crucial issue. Both Gunkel and Mowinckel view a psalm as cultic only in the case when a psalm was composed for and used in a cultic ceremony. Consequently, Gunkel, who claims that the Psalms in their present form were not cultic, has to demonstrate the Psalms' alienation from the cult. Mowinckel, who claims that the present psalms were actual liturgies, has to demonstrate how they fit into a particular cultic ceremony.

This leads to another question: Is it mandatory to consider a psalm as cultic only in the case when it is composed for or used in a cultic ceremony? This study proposes in the next chapter that a psalm may be considered as cultic also in cases when it demonstrates piety that is closely related to or influenced by cult, i.e., not only in those cases when a psalm was composed for or used in a cultic ceremony.

The results of this chapter seem to suggest that a further *Sitz im Leben* for the present Psalms needs to be explored. An attempt is made in the following chapter to examine the relationship between cult and personal piety in the Psalms through the study of torah piety as a possible *Sitz im Leben* of the Psalms. The following chapter explores torah piety of the Psalms in its relationship with another aspect of the cult, i.e., the eschatological dimension of the cult.

5.0 TORAH PIETY AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO CULTIC PIETY IN THE PSALMS

The discussion in the previous chapter strongly suggests that cultic and personal piety are closely related because of the creative aspect of cult and the strong communal solidarity in ancient Israel. However, this does not mean that the relationship between the Psalms and cult has to be explained exclusively in Mowinckel's terms. Strong personal elements and metaphorical references to the sanctuary cult in the Psalms appear to go against Mowinckel's assumption that the present Psalms are actual liturgies. Nevertheless, a number of elements in the Psalms seem to escape the anti-cultic interpretation of Gunkel as well (e.g., the psalmists' love and longing for the sanctuary and the significant role of the sanctuary in the shaping of the present Psalter).

In the light of these observations it seems necessary to attempt to explore the relationship between piety and cult in the Psalms while taking into consideration other features of the Psalms that are not immediately related to cult. The main objective of this chapter is to investigate the relationship between personal piety and cult in the Psalms in the light of the wisdom and eschatological concerns of the Psalter.

This chapter also deals with the practical implications of the study of the relationship between cult and piety in the Psalms for the use of Psalms in worship today. In view of this, the significance of the liturgical use of the Psalms is investigated here. Special attention is also given to modern discussions on the creative power of psalmic language.

5.1 Torah Piety as the Possible *Sitz im Leben* of the Psalter

Though it profits significantly from the contributions of cultic approaches, this study explores the relationship between the Psalms and the sanctuary cult from a different perspective. This study proposes to consider a psalm as cultic not only when a psalm was composed for or was used in a cultic ceremony but also in cases when it demonstrates piety closely related to or influenced by cult. This proposal seems to provide a way to avoid some of the arbitrariness of Gunkel

and Mowinckel in the study of the cultic elements in the Psalms that were addressed in the previous chapter.

Tanner (2011:143) rightly observes that in the cultic approaches the poetic nature of the Psalms was eclipsed by how a psalm was used in cultic temple worship, and for that reason they could not yield the best results. The assumption here is that the numerous references to the cult in the Psalms are not necessarily and exclusively due to the cultic setting of the Psalms. These references may be understood as expressions of a piety which is deeply rooted in the cult. The proposal here is that the cultic approach needs to be modified in order to seek to establish the relationship between the cult and the Psalms through an understanding of the piety of the psalmists, and not primarily through establishing the cultic setting.

The study promises fruitful results since it acknowledges both the poetic function and the cultic elements of the Psalms. The piety of the final editors of the book is viewed here as the probable *Sitz im Leben* of the Psalter.

Mays is right in recognizing the piety of the final editors and of later readers of the Psalter as the most appropriate setting-in-life of the Psalms. He (1987:12) writes,

The torah piety points to a type of piety as setting-in-life for the Psalms, a piety that used the entire book as prayer and praise ... The Psalms were reread in the light of this piety and it in turn was constantly shaped by the use of the Psalms.

Mays argues that the world of the psalmists was “organized around torah”. He (1987:12) is fully aware that torah piety may be falsely understood as piety that lacks personal response and trust in God, so he underlines the idea that torah piety was “quite different from any self-righteous, single-minded legalism”. Mays contends that the basic religious commitments of torah piety were devotion to the instruction of the Lord and trust in the reign of the Lord.

Given these characteristics torah piety seems to be present in the Psalms. However, it appears that torah piety requires further clarifications, i.e., to include those aspects of piety that are strongly related to the cult. A description of torah piety has to integrate the numerous references to the cult in the Psalter and incorporate both aspects of Israelite religion, i.e., instruction and worship.

Mays (1987:8) maintains that “Torah applies to the offices of priest and king.” This is demonstrated in Psalms 18, 99 and 147. In these psalms Moses, Aaron, and Samuel, i.e., the original sequence of priests (Ps. 99:6-7), David and his descendants (Ps. 18:21-25), and the people of Israel (Ps. 147:19-20) demonstrate their love and respect for God by observing the testimonies and statutes that God gave them. A closer look at these psalms seems to suggest that torah piety is closely associated with the cult.

The torah testimonies and statutes refer to a great extent to the sanctuary cult. This is demonstrated in the above-mentioned psalms (Pss. 18; 99; 147). Psalm 99:1, 7 pictures God as enthroned between the cherubim and speaking to Moses, Aaron, and Samuel from the pillar of cloud, i.e., using images belonging to the sanctuary setting (Exod. 25:17-22; 33:9-11).

Similarly the laws and decrees mentioned in Psalm 18:21-25 should to be understood in the sanctuary context. The psalmist says that his hands are clean and that he is blameless and pure because he keeps the Lord’s laws and decrees. The psalmist says that God makes his way perfect (v. 32). For the psalmist God’s way is perfect (v. 30). The terms clean (בר or the more frequent טהור), blameless (תמים), pure (ברר) and perfect (תמים) undoubtedly belong to the sanctuary setting as is indicated in the psalm itself (Ps. 18:6[7]). The term blameless or perfect (תמים) was a technical term used to describe the perfect sacrifice offered to the Lord (Lev. 1:3, 10; 3:1, 6; 4:3, 23, 28, 32; Num. 6:14). The same term is used to describe the people of God and God’s perfect works (Deut. 18:13; 32:4). Purity and washing were an essential part of the cultic piety (Exod. 19:10; 29:4, 17-20; 30:21; Lev. 1:9, 13; 4:12; 11:25, 28, 40; 13:6; 14:8; 15:5; Isa. 52:11;). The psalmist’s prayer to God to keep his lamp burning (Ps. 18:28[29]) seems to refer to the lamps in the sanctuary which kept burning continually before the Lord (Lev. 24:1-4) and express the psalmist’s longing to dwell in the Lord’s presence forever.

Psalm 147:19, 20 points to God’s laws and decrees as the distinguishable characteristic of Israel. God’s law and decrees are viewed in this psalm as part of rejoicing, praising, making music to God and giving thanksgiving in Jerusalem and Zion (vv. 1, 2, 7, 12-14); these elements clearly depict the sanctuary setting.

Torah piety expresses itself through the use of cultic terms. This expression is demonstrated in the torah psalms, and has already been discussed in the previous chapter. In Psalm 19:12-14 [13-15] the psalmist displays a profound knowledge of the cult. In Psalm 119:1, 9 the psalmist is concerned with the question of how to keep his way blameless (תָּמִים) and pure (זָכוּה). This question is basically a cultic concern. The Hebrew root תָּמַם and its derivatives express the concept of integrity, completeness, blamelessness or an attitude that reflects genuineness and reliability (Olivier, 1997:306). In Psalm 19:13[14] the Hebrew adjective תָּמִים means “blameless,” being innocent of great transgression (Olivier, 1997:307). The Hebrew verb זָכַה basically refers to human lack of innocence before God (e.g., Job 15:14, 15; 25:4, 5) (Averbeck, 1997:1099). Cult has to be understood in its broader sense here. Just as torah piety may be falsely equated with a single-minded legalism, in the same way cultic piety may be wrongly understood as referring only to what was enacted in the cult. The scope of cultic piety is much broader and also points to the future. The sanctuary in the eschatological hopes of the ancient Israelites is discussed in more detail in the next section of this chapter.

LeFebvre (2005:216) points to certain vital differences between Psalm 1 and Psalms 19 and 119. Psalms 1, 19 and 119 are commonly designated as torah psalms (e.g., Mays, 1994a:42; Day, 1995:56). Grouping these psalms into the same category presupposes that they share the same intent. This has influenced some authors to read Psalm 1 and consequently the entire Psalter through the prism of torah obedience (e.g., Brueggemann, 1991b:64). LeFebvre (2005:216) rightly calls for the re-examination of that presupposition and writes,

Pss. 19 and 119 state explicitly their concern for *obedience* to the many statutes, ordinances and judgments of God’s law. Ps. 1 also speaks about God’s law, but does not say anything about its precepts and never mentions obedience. Ps. 1 speaks about *delight* (1:2a). Delight may infer obedience, but is not necessarily the same thing ... Ps. 1 is not about obedience, yet when it is grouped with 19 and 119, the concern for obedience in the latter generally influences the interpretation of the former.

LeFebvre’s remarks concerning the distinctiveness of Psalm 1 are very helpful because Psalm 1 serves as an introduction to the whole Psalter and sets the tone of its message. Psalm 1 promotes delight rather than mere obedience. In Psalm 1:2 the words “delight” (הִפִּיץ) and “meditate” (הִנְהַל) are in parallelism.

Psalm 1:1 claims that meditation and delight result in true blessedness (אשרי). Thus Psalm 1 depicts three significant characteristics of torah piety, i.e., meditation, delight and blessedness. These three characteristics resonate throughout the Psalter.

5.1.1 Torah Piety and Meditation

The psalmist meditates (הגה) on all the works of God (Pss. 77:12[13]; 143:5). He will tell (הגה) of the Lord's righteous deeds (Pss. 35:28; 71:24). The cult is not deprived of meditation. The psalmist meditates (הגה) on God after having seen him in the sanctuary (Ps.63:2[3], 6[7]). The righteous meditate (דמה) on God's unfailing love within his temple (Ps. 46:9[10]). The Hebrew verb הגה has a broad range of meaning (e.g., "to groan, moan, sigh, utter, speak, meditate, muse, imagine, devise") (Van Pelt & Kaiser, 1997:1006). LeFebvre (2005:222-225) argues that the Hebrew verb הגה is a generic word for wholehearted vocalization, which may include reading, reciting and singing. He demonstrates that in certain instances singing was a known means for popular contemplation on the Torah (e.g., Deut. 31:21, 22, 24; 32:44-46).

The verb הגה is used to express meditation that is characterized as deep, reflective thought, often recurring in a repetitive fashion (e.g., Pss. 1:2; 63:6[7]; 77:12[13]; 143:5) (Van Pelt & Kaiser, 1997:1007). Meditation is an act of the righteous (Prov. 15:28) that focuses on the Law (Josh. 1:8; Ps. 1;2), the Lord himself (Ps. 63:6[7]), and the works of the Lord (Pss. 77:12[13]; 143:5). "It seems that the righteous meditate not only for the purpose of encouragement, but also that their life may actually conform to the object of such meditation" (Van Pelt & Kaiser, 1997:1007). When viewed in this way the verb הגה certainly conveys more than mere obedience to the law and comes closer to the meaning of delight that is implied by its position in Psalm 1:2, i.e., the parallelism with the word הפיך ("delight").

5.1.2 Torah Piety and Delight

What is the significance of delight (הִפִּיץ) for the understanding of torah piety? The basic etymological meaning of the word cannot be defined precisely, but the element of “protection” and emotional overtones appear to predominate (Botterweck, 1986:93). The Hebrew root הִפִּיץ occurs 123 times in the Old Testament to mean (1) “to like, be fond of; want; (2) have/take pleasure or delight in; (3) be willing; have desire; (4) “delight,” “pleasure,” “joy” (Talley, 1997b:231). Most of the Old Testament occurrences of this Hebrew root are found in the Psalms. The word הִפִּיץ is used to depict the psalmist’s delight in God (Ps. 73:25), God’s will (Ps. 40:8[9]), God’s commandments (Ps. 112:1), God’s works (Ps. 111:2) and God’s saints (Ps. 16:3). One can set one’s passion unfavourably toward earthly treasures (Ps. 73:25). The objects of “setting one’s passion favourably” may be women (Esth. 2:14), fellow humans (1 Sam. 19:2[1]), and a dwelling place (Jer. 42:22) (Talley, 1997b:232).

The word is used also to depict God’s delight in the psalmist (Pss. 18:19[20]; 22:8[9]), humanity (Ps. 37:23), righteous sacrifices (Ps. 51:19[21]) and in the truth in the inward parts of a worshiper (Ps. 50:51:6[8]). God does not delight in evil (Ps. 5:4[5]) and meaningless sacrifices (Ps. 51:16[18]).

There is also an ethical element to הִפִּיץ (Talley, 1997b:234). When Israel is disobedient, God has no delight in her (Mal. 1:10), even when the people offer sacrifices. On the contrary, the person is blessed who finds delight (הִפִּיץ) in God’s law (Ps. 1:2) since delighting in obedience brings joy (Isa. 58:2, 3, 13, 14) (Talley, 1997b:234).

The root הִפִּיץ is somewhat parallel in meaning to several other Hebrew roots, i.e., גִּיל, חִמֵּד, חִשֵּׁק, נִעַם, עֵדוֹן, רִצָּה. The Hebrew root גִּיל denotes exulting and rejoicing (Grisanti, 1997b:854). Whether גִּיל carries a volitional nuance (exhorting someone to rejoice) or simply describes a person’s expression of jubilation, the ground for this rejoicing is God (34 of 46 times) and his works on people’s behalf (e.g., Pss. 9:14[15]; 13:5[6]; 12:1[2]; 31:7[8]) (Grisanti, 1997:854). The psalmist delights (גִּיל) in the Lord’s salvation while declaring praises to God in the gates of Zion (Ps. 9:14[15]). He longs for salvation to come out of Zion and calls Jacob to delight or rejoice (גִּיל) (Pss. 14:7; 32:11;

53:6[7]; 149:2). The psalmist declares that Zion delights (גיל) in God's judgments (Ps. 48:11[12]). He claims that the righteous walk in the light of God's presence and delight or rejoice (גיל) in his name all day long (Ps.89:15[16], 16[17]). The Hebrew גיל denotes a spontaneous, vocal outburst of rejoicing which often results in burst into song (Isa. 35:2; 49:13) (Grisanti, 1997b:855).

The Hebrew חמד depicts strong emotion and means (1) to desire, wish, crave, long for; (2) to find pleasure, liking, or preference in (Talley, 1997a:167,168). The Lord delights (חמד) to dwell in Zion (Ps. 68:16[17]). Depending on the context, the word can stress a different meaning, either the desirability of an object or the desire to obtain (Talley, 1997a:167). In Psalm 68:16[17] the stress is probably on the desirability of the place, i.e., Zion.

God knows that the righteous take delight or pleasure in him (חשק) (Ps. 91:14). The two Hebrew roots, חשק and חפץ show close similarity as they both depict longing, desire, setting one's heart on something or someone (e.g., 1 Kgs. 9:1) (Talley, 1997c:318,319). It is possible that a nuance of חשק entails "setting one's heart so intensely as to change another's life in more positive directions; hence, it keeps one from particular negative outcome" (e.g., Isa. 38:17) (Talley, 1997c:319). Delight (חפץ) in God's Torah guards in the similar way the righteous one from the pitfalls and destiny of the way of the wicked (Ps. 1).

The delight or pleasantness (נעם) of the Lord is to be experienced in the sanctuary (Ps. 27:4). The Hebrew root נעם denotes something pleasing, agreeable, pleasant, lovely and dear, i.e., it focuses on the intrinsic attractiveness and appeal of an object or action (Meier, 1997:121). The intrinsic attractiveness of an object is identified by references to many of the five physical senses (e.g., taste, Ps. 141:4; sight, Song 1:16; 7:6[7]; hearing, Ps. 141:6), so the references to God should be often understood as marking physical manifestations or theophanies of God (Meier, 1997:122). The sound of the harp in comparison to other instruments is described as נעים (melodious, pleasing) and so is particularly appropriate in praising the Lord in the sanctuary (Ps. 81:2[3]) (Meier, 1997:122). The psalmists find it pleasant (נעם) to praise the Lord in the sanctuary (Pss. 135:3; 147:1). The unity of God's people is described as pleasant (נעם) (Ps. 133:1).

In the sanctuary the righteous can drink from the river of delights (עֵדֶן) (Ps. 36:8[9]). The Hebrew root עֵדֶן refers to pleasure, delight, luxury (Price, 1997:330). It is used to depict fine clothes (2 Sam. 1:24) or fine food (Gen. 49:20; Lam. 4:5). When it is used to describe persons, it denotes God's goodness (Ps. 36:8[9]) and great rejoicing (Neh. 9:25) (Price, 1997:329,330). Psalm 36:8[9] describes the sanctuary as the river of delights (עֵדֶן), i.e. a place of feasting, luxury and reveling in God's unfailing love (vv. 5-10 [6-11]).

Even the stones of Zion bring delight (רִצָּה) to God's servants (Ps. 102:14[15]). The Hebrew root רִצָּה is often used in contexts of worship, i.e., to depict a delighting in the temple (1 Chr. 29:3; Ps. 102:14[15]; Hag. 1:8), God's ways (Prov. 23:26), that which is (or is not) pleasing to God, especially sacrifices (e.g., Lev. 1:3; 19:5; 22:19-21; Ps. 51:16[18]; Isa. 56:7; Jer. 6:20), God's blessing and delight in his people (Deut. 33:11, 16; Ezek. 20:40-41; 43:27) (Fretheim, 1997:1186).

This is certainly not a complete study of חִפְּץ and its cognates in the Psalter. Nevertheless, the study of Hebrew roots that depict delight demonstrates that delight in the Psalter is often related to communal worship, meeting God in his sanctuary and Zion. It seems remarkable that delight and the river motif appear together twice in the Psalter, i.e., in Psalm 1, where they depict the prosperity of torah piety, and in Psalm 36, where they depict the blessing of abiding in the sanctuary. Having said this, it can be suggested that the concept of "delight" in Psalm 1 seems to imply that torah piety is strongly related to the delight of communion with God in the sanctuary. In Isaiah 58:2-12 the joyous commitment of one's entire life to God takes the shape of the active cultic worship of the community, which involves seeking God, desire of the knowledge of God's ways, righteous judgments of God, and delight to draw near him (Botterweck, 1986:97).

Experience of God and human pleasure are mutually dependent, for only joyous inward response can experience the wonders of God (Botterweck, 1986:97). In Psalm 1:2, delighting in the Torah is an unmistakable sign of the righteous. The wealth of parallel expressions ("not walking in the counsel of the wicked," etc.) shows clearly that חִפְּץ means more than just emotional happiness and delight,

i.e., it stands rather for the joyous existential commitment of one's entire life (Botterweck, 1986:97).

5.1.3 Torah Piety and Blessedness

Another characteristic of torah piety that can be observed in Psalm 1 deserves special attention, i.e., blessedness. "The Books of Psalms begins with a beatitude" and invites the reader "to read and use the entire book as a guide to a blessed life" (Mays, 1994a:40). The person who delights in the law of God and meditates on it is considered to be blessed (אשרי) (Ps. 1:1, 2). Delight, blessedness and meditation appear to be strongly correlated here.

In the Old Testament two Hebrew words are used to depict blessedness, i.e., ברוך and אשרי. Mays (1994a:41) points to the difference between the two terms. He writes,

"Blessed" is the traditional translation of the saying's formulaic word; contemporary translations prefer "happy" in order to distinguish these sayings from pronouncements of blessing that invoke the beneficent work of God on persons and groups. In blessings, the formulaic Hebrew term is *baruk*; in beatitudes, *'ashre*. The primary difference is that the blessing invokes God's beneficent support of life, while the beatitude points to and comments on the conduct and character that enjoy it.

The basic difference between the two terms seems to be reflected in the basic meanings of their roots. The Hebrew word ברוך derives from the root ברך which means "to kneel," "to kneel for prayer." The passive and submissive manner that is implied by the word seems to suitably depict the proper attitude of a person who wishes to invoke and receive God's beneficent support of life. The emphasis here seems to be on God's beneficial action on behalf of a person. When ברך is used the initiative comes from God (Hamilton, 1980a:80).

God's blessing is not an empty pronouncement or an expression of goodwill, but rather a life-infusing power and action of the creator that actualizes and enables that which is blessed to function and produce at the optimum level (e.g., Gen. 1:28; 5:2; 24:35; 27:27, 28; Ex. 23:25, 26; Deut. 28:5, 8; 33:13) (Brown, 1997:759). Though ברך has been most frequently understood in terms of benefits conveyed, the focus is on the favourable relationship between two parties rather than the content of the benefit and, then, it conveys the sense of

thanking and praising (e.g., Pss. 34:1[2]; 115:17, 18; 145:1, 2) (Richards, 1992:754).

Sometimes the Lord will be blessed by using this word (ברך), pointing to human initiative. This is especially true in the worship setting, when the psalmists refer to God as “blessed” (Hebrew participle, ברוך) (e.g., Pss. 18:46[47]; 28:6; 31:22[23]; 41:13[14]; 66:20; 68:19[20], 35[36]; 72:18, 19; 89:52[53]; 106:46). The question of how the lesser (human) can bless the greater (God) naturally arises. Williams (1997:756) argues that these participles (ברוך) should be

construed as gerundives, with the meaning “to be knelt [before],” indicating “to be revered, praised” (as is a king, cf. 1 Kgs. 2:45). Those finite vbs. that speak of God as “blessed” may very well be q. forms artificially levelled by the Masoretes because the distinction between the vb. patterns had been forgotten (e.g., 2 Chron 20:26; Ps 26:12; 103:1) and would mean “kneel to, revere, exalt.” If such be the case, the distinction between “bless[ed]” as God to human (pi.) and “revere[d], esteem[ed]” as human to God (q.; cf. NIV “praise[d]” in such cases) would be apparent.

Brown (1997:764) highlights the fluidity of the term ברוך and explains its dual usage on the following ground:

God blesses human beings by speaking well of them, thereby imparting “blessing” (good things) to them, and so they are “blessed” (*baruk*); human beings bless God by speaking well of him, attributing “blessing” (good quality) to him, and so he is “blessed” (*baruk*) – i.e., praised and praiseworthy, “blessed” in both a passive and stative sense.

In other words, God blesses people by conferring good on them; people bless God by praising the good in him (Brown, 1997:764). It is significant that חסד (kindness) and אמת (faithfulness) are frequently those attributes for which God is “blessed” or praised (e.g., Pss. 31:21[22]; 106:48). It is clear that for the Old Testament believer blessing rests directly upon the loving and faithful nature of God who alone has the power to bestow the blessing of life (Oswalt, 1980:132).

The Hebrew word אשרי derives from the root אשר which means “to walk straight,” usually in a figurative sense of pursuing a course of life that is characterized by prudence (e.g., Pss. 17:5; 37:31; 40:2[3]; 44:18[19]; 73:2; Prov. 4:14; 9:6; 23:19) (Merrill, 1997:567,568). The word signifies also to be happy or blessed, because the person’s way or motion shows what his end or rest will be, i.e., the person’s happiness in the end lies virtually in his way (Wilson, 1900:41). The relationship between walking straight and blessedness

seems to be implied also in Psalms 1:1 and 128:1. “Blessed is the man who *does not walk* in the counsel of the wicked” (Ps. 1:1; emphasis supplied). “Blessed are all who fear the Lord, who *walk in his ways*” (Ps. 128:1; emphasis supplied). Cazelles (1974:446) argues that this connection between אֲשֵׁרִי (“happy”) and אָשֶׁר (“to walk straight”) “points to an act in which believers seek happiness; it was probably the pilgrimage to the temple in the sense of the Deuteronomistic movement and the return from the exile.” This seems to be implied by the texts in the Psalms which depict happiness as the result of doing certain things: e.g., coming to Zion (Pss. 65:5[4]; 84:5[4]; also, Isa. 30:18), where refuge is to be found (Pss. 2:12; 34:9[8]; 84:13[12]), and where sins are forgiven (Ps. 32:1, 2) (Cazelles, 1974:446).

Happiness depends also on God’s choice (Ps. 33:12), the teaching of God (Ps. 94:12), the believer’s fear of God (Pss. 112:1; 128:1), the believer’s blameless conduct (Ps. 119:1), and obedience to the Torah (Ps. 1:1) (Cazelles, 1974:446). These characteristics are never seen in tension with the sanctuary cult, but as its complements.

God never pronounces a person אֲשֵׁרִי (“blessed”) (Sarna, 1993:30). To be “blessed” (אֲשֵׁרִי) a person has to do something: e.g., to trust in God (Pss. 2:12; 34:8[9]; 40:4[5]; 84:5[6], 12[13]; 146:5), to come under the authority of God’s Torah (Pss. 1:2; 119:1), God’s commandments (Ps. 112:1), God’s testimony (Ps. 119:2), God’s way (Ps. 128:1), or to be beneficent to the poor (Ps. 41:1[2]) (Hamilton, 1980a:80). For the blessed (אֲשֵׁרִי) “[t]heir happy estate is not something given automatically by God, but it is a direct result of their activity” (Craigie, 1983:60). Thus it appears that אֲשֵׁרִי is “a statement about human existence” (Mays, 1994a:40). This can be demonstrated by the following examples: the psalmist declares that all nations will recognize the blessedness of the ideal Davidic king (Ps. 72:17); Leah (Gen. 30:13) and Job (Job 29:11) affirmed that people did or would pronounce them blessed; those who lay hold of wisdom are considered fortunate (Prov. 3:18) (Grisanti, 1997a:568). In other words, אֲשֵׁרִי seems to describe the person or the person’s piety rather than God’s active bestowment of his good things upon the person as in the case of בָּרַךְ.

Distinction between אשר and ברך provides some insights into the relationship between torah piety and the sanctuary. Those who dwell in the sanctuary are called אשרי (Pss. 65:4[5]; 84:4[5]). The distinction between אשר and ברך seems to imply that Psalms 65:4[5] and 84:4[5] are descriptions of piety rather than statements of what God does in favour of the pious in the sanctuary, though the latter is not necessarily excluded. Psalm 1 depicts blessedness as an important aspect of torah piety. The study of אשרי in the Psalms appears to tie together the various aspects of torah piety and includes dwelling in the sanctuary as one of them. Dwelling in the sanctuary is a characteristic of the righteous one's piety, like taking refuge in God (Ps. 2:12), being forgiven by God (Ps. 32:1, 2), caring for the weak (Ps. 41:1[2]), trusting in God (Ps. 84:12[13]), finding one's strength in God (Ps. 84:5[6]), maintaining justice (Ps. 106:3), fearing the Lord (Ps. 112:1), finding great delight in his commandments (Ps. 112:1), keeping God's statutes (Ps. 119:2) and walking in God's ways (Ps. 128:1). All these aspects of torah piety in the Psalms are brought together by the word "blessed" (אשרי). It seems reasonable to conclude that the sanctuary is important for torah piety. In what way the sanctuary was significant for torah piety is discussed later in this chapter.

The psalmists' reverence for the Torah "owes a great deal to the wisdom movement, which in itself was strongly affected by the Egyptian influences" that upheld the belief that studying of sacred texts will ensure the reader a share in the salutary powers which rule the world (Keel, 1978:353). In postexilic Judaism, the revaluation of the Torah raised the study of scripture "to the status of a means of salvation" (Keel, 1978:353). However, LaRondelle (1983:45) argues that focusing on the Torah does not exclude the sanctuary. He writes,

The custom of taking the moral law by itself, in isolation from the covenant of atoning grace, was foreign to the psalmists. They never speak of "the law," but consistently of "the law of the LORD" or of "Thy law" (see Pss 1; 19; 119) ... they always have in mind the Torah as an undivided whole, centered in the sanctuary services. This does not negate the fact that the Torah has different aspects, legal and atoning, but these were never isolated from each other ... The holy law of God remained always *covenant* law; its place and function were exclusively within God's sanctuary.

The term "Torah" has to be understood in its full scope that includes both instruction and worship. Delighting in the Torah seems to involve more than

studying the scripture since the Torah directs the person to the sanctuary (e.g., Exod. 25-40; Lev. 1-27).

The present discussion seems to imply that torah piety does not stand in tension with cultic piety. On the contrary, dwelling in the sanctuary appears to be an important characteristic, not less important than the others. The discussion about the sanctuary in the torah psalms in Chapter 3 seems to suggest that torah piety is by no means alienated from cultic piety.

Two important questions beg to be answered: What provides the link between cultic piety and torah piety? Does torah piety serve as a replacement for cultic piety in the Psalms? These questions seem to be important in the light of the fact that most of the psalms are exilic and postexilic, so that the sanctuary in Jerusalem was not always accessible to the psalmists. An attempt to answer these questions is made in the following lines, which look at the sanctuary in the eschatological hope of ancient Israel.

5.2 The Sanctuary in the Eschatological Hope of Ancient Israel and Torah Piety in the Psalms

Gunkel (1998:54-57) argues that the hymn as a genre speaks not only of Yahweh's past and present but also of his future deeds. He suggests that this happened when the prophetic proclamation influenced the later development of the hymn. According to Gunkel the eschatological elements are found mostly in Zion songs and the enthronement psalms as evidenced by the similar types of praises of the transformed Jerusalem in Isaiah 26:1; 27:2-5, Jeremiah 31:23 and Psalms 46, 48 and 76.

Gunkel (1998:56) asserts that eschatological elements in the Psalms are not always easily recognizable as “[t]hey usually appear with perfect verbs to portray the mighty deeds of God as having already occurred (Isa 44:23; 61:10; Pss 46:7; 47:9; 48:4-7; 98:1-3).” However, Gunkel (1998:56,57) points to several indicators that seem to demonstrate the eschatological meaning of certain psalms. First, the glorified moments mentioned in these psalms cannot be found in the history of Israel, but they agree with prophetic predictions.

Second, the Psalms occasionally reference the occurrence of the fulfilment of the promises (e.g., Pss. 48:9, 11; 68:23; 93:5; 149:9). Third, these psalms sometimes venture to allow God to appear and speak (e.g., Pss. 46:11; 68:23; 75:3; 84:7) which is unheard of in the remainder of hymns but common in prophetic speech. Accordingly, Gunkel (1998:57) suggests that “the perfect of the eschatological psalms should be understood analogously to the prophetic perfect.”

Mays (1987:10) reflects Gunkel’s observations when he writes,

by the time the Psalter was being completed, the psalms dealing with the kingship of the Lord were understood eschatologically. They no longer refer only to what was enacted in cult, but as well to what was promised in prophecy ... Psalm 2, reread as a vision of the goal in history, puts the torah piety of Psalm 1 in an eschatological context ... in terms of the coming kingdom of God.

Psalm 2, reread as a vision of the goal in history, puts Zion, i.e., the sanctuary, in an eschatological context as well. The orientation towards the future, i.e., the eschatological expectation of God’s glorious kingdom, appears to be the link between torah piety and cult in the Psalms.

5.2.1 Eschatological Expectations of the New Temple

Gunkel (1998:56) maintains that “Jerusalem played an important role in the future promises since the time of Isaiah” and was “the place where these events will occur by which YHWH will be proven as lord of all nations.” A number of texts from the prophets point to the central role of the sanctuary in the eschatological hope of Israel. The prophet envisions a future when “out of Jerusalem will come a remnant, and out of Mount Zion a band of survivors” (Isa. 37:32). He points to the future when other nations will come to the Lord’s holy mountain and present sacrifices and prayers in the Lord’s house which will be called “a house of prayer for all nations” (Isa. 56:6, 7). The Lord will fill Zion with justice and righteousness (Isa. 33:5). Jerusalem will be a peaceful abode and the temple will be “a tent that will not be moved; its stakes will never be pulled up, nor any of its ropes broken” (Isa. 33:20). Zion is pictured as the place without illness (Isa. 33:24), wars (Isa. 54:17; 62:8), sorrow (Isa. 61:2, 3), or any other misfortune (Isa. 65:20-25). The faithful remnant will be delivered on Mount Zion (Joel 2:32; Ezek. 39:27-29). The prophets picture joyful festivals (e.g., Isa.

35:10; 51:3; Ezek. 46:9-12) and offerings in Zion (e.g., Isa. 56:7; Ezek. 45:13-25; 46:1-24). The whole of nature will join the righteous in worship (Isa. 55:12). Jerusalem will be a delight (Isa. 65:18). The new temple will be in the centre of the restored kingdom of God (Ezek. 48:21) providing life to all (Ezek. 47:1-12).

Similar eschatological expectations seem to appear in the Psalms. The psalmists sing of the glorious kingdom of God where the Lord will reign forever (Pss. 97:1; 99:1; 146:10). The nations tremble before the Lord and the earth shakes (Ps. 99:1) as he comes to judge the whole earth (Pss. 9:7, 19; 96:10, 13; 98:9; 99:1). The Lord will rain fiery coals and burning sulphur on the wicked (Ps. 11:7), but the righteous and the whole earth will sing for joy (95:1, 2; 96:1-3, 11-13; 98:4-8). The Psalms summon people to sing a “new song” (Pss. 144:9; 149:1); this injunction also appears in the prophets (Isa. 42:10-12; 52:9, 10). Israel’s enemies will run in terror (Ps. 48:4-7). God’s kingdom is an everlasting kingdom and all people will know of its glorious splendour (Ps. 145:11-13). Everything that has breath will praise the Lord (Ps. 150:6).

Gunkel (1998:56) observes that the glorified moments mentioned in the Psalms and the prophetic texts cannot be found in the history of Israel, but they agree with prophetic predictions of the future kingdom of God. Mowinckel (2004, I:111) also asserts that “[t]he historical interpretation is as impracticable in the case of the enthronement psalms as in that of Pss. 46 and 48.” However, he (2004, I:110-113,143,147) disagrees with an eschatological interpretation of the enthronement psalms. He argues that the eschatology of the prophets has drawn its ideas from the same source as the enthronement psalms, i.e., the enthronement festival, and has reinterpreted these ideas in its own way. He contends that the enthronement psalms depict the living present that is actualized in the cult and not the future reign of God. “In the cult the creative and saving events took place again and again, in regular recurrence” and the worshipers “merely rejoice that it has now taken place.”

Mowinckel (2004, I:111,112) describes the role of the cult and the nature of the experience during worship. He writes,

But it is noticeable that the poets never *describe* this enthronement as such; they merely refer to it in hymnal form as something real and well known; and which the audience also can understand ... If it had been an image in the future, present only in their imagination, they could not have

expected their audience to have understood what they were talking about; we should then have expected them to describe what they saw.

Mowinckel (2004, 1:113) remarks that “in the cultic festival, past, present and future are welded into one” to create an experience of the sort that lies behind the enthronement psalms. However, to claim that the living present is everything that is implied by the psalms seems to be unfairly restrictive. The judging of the whole world (Pss. 96:10, 13; 98:9; 99:1) and the universal praise which includes all nations (Pss. 96:1, 7; 98:2, 4) are not likely to be taking place in the present. In the light of Israel’s constant historical struggles with her enemies, it would take much more effort and imagination on the part of the worshiper to experience these moments in the psalms as present reality than to understand them as referring to the future. It seems more appropriate to say that these psalms describe both the present experience of the worshiper and the worshiper’s participation in the invoking of their future realization by singing the psalm.

The significance of the sanctuary in the eschatological hope of ancient Israel shows that cultic piety is oriented towards the future and so may account for the eschatological hopes of torah piety in the Psalms. Cultic piety embraces the present instruction and worship enacted in the cult and the eschatological expectations of the coming kingdom of God. Milgrom (1996:6) asserts that “the ritual law contains, ensconces, the value system of the priestly teachers, and these values must be ferreted out from the ritual law even if the rituals themselves are not observed.” He contends that cultic laws contain at their basis essential ethical positions which should motivate the believer to study them. In that way cultic piety finds its way to shape all the aspects of a believer’s life.

The development of the sanctuary theme in the pivotal psalms discussed in the previous chapter (Pss. 1, 2, 73, 74, 145-150) appears to suggest that eschatological considerations played a significant role in the shaping of the Psalter. The sanctuary motif opens the Psalter with the message of stability and prosperity in Psalms 1 and 2. The crisis reaches its peak in Psalm 73 and 74, with Psalm 74 depicting the destroyed temple and the temporary triumph of the enemies. The Psalter closes with the eschatological hope of rebuilt Jerusalem (Ps. 147:2) and the people triumphantly praising God in his sanctuary (Ps.

150:1), which is so characteristic of the prophets (e.g. Isa. 52:7-10; 54:11-14). The descriptions of the people of Zion rejoicing in their king in Psalm 149:2 and the call for the universal praise in Psalms 146-150 strongly resemble similar descriptions of rejoicing people and praises in the prophets (e.g., Isa. 24:14; 30:29; 51:11; 52:7-9; 65:18). The blessings of the sanctuary connote not only a present state of blessedness but a future one as well. The Zion theme in the Psalter embodies the future existence of a holy people in the presence of God in their midst (Clayton, 2006:119).

Gunkel's argument that the Psalms reflect the anti-cultic polemic of the prophets and thus seek to be liberated from the cult does not seem to be in agreement with the eschatological hope of the prophets (Gunkel, 1998:210). It is true that the prophets criticize the cult (e.g., Isa. 1:11-14; Jer.7:4). The critique of cult in the prophets and the Psalms was addressed in Chapter 4 and there is no need to repeat the whole discussion about this subject. It seems sufficient here to highlight the point that the prophets criticized the worshipers' insults and vain expectations that their worship would blind the Lord so as not to see their immorality and idolatry (e.g., Isa. 1:15-17; Jer. 7:5, 612-19). The prophets' reverence for the cult is seen also in their strong critique of the idolatrous worship that invokes God's judgment (e.g., Isa. 65:2-7; 66:17, 18; Jer. 44:2-6).

Van Beeck (1992:227) maintains that Israel's identity and its worship of Yahweh are unequivocally defined by the Exodus theme which keeps the memory alive of Yahweh leading Israel out from Egypt to Sinai and then to the Promised Land. Psalm 66:5-12 serves as a good example of that. He asserts that this theme is fundamental in the prophets who interpret "the Exile as an enactment of the Exodus and the desert-journey (see, for one example among many, Is 43:8-21), and Israel's return to rebuild Jerusalem as the establishment of the new Zion viewed as the cosmic mountain, the cultic center of a world renewed." Van Beeck continues,

Analogously, the visions of Jeremiah (30-33) and Ezekiel (40-47) rehearse the divine-guidance theme so prominent in the Exodus by having the Lord precede the people to a new Temple, as an encouragement for the exiles to return. Ezekiel 20 goes even further: in the final analysis, it interprets the continuing diaspora as a new Exodus—a faith-journey in the "desert of the nations"—in the perspective of a renewed, purified worship of YHWH that draws in the whole Gentile world (Ezek. 20:33-38).

This kind of dynamic and progression can be observed also in the development of the central themes of the Psalter from Psalm 1 to Psalm 150, as has been argued before in this study. The cosmological dimension of praise, so strongly present in the Psalter (e.g., Pss. 67:3-5; 96; 98; 100:1; 103:20-22; 145-150) seems to follow in this tradition of universal prayer for Jerusalem (Ps. 122:6). Van Beeck (1992:235,236) contends that

historic Jerusalem—city of perpetual contention, never finished, often abandoned, more than once devastated, hardly ever at peace, and always yearning for the fulfilment—can symbolically sum up the conviction of both Israel and the later Christian community that the chaos and incompleteness of all times and all places is to be embraced, worked through, absorbed, out-suffered, and thus brought into the divine presence, for healing and eschatological transformation.

The eschatological expectations of ancient Israel envisioned “[t]he ideal Jerusalem—the City of the Temple on Mount Zion (Ps 46), the City of the Great King (Ps 48:2; Mt 5:35), and the dream city of desire of the Songs of Ascents (Pss 120-34)” which is “the symbolic anticipation of God's definitive presence announced by the post-Exilic prophets: God's presence to the whole world in the Holy City” (Van Beeck, 1992:235,236).

The move from lament to praise in the Psalter seems to depict a journey to the new Zion where the praise to God culminates. The psalmist is strengthened by the promises of God along the way. He remembers that “because of your temple at Jerusalem kings will bring you gifts ... Envoys will come from Egypt; Cush will submit herself to God” (Ps. 68:29, 31). He knows that “God will save Zion and rebuild the cities of Judah” (Ps. 69:35) and “the Lord will vindicate his people and have compassion on them” (Ps. 135:14). He calls for universal prayer for the peace of Jerusalem (Ps. 122:6). He is assured that “the Lord is faithful to all his promises” (Ps. 145:13b). As the Psalter reaches the Songs of Ascents, i.e., Psalms 120-134, it seems that the theme of Zion and of the sanctuary is ever-present from that point to the end of the Psalter. Zion is mentioned in a great number of psalms that follow the Ascent psalms (e.g., Pss. 135:21; 137:1, 3; 138:2; 146:10; 147:12; 149:2; 150:1).

The Psalter seems to lead the worshiper finally to Zion and the time when God will reign from Zion forever (e.g., Ps. 148:10). The Songs of Ascent highlight the fact that “the journey of faith is a community affair” (Creach, 1996b:50). Faith is

strengthened “through intense encounters with the divine presence during liturgical seasons, high times that direct and order periods of ordinary life” (Creach, 1996b:48).

Gunkel (1998:55) remarks that prophetic passages eagerly present the powerful jubilation into which Israel will break forth when the Lord redeems and restores Zion in the future (e.g., Isa. 9:2; 24:14; 30:29; 52:7; 65:18; 66:5; Jer. 31:4, 7; 33:11; Nah. 2:1; Zeph. 3:14). Gunkel contends that this type of rejoicing about the future is similar to that described in the Psalms (e.g., Ps. 68:27). The Psalter ends in praises which share common features with the songs of rejoicing of the prophets, such as the presence of the sanctuary and making God’s name known among the nations (e.g., Isa. 12:4-6; 25:1-5; 26:1-6; 42:10-17; Pss. 96; 98; 138:2, 4, 5). Zion provides a framework for the everlasting praise of all creation (e.g., Pss. 146:10; 147:12; 149:2; 150:1).

A number of scholars argue that the Torah is depicted in the Psalms as the replacement for the temple (e.g., Creach, 1999:45). However, it seems that this replacement is not one of simple substitute. The central role of the sanctuary in the eschatological hopes of ancient Israel strongly suggests that the sanctuary has never been fully replaced or substituted and also strongly implies that delighting in the Torah, i.e., torah piety, has never been alienated from the cult. It is believed here that that torah piety is a variation of cultic piety. This suggests that the Torah in the Psalms should be understood as the bridge between the old and the new temples and as the source of nourishment and hope that is built on the prophetic promises of the new temple and the coming of the messiah rather than a replacement for the cult. The word “replacement” seems to connote alienation and disaffection that are surely not present in the Psalms and the prophets.

The sanctuary appears to be crucial in the eschatological hope of Israel depicted in the prophets and the Psalms because of its primary role to host God’s holy presence in the midst of his people (Exod. 25:8). The New Jerusalem in Ezekiel 48:35 is given a new name: “the Lord is there.” LaRondelle (1983:138) rightly asserts that the Psalms do not glorify Zion or Jerusalem “in an ethnic or territorial sense, but rather Zion’s God.” It is God who shines forth from Zion, perfect in beauty (Ps. 50:2). The happy and rewarding life in the

Psalms is found in “a personal relationship with the living God, a relationship celebrated joyfully in worship since it evokes a response of praise and trust (e.g., Ps. 2:11; 65:4; 84:4, 5; 89:15)” (Davidson, 1998:10). The Psalter ends with the praise of the righteous in the sanctuary (Ps. 150:1) because the sanctuary represents God’s living presence among his people. This idea appears to be developed later in the New Testament where Zion descends from heaven to earth at the end of time (Rev. 21:1-4, 10-23). Revelation 21:3b, “Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them,” appears to echo Exodus 25:8, “Then have them make a sanctuary for me, and I will dwell among them.”

The important role of the sanctuary in the eschatological hope of ancient Israel appears to be the vital link between torah piety and cult in the Psalms. This is because torah piety is eschatologically-oriented and the sanctuary is an important part of the eschatological hope of ancient Israel. The sanctuary refers not only to what is enacted in the cult, i.e., the presence of God in the present (e.g., Exod. 25:8; 2 Chr. 6:2), but also points to the eschatological dwelling of God among his people (e.g., Ezek. 48:35). It seems that torah piety continued to look for the sanctuary because of this eschatological hope.

The discussion turns now to another important aspect of the sanctuary, i.e., its heavenly symbolism. The heavenly symbolism seems to further strengthen the ties between torah piety and the sanctuary.

5.2.2 Heavenly Symbolism of the Sanctuary

The ancient Israelites viewed their earthly sanctuary as a reflection of the heavenly temple (Beale, 2004:31). One of the most explicit texts affirming this is Psalm 78:69: “He built his sanctuary like the heights, like the earth that he established forever.” Beale (2004:32) asserts that “[t]he psalmist is saying that, in some way, God designed Israel’s earthly temple to be comparable to the heavens and to the earth.”

The luminescent cloud mixed with darkness covered Sinai when God appeared in the midst of his people (Exod. 19:9). The same “cloud” filled the sanctuary after it was completed and dedicated by Moses (Exod. 40:34-38) and Israel’s

temple when it was dedicated by Solomon (1 Kgs. 8:10-13; 2 Chr. 5:13-6:2). Ezekiel portrays God's theophanic glory as "an immense cloud with flashing lightning and surrounded by brilliant light ... Like the appearance of a rainbow in the clouds" (Ezek. 1:4, 28). The "cloud" here is obviously the sign of God's glorious presence, but it is also a visible association with the heavens (e.g., Gen. 9:13-14, 16; Job 26:8, 9). The repeated association of the "cloud" with the glory of God and the sanctuary may partly be associated with the clouds in the heavens that pointed beyond themselves to God's unseen heavenly dwelling place and points to an attempt to identify the sanctuary in some way with the heavens (Beale, 2004:36).

The heavenly symbolism of Israel's sanctuary seems to be strongly implied in Exodus 25:9, 40 where the word "pattern" (תבנית) is used to describe the model or design according to which the sanctuary was built by Moses (Van Leeuwen, 1997:646). The Hebrew תבנית appears in 1 Chronicles 28:19 to depict the plan which David received from the Lord concerning the building of the temple. The question is whether תבנית in Exodus 25:9, 40 and 1 Chronicles 28:19 points to the heavenly sanctuary as the original. Rodriguez (2000:382) argues that "[i]f it can be shown that there was in the Israelite faith an awareness of the existence of a heavenly sanctuary, the use of *tabnit* in Exodus would point to that original."

Various Old Testament texts refer to the heavenly sanctuary as the place where God dwells (e.g., 1 Sa. 22:7; 1 Kgs. 8:39, 43, 49; Isa. 6:1-6; 18:4; Jer. 17:12; Dan. 7:9; Mic. 1:2; Hab. 2:20). The mention of the particular sanctuary furniture appears to further highlight the correspondence between the heavenly and the earthly sanctuary (e.g., the altar, Isa. 6:6; Exod. 38:1-7; the Ark of the Covenant as the throne, Exod. 37:1-9; Pss. 93:2; 99:1; Dan. 7:9). The heavenly and the earthly sanctuaries were closely related. Rodriguez (2000:382) properly argues that "[t]he efficacy of the Israelite sanctuary was determined by its relationship with God's celestial temple" as demonstrated in Solomon's prayer that whenever a person prayed in the temple in Jerusalem, God would hear and act from heaven (1 Kgs. 8:31, 32).

Solomon's reference to the temple as "a house of loftiness" (בית זבל) (1 Kgs. 8:13) refers to an elevated dwelling and describes the temple figuratively as being in the heavens (Beale, 2004:36). The word "loftiness" (זבל) occurs only

three times elsewhere in the Old Testament, and always refers to the “elevated places” in the visible heavens (Hab. 3:11; Isa. 63:15) or to the earth as an “elevated place” above Sheol (Ps. 49:14).

Beale (2004: 31-45) finds a number of other clues that highlight the strong connection between the earthly sanctuary and the heavenly dwelling of God. The seven lamps on the sanctuary’s lampstand may have been associated with the seven light-sources visible to the naked eye. Beale (2004:34) contends that this identification is pointed to by Genesis 1 which uses the unusual word “lights” (מאורות) instead of “sun” and “moon”; this word is used elsewhere in the Pentateuch (10 times) only for the lights of the tabernacle lampstand. Among the four other uses elsewhere in the Old Testament, two also refer to the “lights” of the heaven (Ps. 74:16; Ezek. 32:8). In Proverbs 15:30 the word refers to the light of the eye, i.e., the eyesight. The word in Psalm 90:8 refers to the light of God’s presence which may suggest that the lights of the lampstand represented the light of God’s presence.

Beale (2004:38) points further to the “winged” figurines around the Ark of the Covenant (1 Kgs. 8:6, 7) and to the colours of the sanctuary’s numerous curtains which resembled the skies, as well as the winged bird-like creatures woven into them (Exod. 26:1, 31; 36:8, 25). The priests were to cover all the furniture of the tabernacle with blue material when dismantling them for transport (Num. 4:5-13).

The heavenly symbolism of Israel’s sanctuary can serve as a plausible explanation of the psalmists’ almost interchangeable references to the Jerusalem temple, Zion, God’s heavenly dwelling and heaven. It seems that the psalmists are not concerned about geographical precision in referring to these places. This strongly suggests that for them these places are experienced as one and the same place. The psalmist affirms that “the Lord is in his holy temple; the Lord is on his heavenly throne” (Ps. 11:4). “From heaven the Lord looks down and sees all mankind; from his dwelling place he watches all who live on earth” (Ps. 33:13, 14). The psalmist asserts that God’s sanctuary is on high, i.e., heaven (שמים) (Ps. 102:19[20]; also 18:6). God has established his throne in heaven (Pss. 103:19; 113:5), but in Zion as well (Ps. 99:1, 2). For the psalmist God sends his help from the sanctuary and answers from his holy

heaven (Ps. 20:2, 6). Dual, i.e., heavenly and earthly, understanding of the sanctuary allows the worship in the sanctuary to incorporate the praise of both heavenly and earthly worshipers (Pss. 103:20-22; 148:1-14; 150:1-6).

Anderson (2000:97) asserts that “[i]n the Old Testament we do not find a nostalgia for the past or a settling down in the present, but a movement toward the future.” The psalmists always engage in singing a “new song”. The expression “new song” (שִׁיר חָדָשׁ) appears seven times in the Old Testament, i.e., six times in the Psalms (Pss. 33:3; 40:3; 96:1; 98:1; 144:9; 149:1) and once outside the Psalter (Isa. 42:10). Its meaning is not clear. Longman (1984:269) contends that the term refers to the celebration of the Lord’s military victories, since it appears always in a holy war context. He believes that references to the Lord’s “right hand” and “holy arm” and the allusion to the Lord’s salvation signify his warring activity (e.g., Pss. 96:1, 2; 98:1, 2; 144:9, 10). He (1984:270) points to a custom in Israel and the Ancient Near East to make a musical response to military victories (1 Sam 18:6-7; Judg. 11:34).

Longman (1984:272) argues that the present Psalms demonstrate “the subduing of reference to specific historical events in order to preserve the immediate relevance of the poem in the cult.” However, he (1984:270) disagrees with Mowinckel’s notion that the “new song” refers to celebration of the renewal of the Lord’s kingship in a cultic ceremony since there is no “indication that kingship is something that is being newly bestowed or even renewed at this time.” He argues that “the natural reading of the psalm is that Yahweh is being praised as king eternal (cf. 93:2).”

Brueggemann (1995:22) agrees that the “new song” represents something more than what can be caught in and confined by the enthronement festival or any other festival. He remarks that the “new song” is mentioned not only in the enthronement psalms (Pss. 96:1; 98:1) or in the psalm concerning the king (Ps. 144:9), but also in the thanksgiving psalms, which may refer to any personal crisis (Pss. 33:3; 40:3).

Tate (1990:513,514) suggests that the references to the “new song” in the Psalms should be interpreted in the light of the “new song” in Isaiah 42:10. The context of Isaiah 42 places the “new song” among the “new things” that the Lord will do in the future (Isa. 43:18, 19; 48:6, 7). Thus the emphasis moves toward

“a song which anticipates the new acts of redemption and deliverance which Yahweh is about to perform.” Tate remarks that anticipation of the Lord’s victories is dominant in Psalm 96 and 98. These psalms picture the eschatological universal worship (Pss. 96:2-13; 98:4-9) and the Lord’s judgment (Pss. 96:13; 98:9). The themes of future salvation and judgment are found also in other psalms which mention the “new song” (Pss. 33:20; 40:13, 17; 144:10-14; 149:2-9). Kraus (1992:71) writes that “the ‘new song’ has as its content the new, future deeds and miracles of Yahweh”. He argues that the future deeds represent the final phase of Israel’s history and the people prepare themselves in worship to follow that course and not fall short of their destiny and goal.

Brueggemann asserts that the “new song” is “a new song sung at the appearance of a new reality, new creation, new harmony, new reliability.” The “new song” depicts “the fullness of language in the service of reorientation and new creation” (Brueggemann, 1995:23). The reorientation and new creation in the Psalms are important aspects of torah piety. Torah piety appears to be oriented toward new and different worship that focuses on the sanctuary in heaven while retaining its alliance to the earthly sanctuary. The heavenly symbolism of the sanctuary seems to emerge as part of the new focus of piety that sings the “new song.” In Psalm 33 the “new song” focuses on the Lord who created the heavens (v. 6) and who watches all who live on earth from his dwelling or temple in heaven (vv.13 and 14). In Psalm 40 the psalmist praises God in the great assembly with a new awareness that the true worship goes beyond sacrifices and offerings (vv. 6-8). In Psalms 96 and 98 the universal call to praise the Lord who created the heavens includes heavens and earth (Pss. 96:5, 11; 98:3-9). Psalm 144 focuses on the Lord who is in heaven (v. 5). Psalm 149 relates the “new song” to the divine king who reigns in Zion.

The heavenly symbolism of the earthly sanctuary demonstrates that the sanctuary cult went beyond its material representation. The sanctuary cult was part of the universal, cosmic worship of God and was not limited to its earthly representation, i.e., the earthly sanctuary and the temple in Jerusalem. As such it was able to survive and continue to influence the people even when its material components were not in function, e.g., when the temple was destroyed. The movement toward the future in the Psalms appears to be possible because the Israelites’ faith was not bound to particular places on earth but in heaven.

The psalmist knew that the Lord reigned even when the earthly sanctuary was destroyed (e.g., Ps. 74:12, 22) because the Lord's throne was established from long ago and his sanctuary in heaven endures forever (Ps. 93:2, 5).

When the attention is directed "beyond questions of form and function to matters of content and theology" (McCann, 1993:73), it appears that the intention of the present Psalms and torah piety is to focus on the heavenly dimension of the earthly sanctuary if not the heavenly sanctuary itself. This new orientation toward the heavenly sanctuary seems to be in line with the new orientation from the Davidic king to the divine king that a number of scholars observe in the Psalms.

5.2.3 The Eschatological Expectations of the New Davidic King in the Psalms

The eschatology of the Psalms is undoubtedly related to the theme of kingship. The case for an eschatological programme in the Psalms in relation to the royal psalms was advocated first by F. Delitzsch and J. Forbes in the nineteenth century, and more recently by B.S. Childs, J.P. Brennan, G.H. Wilson and D.C. Mitchell (Mitchell, 2006:529). Mitchell (2006:528-529) points to five pillars on which the eschatological agenda of the Psalter rests.

First, the royal psalms are set in significant positions in the Psalter. Yet, when the Psalter was redacted, the house of David was in eclipse, so the redactor must have meant these psalms to refer to a future Davidic king.

Second, many other psalms (e.g., Pss. 21; 46; 47; 48; 67; 80) seem to be intrinsically eschatological in tone. Mitchell cites Psalm 80, which is a prayer for the restoration of the Josephites who were long exiled by the time of the Psalter's redaction. Mitchell rightly argues that "the psalm's inclusion in the Psalter can only be explained as anticipating their future redemption." Likewise, he points to Psalm 83, which describes a global alliance against Israel which never took place in history, but looks like the eschatological coalitions described in some prophetic books (e.g., Dan. 7:7-25; Ezek. 38:1-9; Zech. 12:3; 14:2).

Third, a number of psalms include in their titles the names of certain individuals who were regarded as prophets, i.e., David, Asaph, Heman, Jeduthun, and

Moses. Mitchell plausibly contends that the presence of these names suggests that “the redactor of the Psalter would have regarded psalms bearing their names as future-predictive.”

Fourth, Messianic expectation dominates second-temple period history and literature in general, which strongly implies that the eschatological expectation is dominant in the Psalter, which was compiled in its final form in this period.

Fifth, Mitchell argues that “[e]schatological interpretation of the Psalms was normative from late biblical times until the nineteenth century in both Jewish and Christian traditions,” and for that reason should not be underestimated in modern psalmic interpretation.

An attempt to explore the relationship between kingship and the sanctuary in the Psalms has been made in Chapter 3 of this study. One point emerged as crucial there, i.e., the strength and prosperity of the king depended on the king’s right relationship with Zion. There is no need to repeat that discussion here. The eschatological expectation of the new Davidic king in the Psalms is explored now in order to see whether the shift from earthly to heavenly that has been observed in the Psalms’ treatment of the sanctuary exists in their dealing with the theme of kingship.

Recent canonical approaches to the Psalter have proposed that the Psalter was redacted deliberately to help the exilic and post-exilic communities answer the apparent failure of the Davidic covenant (Wallace, 2011:2). Gerald Wilson (1986:87-92) argues that the present shape of the Psalter tells a narrative which depicts the failure of the Davidic covenant and rejection of the Davidic king. He rightly contends that the present form of the Psalter betrays a piety that moves away from hope in human, Davidic kingship and seeks direct reliance on God's protection and the individual access guaranteed by the Law (e.g., Pss. 90; 119).

The discussion about the significance of the sanctuary in the enthronement psalms in Chapter 3 of this study seems to suggest that the failure of the Davidic covenant was closely related to the king’s departure from Zion. The failure of the Davidic covenant had grave consequences for the people and the prosperity of the land. The enemies appear to triumph over Israel (e.g., Ps.

74:4-8, 22, 23). The sanctuary is destroyed (e.g., Ps. 74:3-8). The king's crown is defiled in the dust and his throne cast to the ground (Ps. 89:39, 44). The people are left with only one hope, i.e., that God will intervene to deliver his people (Pss. 74:10, 11, 22; 89:46; 90:15-17). Westermann (1974:21) remarks that "Israel experienced God's presence throughout its entire history as one who saves."

It appears that the psalmists call upon Israel's divine king with new fervour and devotion after the decline of the Davidic covenant. It is remarkable that the psalms that praise the divine king appear right after Psalm 89, which marks the failure of the Davidic covenant (Wilson, 1986:89,90). The psalms that come after Psalm 89 depict a contrast between the Davidic king and the divine king. The Davidic king's throne is cast to the ground (Ps. 89:44), but the Lord's throne lasts forever (Ps. 93:2). The Davidic king's crown lies defiled in the dust (Ps. 89:39), but the Lord continues to reign (Pss. 96:10; 97:1; 99:1). The Davidic king's splendour is put to an end (Ps. 89:44), but the Lord continues to live in the splendour of his sanctuary (Ps. 96:6, 9). The Davidic king's sword is powerless and the enemy prevails (Ps. 89:42, 43), but the Lord judges and destroys the enemies (Pss. 92:9; 94:23; 96:13; 98:9). The Davidic king has become the scorn of his neighbours (Ps. 89:41), but the Lord is exalted and adored by all nations (Ps. 96:7, 8). The Davidic king is plundered by all who pass by (Ps. 89:41), but the Lord receives offerings from all who come into his courts (Ps. 96:8).

References in the Psalter to the kings of David's house as Yahweh's *messiahs* have given rise to extensive research on the subject of sacral kingship (e.g., Eaton, 1975), "the religious celebration of human kingship as instituted and affirmed by God"(Durham, 1983:426). However, these psalms point to "the limitations of all human ambitions in connection with kingship" and dependence of the sacral kingship upon the divine kingship (Durham, 1983:427).

It seems that the contrast between the Davidic king and the divine king is drawn in order to provide hope to the people that the Lord has not rejected them (Ps. 94:14) and that he will make his salvation known to the nations (Ps. 98:2). The crisis that Israel experiences reaches its climax in Psalm 89 and provokes

people to repent (Ps. 90:3-13) and to acknowledge that true prosperity comes with trusting and loving the Lord (Ps. 91:14-16). The failure of the Davidic covenant in Psalm 89 does not leave the psalmists hopeless. On the contrary, it leads them to realize that true security is not found in the stability of the Davidic monarchy but in the Lord (Pss. 90:1; 91:1, 92:12-15).

These psalms acknowledge that “[o]nly Yahweh is a permanent King, one whose kingship is in no way contingent, one whose kingship makes Israel's kings a possibility, one whose kingship is manifest in theophany (Ps. 97), in deliverance (Ps. 98), and in holiness (Ps. 99), one who rules over chaos (Ps. 93), all the earth (Ps. 47) and all peoples (Ps. 96), whether they recognize it or not” (Durham, 1983:427).

5.2.4 The Heavenly Aspect of Israel’s Religion and the Eschatological Reorientation in the Psalms

Brueggemann (1980:6) suggests exploring the use and function of the present Psalms in the sequence of orientation-disorientation-reorientation. He (1984:19) believes that “psalm forms correspond to seasons of human life and bring those seasons to speech.” He recognizes three major seasons, i.e., the season of orientation, of disorientation and of reorientation. The season of orientation reflects life without tension and “well-oriented faith in a mood of equilibrium” (Brueggemann, 1980:7; 1984:25). The psalms of orientation are songs of creation (Pss. 8; 33; 104; 145), songs of Torah (Pss. 1; 15; 24; 119), wisdom psalms (Pss. 14; 37), songs of retribution (Ps. 112) and psalms of occasions of well-being (Pss. 131; 133) (Brueggemann, 1984:28-49). The season of disorientation depicts those passages in life when life passes through “the darkness that belongs properly to humanness” (Brueggemann, 1984:52). The psalms of disorientation are the personal laments (e.g., Pss. 13; 35; 86) and communal laments (e.g., Pss. 74; 79; 137) (Brueggemann, 1984:58-121). The season of reorientation or new orientation refers to the periods in life when the grace of God transforms the faith of the psalmists and gives new life. Brueggemann (1980:9; 1984:125-167) indicates declarative hymns and songs of thanksgiving as songs of reorientation.

The sequence of orientation-disorientation-reorientation seems to appear in the narrative of the Davidic king in the Psalter. Wilson (1986:85-94) has demonstrated that while the Davidic motif dominates Books I and II of the Psalter, Book III departs strongly from it. Psalm 89, which closes Book III, depicts the failure of the Davidic covenant and rejection of the Davidic king. Wilson rightly argues that Books IV and V decidedly shift their emphasis away from the human, Davidic king to the divine king of Israel. Kim (2008:143-157) further develops Wilson's theory by attempting to look systematically at the arrangement of the royal psalms in Books IV and V. He observes a thematic movement from the royal psalms in Books I-III to those in Books IV-V. He (2008:157) concludes that

Pss 110, 132, and 144 are strategically located *at* or *near* the end of the group of psalms followed by a doxological psalm or a group of doxological psalms ... It is obvious that the royal psalms are immediately followed by a doxological psalm or a group of doxological psalms. Thus, it is highly likely that the royal psalms and doxological psalms in Books IV-V, as in Books I-II, were intentionally arranged by the Psalter editor(s) under the influence of the eschatological movement in the Second Temple period. By strategically arranging the royal psalms in Books IV-V, the editor(s) intended that all the psalms in these books be understood eschatologically.

If Wilson and Kim are right about the eschatological nature of the royal psalms in Books IV and V, then reorientation in the Psalter includes an eschatological dimension. The sequence of orientation-disorientation-reorientation in the narrative of the Davidic king appears to point in the same direction as the sanctuary narrative that was discussed above, i.e., toward the heavenly symbolism of Israel's religion. An attempt to explore this proposal is made in the following lines.

Books I and II portray the stability of the Davidic covenant. The king is installed on Zion and the Lord protects his kingdom (Ps. 2:4-12). The king is enthroned in God's presence forever (Ps. 61:7) and rules over his enemies with an iron sceptre (Ps. 2:9). He receives help from the Lord when he is in distress (e.g., Pss. 3:3-8; 4:7, 8; 5:12; 6:8-10). The lament songs usually end with the assurance of salvation and thanksgiving (e.g., Pss. 4; 12; 17; 22; 59; 64; 69; 70; 71). The king's enemies turn back and perish (e.g., Pss. 6:10; 9:3; 68:1, 2). The Lord blesses the king abundantly (e.g., Pss. 13:6; 16:5-11; 21:1-13; 23:1-6; 45:1-9).

Psalm 72 closes Book II and depicts the Davidic king and the prosperity of his kingdom with strong images. The king will endure “as long as the sun, as long as the moon, through all generations” (v. 5). He will cause his kingdom to prosper to such an extent that he will be considered like “like rain falling on a mown field, like showers watering the earth” (v. 6). The prosperity of his kingdom “will abound till the moon is no more” (v. 7). “He will rule from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth” (v. 8). The term “River” (נהר) often refers to the Euphrates (e.g., Gen. 15:18; 31:21; 2 Sam. 10:16), but Tate (1990:221) rightly remarks that in this case the term “may be a reference to the great stream that issues from the temple in Israel’s visions of Zion (cf. Ps 46:5; Ezek 47).” In that case “the poet would be seeing the power of the king extending from Jerusalem over the world” (Tate, 1990:221). All kings of the earth will serve him (vv. 10 and 11).

Psalm 72 is universally considered to be a royal psalm and probably also a coronation psalm, a prayer for the king at the beginning of his reign (Tate, 1990:222). However, its present function has to be viewed in the light of its present position in the Psalter. Psalm 72 appears to close not only Book II but also the part of the Psalter that highly esteems the office of the Davidic king, i.e., the section that consists of Books I and II. The following parallels between Psalm 72 and Psalms 1 and 2 seem to suggest that Books I and II are closely related. Psalms 1 and 72 seem to describe the prosperity of God’s people in a very similar way. Those who belong to God are called “righteous” (צדיק; Pss. 1:5, 6; 72:1, 7). The righteous are “fruitful” (פורה; Pss. 1:3; 72:7). Their prosperity is closely related to the abundant waters (Pss. 1:3; 72:6).

The parallels between Psalms 2 and 72 are even more numerous. The king is called the “son” (בן) in both psalms (Pss. 2:7, 12; 72:1). The king is given the right to judge (Pss. 2:9, 12; 72:2). The king’s rule extends to “the ends of the earth” (אפסי ארץ) (Pss. 2:8; 72:8). The prosperity of the king’s rule is closely related to his alliance with the sanctuary (Pss. 2:6; 72:8; also, Ps. 68:29). The enemies in Psalm 2:9 are dashed to pieces like pottery. This image of the shattered pottery in Psalm 2:9 seems to correspond to the description of the

enemies in Psalm 72:9 who lick the dust (עפר) refers to soil, dirt; Gen. 2:7; 3:19) since the pottery is made of clay and the smashed pottery turns into dust. Those who live in the peace with the king are “blessed” (אשרי in Pss. 2:12 and 72:17; and ברוך in Ps. 72:17).

Psalms 2 and 72 seem to mark the boundaries of the first segment of the Psalter that speaks of the blessed times of the Davidic covenant. Psalm 72 appears to close the prosperous epoch of the Davidic king. If this is true, then it seems appropriate that Psalm 72:20 (“This concludes the prayers of David son of Jesse”) was retained by the editor(s) of the Psalter though the psalms with David’s name in their superscription reappear later in the Psalter.

The stable world of orientation of the Davidic covenant in Books I and II is threatened in the crisis that arises in Psalm 74, which depicts the destruction of the sanctuary. Further difficulties culminate in Psalm 89 which depicts the failure of the Davidic covenant. Book III seems to depict the season of disorientation when Israel loses hope in the traditional elements of her religion. Psalms 73 and 74 seem to picture Israel’s reality in contrast with Psalm 72 and the rest of Books I and II. Psalm 72 speaks of the prosperity of justice and righteousness. The afflicted are defended and the children of the needy are saved (Ps. 72:4, 12-14). The oppressor is crushed and defeated (Ps. 72:4; 9). The kings bring their gifts to Israel because of the temple in Jerusalem (Ps. 68:29). Psalm 72 maintains the well-ordered world of Psalms 1 and 2 intended by God (Brueggemann, 1984:25).

Book III engages in the challenge to acknowledge and embrace the negativity that causes disorientation (Brueggemann, 1984:52). Psalm 73 speaks openly of apparent injustices and the prosperity of the wicked (Ps. 73:3-12). The psalm does not offer any proof that justice has been restored although the psalmist finds consolation in the presence of God in the sanctuary and in the assurance of God’s judgment (Ps. 73:17-28). The author of Psalm 74 has to cope with the destruction of the temple. Brueggemann (1984:68) asserts that Psalm 74 “does not concern simply a historical invasion and the loss of a building,” but “[i]t speaks about the violation of the sacral key to all reality, the glue that holds the world together.”

Wallace (2011:3) points out that ten out of sixteen psalms in Book III contain individual or communal lament characteristics and provide a canonical context in which to read the psalms of Book III. Book III depicts how “the disoriented psalmists desperately look to reorient their theology by appealing to Temple, land, and Davidic covenant.” The psalmists turn to the temple with acknowledgment that God’s temple is a lovely place, a place of security and blessings (Ps. 84). The psalmists turn to the land which prospers under God’s blessing (Ps. 85:12). The psalmists tie their hopes to Zion, the glorious city of God (Ps. 87). They turn to the Davidic king for help (Ps. 89). Wallace (2011:2,7) rightly observes that it becomes clear that “those traditional elements are no longer capable of providing hope” when Psalms 84-89 are interpreted in the light of their canonical context, i.e., of their present placement in the Psalter. Psalms 84-89 come after Psalm 74, which depicts the ruined sanctuary and the destroyed land. The reader of the Psalter encounters Psalms 84-89 in the context of Jerusalem having been destroyed, even though the traditional setting for Psalm 84 was most likely pre-exilic. Wallace (2011:7) rightly contends that “with an exilic setting providing a hermeneutic lens through which to read the psalm, Ps 84 becomes an ironic expression of hopelessness and longing.” This conclusion about the nature of Psalm 84 can probably be applied to Book III as a whole. The book opens with the scene of injustice (Ps. 73) and the destruction of the temple and the land (Ps. 74), and closes with the failure of the Davidic covenant (Ps. 89).

The new orientation or reorientation begins with Book IV and continues with Book V. It seems remarkable that Book IV appears to provide answers to the major concerns that caused disorientation in Book III. Psalms 90 to 93 deal with the “dwelling place” or the sanctuary. Psalms 93 and 95-99 focus on Israel’s king. Psalm 94 deals with the land.

Psalm 90:1 points to the Lord who is Israel’s “dwelling place” (as KJV, RSV and NIV translate the Hebrew, *מִעוֹן*). Tate (1990:432) accepts Dahood’s argument that the word *מִעוֹן* derives from the Arabic *ana* which denotes “aid/give succor” (Dahood, 1968:172) and translates the phrase as “our help.” This translation

seems improbable in the light of the word's usage elsewhere in the Old Testament. The word is used of the habitations of animals (e.g., Nah. 2:12; Jer. 9:10; 10:22; 49:33; 51:37) and of people (1 Chr. 4:41), and also for the dwelling place of God (e.g., Deut. 26:15; 2 Sam. 2:29, 32; 2 Chr. 30:27; 36:15; Pss. 26:8; 68:5[6]; Jer. 25:30; Zec. 2:13[17]). The word clearly denotes God's dwelling place in Psalms 26:8 and 68:5[6]. Dahood (1968:322) translates the term as "our mainstay" because he relates it to כווננה (sustain) in verse 17 which suggests the idea of foundation and support. Though his translation implies the meaning of habitation, the context of the Psalms appears to point to the sanctuary as that habitation or mainstay. There are no strong indications in Psalm 90 that would suggest a different meaning for מועון in Psalm 90:1, i.e., as Tate suggests.

The word is used again in Psalm 91:9 and again there is no reason to avoid the meaning of "dwelling place" in this verse. Moreover, the meaning of "dwelling place" seems to be supported by Psalm 91:1 where the righteous one is depicted as dwelling (ישב) in the shelter (סתר) of the Almighty. The Hebrew סתר refers in the Psalms to a secret or hiding place (Ps. 32:7; 139:15), most often the sanctuary (Pss. 18:6[70, 11[12]; 25:5; 31:20[21]; 61:4[5]; 81:7[8]). Divine hiding places are depicted as secret because the darkness and thick clouds of the thunderstorm are the Lord's covering (Job 22:14; Ps. 18:11[12]), which points to the residual mystery of the transcendent God, who remains hidden (e.g., Job 34:29; Prov. 25:2; Isa. 45:15) but from whom nothing can be hidden (Job 34:22; Jer. 16:17; Isa. 29:14, 15) (Hill, 1997:301,302).

The Lord hides the righteous from the schemes of the wicked (Pss. 17:8; 31:20[21]; 64:2[3]) and preserves those who trust in him in his sanctuary (Pss. 27:5; 32:7; 91:1) (Hill, 1997:302). The idiom "I will hide my face" symbolizes a breach of covenant and fellowship between God and Israel (e.g., Deut. 31:17, 18; Isa. 59:2) (Hill, 1997:301). God does not hide his face from the righteous (Pss. 27:9; 69:17[18]; 102:2[3]). The words of Psalms 90:1 and 91:9, which depict the Lord as the secure dwelling place of Israel, become particularly significant when they are read in their canonical context, i.e., after Psalm 74 that depicts the ruined sanctuary as discussed already in this chapter. Psalms

90 and 91 give hope that Israel is not left without a dwelling place, i.e., the Lord is their true dwelling place.

Psalms 92 continues with the motif of the dwelling place and pictures the righteous flourishing in the house of the Lord (vv. 12-14). The imagery of a tree in the context of the sanctuary has been discussed in Chapter 3. What seems important here is that the sanctuary still offers hope and prosperity. The scene that is portrayed in Psalm 92 seems to be eschatological since the psalmist speaks of the enemy who will be defeated (vv. 8 and 11) and presents the projection of the lives of the righteous until their old age (v. 14). Psalm 93 adds a new dimension to God's holy dwelling, i.e., it is eternal (v. 5). This contrast with the earthly sanctuary that was destroyed (Ps. 74:3-8) should bring consolation and hope to Israel.

Psalms 93 and 95-99 continue with the motif of Israel's king. These psalms are widely recognized as the enthronement psalms and were somehow related to some kind of cultic ceremonies concerning the king (e.g., Gunkel, 1998:66-81; Mowinckel, 2004, I:106-192; Westermann, 1980:109,110). It is beyond the scope and interest of this study to discuss the possible cultic use of these psalms. The focus of the study is now on their canonical context. It is evident from the psalms themselves that they portray the idea of Yahweh's enthronement and kingship (Pss. 93:1, 3; 95:2, 3; 96:10; 97:1, 2; 98:6; 99:1-5). Yahweh's kingship appears to be particularly significant at this specific point in the Psalter, i.e., right after Book III which ends with the failure of the Davidic king (Ps. 89). This does not mean that the idea of the Lord's kingship and enthronement is not seen in Books I and II (e.g., Pss. 10:16; 24:7-10; 29:10; 47; 74:12; 84:3[4]). However, it can hardly be denied that Psalms 93 and 95-99 together emphasize this idea more intensively than those scattered references in Books I and II. Most references to the divine king in Books I and II depict the way the psalmist addresses the Lord. Psalms 93 and 95-99 bear a significant connotation as they depict the Lord as enthroned and actively ruling.

Book IV has already introduced the heavenly scene by referring to the heavenly sanctuary, and now it continues with the divine king. The divine king will accomplish what the Davidic king could not. He will reign forever (Ps. 93:2, 5).

He will judge the nations and deliver Israel from her enemies (Ps. 94:1-17, 21-23; 96:13; 97:10; 98:9). All the nations will bow down to the divine king and bring their tributes to him (Ps. 96:7-9). His kingdom will be firmly established (Pss. 93:1; 96:10). Israel still has reason for hope and praise because the Lord is the great king (Pss. 95:1-3; 96:1-3; 97:1). He has done marvellous things and made his salvation known (Ps. 98:1-9). He has forgiven Israel though he punished them for their misdeeds (Ps. 99:2, 3).

Psalm 94 deals with the land of Israel. Verse 14 depicts the people of Israel as God's inheritance (נחלה). This clearly points to Deuteronomy 4:20, 21 where Moses declares that the Lord brought the people of Israel out of Egypt and chose them to be the people of his inheritance. He also says that the Lord is giving them the good land as their inheritance. The concept of inheritance in the Old Testament is closely related to the land (e.g., Gen. 31:14; 48:6; Exod. 15:17; Num. 26:53; 34:2; Josh. 11:23; Pss. 135:12; 136:21, 22; Lam. 5:2). The Hebrew נחלה has also a relational dimension, as the Old Testament speaks of Yahweh as Israel's נחלה (e.g., Deut. 18:2; Ps. 119:57) and Israel as the Lord's נחלה (Pss. 28:9; 33:12; Jer. 10:16) (Wright, 1997:79,80). Because of the relational dimension inherent in נחלה, living in the land brought moral responsibilities (Deut. 24:4; Isa. 58:14) (Wright, 1997:78).

Psalm 94:14 affirms that "the Lord will not reject his people; he will never forsake his inheritance." This and other texts (e.g., Deut. 4:32-38; Pss. 47:3-4 [4-5]; 82:8; 111:7-9; 147:19, 20; Isa. 19:24-25) contain a strong eschatological note and speak of Yahweh's sovereignty in international history (Wright, 1997:78,79).

Gunkel (1998:66-69) contends that these psalms should be understood eschatologically, as discussed already in this chapter. The same image of Yahweh coming to rule over the earth from Zion is found in the prophets (e.g., Isa. 24:23; 52:7; Mic. 4:7; Ezek. 20:33). Gunkel (1998:69) asserts that these psalms "provide a good picture of the powerful faith of Judaism in the coming kingdom of YHWH, a faith which, in the manner of the ancient prophets, sees

the future as having already occurred and thus can even now raise the royal call.”

The reorientation, i.e., the new focus on the heavenly dimension of Israel’s faith, serves to reassure the people that the Lord will vindicate them (Ps. 135:14), the Davidic king (Ps. 132:17), the sanctuary (Ps. 132:13-16; 147:2), and the land (Ps. 135:12). Thus the Psalms seem to demonstrate that “[t]he reorientation has both continuities with and discontinuities from what has been” (Brueggemann, 1980:6). Thus Israel still hopes that the Lord will build up Jerusalem, strengthen the bars of its gates and grant peace to its borders (Ps. 147:2, 12-14), but the transformed faith now looks beyond the earthly Jerusalem to the splendour of the Lord above the earth and the heavens (Ps. 148:13).

The psalms with David’s name in the superscription reappear in Book IV (e.g., Pss. 110; 124; 133; 138-145). This seems to indicate a renewal of the Davidic covenant. Reid (2001:47-49) rightly notes that the language of Psalm 132, which reinstates the Davidic lineage, is more than just descriptive. He argues that the language of this psalm is performative, i.e., it acts and also invites action which results in construing the power of the Davidic king. However, the new focus now is primarily on the divine king (Pss. 146:10; 149:2). The heavenly aspect of the sanctuary and of Israel’s king becomes the centre of faith (Pss. 146:10; 149:2; 150:1) while the earthly dimension is preserved (Pss. 135:17; 147:2, 12-14).

The motifs of king, Zion, crowning, and judgement of the nations who rebel against the Lord and Israel are commonly shared by Psalms 2 and 149, which open and close the Psalter respectively. However, Psalm 149 sings a “new song” that clearly has a new essence even though it is so reminiscent of Psalm 2. Psalm 149 focuses its praise entirely on the divine king in Zion, while Psalm 2 seems to focus slightly more on the son (vv. 2, 6-11, 12). Brueggemann (1984:124) contends that “[t]hat new orientation is not a return to the old stable orientation.” The old story is given a new meaning. The traditional elements of Israel’s faith are given new focus. The reorientation is not “the ‘natural’ outcome of trouble,” but “the decisive *transformation* made possible by this God who causes new life where none seems possible” (Brueggemann, 1984:125).

Wilson (2005:246) recognizes a shift from dominant lament in the first half of the Psalter to predominant praise and thanksgiving in the last half of the book. He argues that “[t]he shift from individual lament to communal praise/thanksgiving that takes place within the Psalter when read from beginning to end suggests that individuals faced with the pain of the real world find strength within the community of faith” (Wilson, 2005:246). This shift seems to coincide with the eschatological reorientation and new focus on heavenly aspects of Israel’s religion in the Psalter.

The eschatological reorientation of torah piety in the Psalms seems to provide a basis for the future usage of the Psalms in liturgy and personal devotion. The tendency of the Psalms to depict the future as having already occurred and their call to the reader to participate in the new world has been explored by a number of scholars. The Psalms appear not only to long for the new reality to come but also to demonstrate power to evoke it.

5.3 Liturgical Use of the Psalms and Their Constitutive Power

The creative aspect of cult, primarily of cultic acts, has been discussed in Chapter 4. An attempt has been made there to explore how the sanctuary cult shaped and nourished the personal piety of the psalmists. The question of the relevance of this study for the modern believer comes to mind now since the sanctuary as known to the psalmists is not available today. The following pertinent question has to be discussed at this point: How can a modern believer experience God and pursue the same kind of piety as the psalmists did? This question leads to another aspect of cult which deserves special attention and which also promises to answer this question effectively, i.e., the creative power of words used in the cult.

Earlier generations of scholars noted the special ability of the Psalms to appeal to the whole person in a way that some other Old Testament texts did not. Longman (1988:13) asserts that “[w]hen we read the Psalms with faith, we come away changed and not simply informed.” He rightly observes that the Psalms affect the believer in a different way than the last half of Joshua, which details the geographical boundaries of the twelve tribes of Israel. Longman

(1988:92) ascribes the special appeal of the Psalms to their poetic form and writes,

The point is that poetry appeals more directly to the whole person than prose does. It stimulates our imaginations, arouses our emotions, feeds our intellects and addresses our wills. Perhaps this is why poetry is the preferred mode of communication of the prophets, whose purpose depends on capturing the attention of their listeners and persuading them their message is urgent.

However, modern scholarship has been recently interested in the distinctive power of the Psalms that comes from their liturgical use. These new trends represent a renewal of Mowinckel's ideas about the creative power of cult already discussed in this thesis.

Mowinckel writes not only about the creative power of cultic rites but also about the creative power of words which accompany cult. He says (2004, 1:20) that "[t]he power inherent in the act is also concentrated in the word; the holy word is effective and creative. Word and act co-operate in the creation of reality." Brueggemann (1995:28) applies these insights to the Psalms and writes,

The songs can also function to evoke and form new realities that did not exist until, or apart from, the actual singing of the song. Thus the speech of the new song does not just recognize what is given, but evokes it, calls it into being, forms it.

The constitutive power of the Psalms may be seen in their creative, evocative function to bring forth a new reality, i.e., to initiate "cosmic and personal transformation" (Brueggemann, 1995:28,33). This agrees with Brown's (2002:2) statement that "[b]iblical poetry is poetry with purpose." Brown adopts Ricoeur's observation of the formative power of biblical language to form our feeling in the process of expressing it, and appropriately applies it to the Psalms.

For Mays (1994b:7) the Psalms are "the liturgy of the kingdom of God." He (1994b:40) calls the Psalms "means of grace," i.e., "regular and established ways in which divine grace is offered and received" and "one of the most important resources in the disciplined use of means of grace". The role of Psalms as a means of grace becomes decisive as they "give us words to say" and "evoke the setting in which the prayer occurs" (Mays, 1994b:40-41). Moreover, the Psalms shape piety by impressing upon the worshiper "a structural pattern of religious experience: need, gratitude, and trust" (Mays, 1994b:42). However, Mays (1994b:6) argues that, in order for this to happen, the worshiper needs not only to say the words of the Psalms, but to actually

speak their language. Otherwise, “the words are empty and perverted.” The language Mays refers to is not simply grammar, syntax, and vocabulary, but “speech that goes with a distinctive way of viewing and experiencing and acting,” i.e., “rendering of ‘world’ and ‘existence’ expressed in them.”

Brueggemann (2007:18, 19) asserts that the language of the Psalms is creative and can evoke new forms of human life that never existed before. He argues that the language of the Psalms does not describe what is, but rather “evokes into being what does not exist until it has been spoken.” Thus, for Brueggemann (2007:20-23) the key assertion of the royal psalms, “Yahweh is king,” is not descriptive of the reality, for in that case the words would be deceptive, because God manifestly is not the king, having in mind all the evil that is happening in the world. The words are rather evocative of a new reality yet to come. Brueggemann argues that words have a powerful function when viewed in this way.

This new trend in Psalms scholarship and its interest in the “language world” of the Psalms recall the growing tendency to see the Psalms in the light of modern literary theory, particularly speech-act theory. This theory is interested in the ability of words and texts to perform actions and make things happen in the so-called “real world”. The words of the Psalms are not seen only as means of describing the world that already exists (a word to world direction) but also as a means of creating the world that would not have come into being without their use (a world to word direction) (Nasuti, 2001:80-81). The first case refers to the responsive aspect of word. The second case describes the constitutive or creative aspect of word.

Mowinckel (2004, 1:17) described the complementing roles of the creative and responsive aspects of cult in the following way:

At all events it is a mutual relation which is set up and developed in the cult. The acts and words express and produce this mutuality. Hence there are acts and words directed, so to speak, upward from below, from the congregation to the deity – ‘sacrificial’ acts and words – and also such as are directed downwards from above, from deity to the congregation – ‘sacramental’ acts and words. But the boundary between them is not sharply defined.

What Mowinckel describes as acts going upward from below is the responsive aspect of the cult. The words directed upward from below are what the modern scholars depict as words which are used to describe the world that already

exists, i.e., the responsive power of words. What Mowinckel calls “sacramental” acts and words, i.e., acts and words directed downwards from above, i.e., the constitutive aspect of cult, is what the modern scholars portray as the means of creating the world that would not have existed without their use.

Obviously, what Mowinckel said about cult and its constitutive or creative power is applied now to the words of the Psalms to argue for their “full sacramental power” (Nasuti, 2001:81). Some authors prefer to call it the “performative” power of the language or “performative speech” (Reid, 2001:44,47). By performative speech is meant “language that does more than describe,” i.e., language that acts and invites action (Reid, 2001:47,48).

Nasuti (2001:78-89) elaborates on the sacramental function of the Psalms. He argues that the sacramental power of the Psalms is demonstrated in their ability to actualize in the believer the rest of Scripture. In other words, the Psalms “are not so much the human response to what is found in the rest of Scripture as they are means by which such a response is made possible ... the “means of grace” by which the person praying is formed in a way acceptable to God” (Nasuti, 2001:81). Nasuti (2001:83) argues that “the praying of the psalm is an event by which God’s grace is made manifest in the lives of believers.” Nasuti constantly applies to the Psalms what has been said earlier about cult and its creative power.

The term “sacramental power” of the Psalms is avoided here for the same reason it was avoided in the case of cult, i.e., for the fear of misinterpreting the term as suggesting a kind of uncritical *ex opera operato*, as if it is effective in itself. Cultic acts and words never have authority and power in themselves, and neither do the Psalms. They are not to be seen as “magic” which by itself creates life; it is Yahweh who acts and creates through them (Mowinckel, 2004, I:19).

However, Nasuti (2001:85) recognizes that the reading of a psalm “has a real effect on the believer, not simply as convenient restatement of sentiments that already existed before praying of the psalm.” The constitutive power of the psalms in relation to piety is demonstrated in the ability of a psalm to enable the believer to act in the way demanded by the psalm. The psalm does not only help the believer express his or her inner feelings, but is actually the means by

which the believer is formed into a person with a broken and contrite heart as described in Psalm 51.

Though he writes about the constitutive power of psalms in the context of liturgy, Nasuti (2001:87) remarks that it would be a mistake to say that it is only in the context of liturgy that psalms function in such a way, for they have been the means by which God has transformed believers in a variety of public and private settings.

However, it is contended here that a mere repetition of the words of the Psalms with only a slight comprehension of their meaning may not produce the authentic transformation intended by their use. Mays (1994b:6) observes that the words of the Psalms may become empty and perverted if they are spoken without an understanding of the language world of the Psalms. As asserted before, the language world includes not just grammar and vocabulary, but also the distinctive way in which the world rendered in the Psalms is viewed, experienced and acted. One must, by means of the Psalms, enter and live in that particular language world if praise and prayer with their words are to be authentic (Mays, 1994b:6).

Liturgical use of the Psalms should not be misunderstood as a kind of use of amulets with quotations from the Hebrew Psalter, which are believed to have some kind of magical curing power. In the course of the generations, when the sick Jew was seized with fear or panic, he believed in the power of the amulet which included a sentence from the Bible which exactly fitted his situation and prayer (Davis, 1992:174). Amulets with quotations from the Hebrew Bible were given recognition by the popular opinion, despite the fact that the Rabbis were divided on their use (Davis, 1992:173-174). Davis (1992:175,176) draws attention to the numerous passages in the Psalter that were used for this purpose (e.g., Pss. 6:4,5; 13:4; 19:9; 23:3; 30:4; 31:6,8; 34:13,19; 91:6,16; 128:3,6; 130:7).

The cultic elements in the Psalms strongly suggest that the sanctuary is an important part of that world. Thus understanding of the sanctuary cult becomes a necessary prerequisite for grasping the piety of the psalmists. Neglect of this fact may jeopardize one's chance of comprehending and experiencing the world of the psalmist, as demonstrated later in this chapter. The sanctuary cult may

be seen as the Jewish “awkwardness” (as Brueggemann calls it) which Christians deal with either by “cunning selectivity or by knowing spiritualization” (Brueggemann, 2007:x). Brueggemann (2007:30) is right that metaphors in the Psalms are “free to work in many directions, but always without losing contact with their initial concreteness.” This brings us again to the importance of understanding the relationship between the Psalms and the cult, as a great number of the psalmic metaphors are cultic.

Without going into a deeper discussion on the creative power of the Psalms, it seems plausible to conclude that the Psalms are not only a product of a particular piety but in turn actively participate in producing a specific world of piety along with the cult. This is particularly seen in the use of Psalms in the cult to inform one another and to strengthen the faith of other believers during cultic events.

Brueggemann’s appropriation of the Psalms to the personal life of the psalmists through the evaluation of seasons of orientation, disorientation and new orientation has been discussed in Chapter 3 of this study. Jacobsen (2001:94-98) takes Brueggemann in a slightly different direction. While Brueggemann focuses on “matching” the expression given in the psalm to the actual experience in real life, Jacobson (2001:98) argues that “an expression that is precisely *contrary* to present experience may be introduced in order to initiate a change in experience.” Jacobson (2001:93) writes, “the liturgical use of the Psalms can be employed to introduce new cognitions, new attitudes, and new behaviours into worshipers.” Brueggemann focuses on the power of Psalms to express present reality. Jacobson (2001:98) contends that the language of the Psalms is creative and evocative of realities yet to come. He (2001:97) rightly notes that “[w]hen the liturgy places the words of psalms of reorientation into the mouths of sufferers, it can introduce a new cognition that one hopes might destabilize the experience of the worshiper” and create a dissonance that the human mind will seek to resolve “either by changing cognitions, adding new cognitions, or changing attitudes.”

It appears that the torah piety of the Psalms embodies the reorientation that was created by the eschatological focus on the new temple and the new king and on the heavenly aspect of Israel’s religion. The words of the Psalms did not

always match the experience of the worshiper but they had power to transform the experience and create hope.

The awareness of the constitutive power of the Psalms calls for responsibility in terms of its practice and implementation in modern society, a responsibility that goes beyond the use of Psalms to strengthen the faith of believers only during cultic events. Reid (2001:49) remarks that the use of Psalms in liturgy must not be eschewed by any sort of obscurantism. He appropriately notes that “[t]he institution of power, politically and ecclesiastically, are themselves theological by virtue of the performative speech they embody.” He rightly contends that “[u]ltimately, we must ask what David and Zion have to do with the construal of power and agency in North America today,” or in the world in general.

5.4 Conclusion

An important shift in this study is marked by the question: Is it mandatory to consider a psalm as cultic only in the case when it is composed for or used in a cultic ceremony? This study proposes that we should consider a psalm as cultic in cases when it demonstrates piety closely related to or influenced by cult, not only when a psalm was composed for or used in a cultic ceremony. This proposal seems to provide a good way to solve, or at least to avoid, the arbitrariness of both Gunkel and Mowinckel that were discussed in the previous chapter. Torah piety emerges as the possible *Sitz im Leben* of the Psalms.

Torah piety, in its close relationship to the eschatological hopes of the new temple and the new Davidic king, seems to embrace the cultic and the personal elements in the Psalms in a way that does not put the cultic and personal aspects in opposition but shows how they complement each other and work for the editorial purposes of the entire Psalter. The torah piety of the Psalms longs for the fulfilment of eschatological expectations of the new temple where the presence of God will be fully revealed, the fortunes of Israel restored and justice maintained in the whole universe. The move from lament to praise in the Psalter seems to reflect a journey towards the new Zion, as the Zion theme dominates the final part of the Psalter, beginning with Psalm 120. The sanctuary embodies the redemption of the whole earth, not only Israel, and for that reason all

creation is called to acknowledge and praise God as the Psalter culminates in praise. The spiritual journey in the Psalter is also marked by the shift from the earthly Davidic king to Israel's divine king. The Psalter depicts a new, fresh reorientation towards the heavenly aspects of Israel's religion though the earthly aspects are not abandoned.

Seybold (1997:140) contends that a certain levelling out of the whole body of theological themes exists in the Psalter, though the Psalter betrays "the ultimate lack of any real interest in a systematisation of the traditions into a symbolic credal schema." Various themes of the Psalter that have been discussed in this chapter, i.e., Torah obedience, the sanctuary and kingship, appear to be intermingled and levelled out to pursue the contemporary aims of the editor(s) of the Psalter. The Psalter appears to be constructed as a collection of testimonies, drawing together selected individual and communal experiences to "a complete picture of faith" (Seybold, 1997:147). The complete picture of faith or the piety of the psalmists does not emerge in a clearly structured and systematized way, but its orientation seems to be clearly eschatological and focuses on the heavenly aspect of Israel's religion. Torah piety appears to be the result of the reorientation that brought the eschatological focus onto the new temple and the new king and onto the heavenly aspect of Israel's religion. It seems plausible to say that torah piety is reoriented and transformed cultic piety.

A number of scholars have rightly recognized that the Psalms do not merely wish for or testify about the coming of God's kingdom. The Psalms demonstrate a constitutive power that can be observed in their creative, evocative function to bring forth the new reality that they long for. The Psalms, like the cult, have the power to initiate "cosmic and personal transformation" (Brueggemann, 1995:28,33). Thus they continue to transform and unite the community of faith through the centuries and direct believers to the ultimate goal of their faith, i.e., to wait for and praise the divine king who rules from the heavenly sanctuary.

6.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This examination of the relationship between the sanctuary cult and the personal piety of the psalmists calls for several conclusions, relating to 1) the compatibility between the sanctuary cult and the piety of the psalmists, 2) the vital link between the sanctuary cult and piety, and 3) torah piety as a possible setting-in-life of the Psalms, with the sanctuary cult playing a significant role in this.

6.1 Compatibility between the Sanctuary Cult and the Piety of the Psalmists

The discussions in this study seem to point to the conclusion that there is continual interaction and compatibility between cultic and personal piety in the Book of Psalms. This conclusion stems from the following five indications.

1) The form critical studies of the Psalms, which are discussed in Chapter 2, appear to demonstrate that psalm genres point to the cultic setting of the Psalms and strongly advocate cultic influence in the Psalms. The cultic influence in the Psalms seems to imply that the piety of the psalmists is closely related to the sanctuary cult.

2) A brief examination of the shape of the Psalter in Chapter 3 seems to depict the sanctuary as being one of the major concerns of the book, and a possible unifying motif of the editorial plan of the Psalter. The discussions in Chapter 3 have confirmed in broad strokes some suggestions of earlier scholars that various related themes influence the overall shaping, and have demonstrated that these themes are closely related to the sanctuary. This relationship suggests that references to the sanctuary in the Psalms are not just leftovers of the old-fashioned cultic religion in Israel which was succeeded by the more spiritualized and reformed piety of the prophets. On the contrary, it implies a piety strongly related to and compatible with the sanctuary.

3) The numerous references to the sanctuary in the Psalms strongly suggest that the sanctuary was indispensable for the psalmists' personal piety. This conclusion stems from the observation in Chapter 4 that the sanctuary plays an important role not only in communal psalms, which is expected and assumed, but in individual psalms as well. The discussions in Chapter 4 have demonstrated that this is so because the sanctuary was not only the place of meeting and worship but was also an important aspect of the revelation of God which probably at times included visible phenomena of God's glorious presence and revelation of God's character and beauty that surpass merely physical sight. The sanctuary provided an environment for the individual and the community to experience the presence of God, obtain forgiveness of sins and renew a living relationship with God. These things were achieved not only through the theological lessons that were taught by the visual means of the sanctuary objects and rituals. The psalmists seem to believe that in the sanctuary God actually dwelt in person, i.e., he was not merely experienced psychologically by worshipers.

4) The discussions in Chapter 4 have demonstrated the significance of the theocentric worldview and of the concept of solidarity for the understanding of the personal piety of the psalmists. The theocentric worldview of the Psalms that considers God as being the centre of all life, and the solidarity that strongly binds the individual and the community together, strongly suggest that the clear distinction between the individual and the community and between the common and the sacred was not as strong in ancient Israel as it seems to be in some places today. The role of the sanctuary was not separated from the individual's daily life. In fact, cultic piety and personal piety are so interwoven that they are sometimes hardly distinguishable. This blending seems to be partially reflected in the difficulty of clearly distinguishing between the "I" of the individual and the "I" of the community in the Psalms. However, this does not mean that the individual was not perceived outside of the community. It rather suggests that the sentiments of the individual did not represent an anti-community or anti-cultic agenda or an alienation from community or cult.

5) The sanctuary imagery in the Psalms, which is discussed in Chapter 4, provides another indication of the close relationship between the sanctuary cult

and personal piety in the Psalms. Cultic experience appears to be so vivid and relevant to the psalmists that they exploited the sanctuary imagery as a powerful channel for expressing their personal thoughts and feelings. It remains uncertain whether the present psalms represent actual liturgies, in which case the sanctuary imagery would refer to actual cultic practices, or are merely drawn from cultic language, in which case the sanctuary imagery would serve as merely poetic language. What does seem clear is that the presence of sanctuary imagery in the Psalms strongly implies a piety that finds its expression by referring to the cult. Because the particular cultic images and their context were familiar to both the psalmist and his audience, a reading of the Psalms could achieve the intended emotional and psychological effects. This strongly implies that the sanctuary cult was compatible with the piety of the psalmists and of their audience.

6.2 The Vital Link between the Sanctuary Cult and Piety

The second conclusion of the study concerns the nature of the sanctuary cult. It has been suggested in Chapter 4 that the on-going interaction between the sanctuary cult and personal piety in the Psalms is the result of the creative power of cult. That such a power existed seems evident from the role of the sanctuary cult, not only to provide a framework for the people's response of lament and praise to God but also to create and restore a living relationship between God and his people. This seems to be apparent from the fact that the sanctuary had to be built according to the plan given by God and governed by meticulous laws and restrictions in order to serve as a powerful channel of God's grace that made God's real presence among his people possible and created new life in the worshipers. However, cult was not perceived as magical, i.e., as having a power of its own. The discussion in Chapter 4 about the critique of cult in the Old Testament demonstrates that God could reject cult and withdraw his blessings when people thought that participation in the cult could excuse them from observing ethical principles. The critique of cult in the psalms and in the prophets did not convey an anti-cultic agenda but advocated the idea that the sanctuary cult was "sacramental" only in the sense that God chose it as his means to bestow blessings and the life of salvation upon the partakers.

This seems to imply that participation in cultic events was not an option for ancient Israelites, but a way of living, serving and communing with their God. The creative aspect of cult seems to reinforce the idea of compatibility between cultic and personal piety because it highlights the importance of the sanctuary cult for creating and nourishing piety. It also highlights the idea that the sanctuary was important to the psalmists because it was the place where they could commune with God and receive spiritual blessing in a more life-giving and substantial way than elsewhere. The implication is that cult was essential for the religious life of ancient Israelites and that their religion was never meant to be anti-cultic.

Awareness of the creative power of cult has practical implications. It will permit the agents of the liturgical drama – priests and pastors – to be more intentional and critical of what they themselves do, since lack of such awareness in itself will not prevent the inevitably on-going impact of cult (Brueggemann, 1988:7). Cult plays a unique role in shaping and fuelling both communal and personal piety. Through cult personal piety is shaped in the light of communal piety and communal piety in turn is constantly shaped by the piety of the individual.

The creative aspect of cult seems to provide an insight into the specific nature of the relationship between the sanctuary and the personal piety of the psalmists. However, it is widely accepted that most of the psalms are exilic and postexilic. This means that the sanctuary was not always available to believers, and even later when the temple was rebuilt the Israelites who lived in the Diaspora could not visit it often. Was the link between the sanctuary and piety broken in these times? Was the concept of the sanctuary abandoned and substituted for something else in order to fill the emptiness that the absence of the sanctuary created? These questions are answered by a closer look at torah piety that appears to have influenced the present shape of the Psalter.

6.3 The Significance of the Sanctuary Cult for Torah Piety

The third conclusion of this study concerns torah piety as the possible setting-in-life of the Psalms and the significance of the sanctuary cult for it. Torah piety seems to embrace the cultic and the personal elements in the Psalms in such a

way that they complement each other and work for the editorial purposes of the entire Psalter. The discussions in Chapter 5 suggest that torah piety in the Psalter is engagement in a spiritual journey which can be effectively described by the sequence of orientation-disorientation-reorientation suggested by Brueggemann (1980:6,7; 1984:19-23). This journey involves reflection on the past, examination of the present and an attempt to see hope in the future. The journey starts with orientation, which is reflected in Books I and II, portraying the stability of the Davidic monarchy and the earthly representations of Israel's religion. The stable world of the Davidic covenant in Books I and II is threatened in the crisis of disorientation that is depicted in Book III, when Israel loses hope in the traditional elements of her religion, i.e., the temple, land and king.

Reorientation takes place in Books IV and V. It seems remarkable that Book IV appears to provide answers to the major concerns that caused disorientation in Book III by redirecting the worshiper to the heavenly sanctuary (Pss. 90-93), the divine king (Pss. 93 and 95-99) and the restored land (Ps. 94:14; 106:4, 5, 47). Books IV and V depict the shift from the earthly sanctuary to the heavenly sanctuary, and the earthly Davidic king to Israel's divine king. It has been shown in Chapter 5 that the Psalter is possibly ordered to promote eschatological hope in the new temple and the new king, as well as pointing to the heavenly symbolism of the sanctuary. The parallels between these psalms and the prophetic texts appear to imply that the psalms dealing with the kingship of the Lord were understood eschatologically by the time the Psalter was being completed. The torah piety of the Psalms longs for the fulfilment of eschatological expectations of the new temple where the presence of God will be fully revealed and the redemption of the whole earth, not only of Israel, will be achieved. For that reason all creation is called to acknowledge and praise God as the Psalter culminates in praise.

It appears that the dual dimension of Israel's religion, i.e., the earthly and heavenly, provided continuity for Israel's faith at all times. The sanctuary cult was part of the universal, cosmic worship of God and was not limited to its earthly representation. Both aspects of Israel's religion were always inseparably present and experienced together. However, at different times each aspect could receive greater emphasis. In the pre-exilic times, when the earthly

aspects of Israel's religion flourished, Israel's faith was nourished by these tangible means and channels of God's grace, i.e., the Jerusalem temple and the Davidic monarchy. In times of crisis, when the earthly means were not available, Israel's religion was nourished by faith in the heavenly sanctuary and the divine king. The sanctuary cult was able to survive and continue to influence the people because of its heavenly dimension. The creative aspect of faith in the heavenly sanctuary seems to have been decisive for keeping alive the eschatological hope of the new temple and the new king because it provided a spiritual bridge between the past and the future temples. The present arrangement of the Psalter appears to direct a reading of the whole collection that encourages dependence on the heavenly sanctuary and the divine king even when the fortunes of Israel are restored.

In the light of this study it seems plausible to conclude that the relationship between the sanctuary cult and personal piety in the Psalms is three-dimensional, i.e., it can be described in terms of the creative power of cult, the heavenly dimension of the sanctuary and the eschatological context of torah piety. These three dimensions of the interaction between the sanctuary cult and the piety of the psalmists seem to be intermingled and interrelated in the Psalms.

6.4 Implications for the Cultic Approach

In addition, this study has taken an approach which has some potential to advance the cultic approach. One of the shortcomings of cultic approaches seems to be their failure to adequately appreciate the question of Gunkel: are the Psalms in present form cultic, or do they merely draw from cultic forms and language? Cultic approaches seem to have arbitrarily taken the present psalms as the actual liturgies. However, even those who take the present psalms as non-cultic seem to have done so arbitrarily. Modern psalmic studies have been brought back, albeit by a different path, to Gunkel's question, even though they largely neglect cultic approaches (Creach, 2005:137). It seems that Gunkel's question is still relevant and requires further study.

This study has largely evaded the question by suggesting that a psalm is regarded as cultic not only in cases when it was composed for or used in cultic ceremonies, but also in cases when it reflects a piety that is closely related to cult. The question whether the Psalms in their present form are cultic or whether they merely draw from cultic poetic style seems to be less determinative for the study of the relationship between the sanctuary cult and the piety of the psalmists when the creative aspect of cult is understood as the vital link between cult and piety. Thus the relevance of the sanctuary cult in the Psalms is viewed here not only through the possible presence of actual liturgies, which is the method largely utilized by cultic approaches, but also through the effects of cult, i.e., piety.

The creative aspect of cult seems to provide an explanation about how the cultic elements and piety complement each other in the Psalms. The sanctuary cult had “a vitalizing function” intended to develop a mutual relationship between God and humanity as the God-given channel of his grace. The role of the sanctuary cult was not only to provide an environment where the people could respond to God in worship, but also to create and nourish that response. Thus it seems plausible to regard the cultic elements in the Psalms as a reflection of piety that was closely related to cult, instead of attributing them exclusively to a cultic origin. It appears that the present psalms are cultic, but not in Gunkel’s and Mowinckel’s terms. They can be viewed as cultic because they reflect a piety that is closely related to cult. The evidence in the Psalms appears to imply that cult has to be viewed in its dual character, i.e., earthly and heavenly, in order to provide a comprehensive picture of the piety of the psalmists. In this view the cultic elements represent neither a burden for the study of the Psalms as the leftovers of the old-fashioned cultic style nor constitutive evidence that allows a reconstruction of actual liturgies.

6.5 Implications for the Shape of the Psalter

This study has demonstrated that the sanctuary motif plays a significant role for the shape of the Psalter. Chapter 3 has produced the following three items of evidence for the possible shaping of the Psalter around the sanctuary motif:

1) The sanctuary motif appears to play a significant role in the opening psalms of the Psalter (Pss. 1 and 2) as well as in the opening psalms of each of the five books of the Psalter (Pss. 3; 42; 43; 73; 74; 90-99; 107; 108). A number of linguistic and thematic parallels between Psalms 1, 2, 73, 74 and the concluding psalms of the Psalter suggest that these psalms and their parallel motifs have played a significant role in the shaping of the Psalter.

Psalms 1 and 2 tell of a secure world of justice and prosperity for those who abide in Zion. A crisis of faith occurs when the world does not seem to be in harmony with what Psalms 1 and 2 claim. In the general plan of the Psalter the chief crisis seems to take place in the middle of the Psalter, i.e., in Psalms 73 and 74. In both Psalms 73 and 74 the sanctuary emerges as the place where the conflict and the solution reach their peak (Pss. 73:17; 74:3-8). Psalms 90-99 provide a kind of “answer” by promoting the divine aspects of Israel’s religion, i.e., the heavenly sanctuary and the divine king. The parallels between Psalms 1 and 2 and the concluding psalms of the Psalter seem to imply that the concluding psalms reaffirm the secure world of Psalms 1 and 2 prophetically by promoting eschatological hope in the final victory of the Lord.

2) The sanctuary is one of the important themes that have been suggested as the possible centre for the shaping of the Psalter. This study has confirmed in broad strokes Wilson’s suggestions that the royal psalms were intentionally placed at the seams of Books I, II and III to depict the decline of the Davidic monarchy and that Books IV and V, especially Psalms 93-99, provide an answer to that situation by promoting the direct rule and eternal reign of the divine king (Wilson, 1986:89,90; Wilson, 1992:132,133).

It appears that the sanctuary plays an important role in this narrative of the Davidic monarchy in the Psalter. The king’s strength and superiority over his enemies comes from the fact that he is firmly grounded on Zion, God’s sanctuary (Ps. 2). The crisis of Davidic kingship in Psalm 89 has much to do with the king’s departure from God and his sanctuary. The hope in the divine king in Psalms 93-99 seems to renew the devotion to God’s sanctuary. This seems evident from the description of God in the sanctuary and numerous references to worship in the sanctuary in Psalms 93-99. After Israel repents and renews her alliance to God (Ps. 94), God is ready to re-establish the Davidic

king. Psalm 110 reintroduces the Davidic king in a way that is reminiscent of Psalm 2 in depicting Zion as the source and the guarantor of the king's strength and longevity. Certain striking parallels between Psalms 89 and 144 may point to a reversal in the fate of the Davidic kingship. Psalm 149 seems to echo Psalm 2 as it describes the people of Zion rejoicing in their king. Psalm 150 closes the Psalter with praises that come from the sanctuary and include the whole universe.

Chapter 3 of this study also relates to the work of other scholars (Mays, Creach, Futato, McCann and Brueggemann) in that it helps to define further the suggested themes which guided the shaping of the Psalter in their close relationship to the sanctuary cult.

3) There seems to be a narrative in the Psalter that depicts a spiritual journey of orientation-disorientation-reorientation. This journey is characterized by the move from trusting in the traditional institutions of Israel's religion, i.e., the Jerusalem sanctuary and the Davidic monarchy, to trusting in the divine king and the heavenly sanctuary. The shape of the Psalter promotes the eschatological hope in the new temple and the new Davidic king.

However, conclusions about the significance of the sanctuary motif for the shape of the Psalter must be tentative and certainly require further study.

6.6 Suggestions for Further Research

Despite its contributions to the study of the Psalms this investigation of the relationship between the sanctuary cult and the piety of the psalmists has mentioned a number of issues that could not be treated because of the limitations of scope and space. Three issues seem to have potential for further fruitful research.

Firstly, there seems to be a need for a more detailed assessment of the significance of the heavenly sanctuary for Israel's religion, particularly in the Psalms, and its implications for modern believers.

Secondly, the possible parallels between the sanctuary cult and the piety of the psalmists, and between the sanctuary cult and the piety of the prophets,

requires further investigation. This preliminary study of the eschatological hopes in the Psalter seems to indicate that such an endeavour would be fruitful.

Thirdly, the creative aspect of cult and its significance for modern Christian liturgies deserves further study. This could also be applied to certain Protestant traditions which appear to undervalue liturgy.

The significance of the Psalms for modern liturgies and for formation of the piety of the present readers of the Psalms could be investigated. This study has briefly referred to modern discussions about the liturgical power of the Psalms. It appears that the Psalms exercise the creative ability to shape and nourish the piety of believers, in a similar way that was observed in the creative power of cult. Two questions come to mind: Does the liturgical power of the Psalms imply that they have power to create or impress the piety of the psalmists in the believers who regularly use them as their prayer-book and hymnal? What is the significance of the eschatological expectations and the hope in the heavenly sanctuary that are promoted in the Psalms for modern believers?

The study of these three issues will hopefully contribute to a greater appreciation of the value of both cult and the Psalms for nourishing personal piety and inspire further studies of the significance of the sanctuary cult in relation to personal piety in Scripture.

7.0 BIBLIOGRAPHY

- ANDERSON, B.W. 2000. *Out of the depths: the psalms speak for us today*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press. 3rd ed. 249 p.
- ALTER, R. 1985. *The art of biblical poetry*. New York, NY: Basic Books INC. Publishers. 228 p.
- _____. 2007. *The Book of Psalms: a translation with commentary*. New York, NY: W. W. Norton & Company. 518 p.
- ALLEN, L.C. 1982. Psalm 73: an analysis. *Tyndale Bulletin* 33:93-118, January.
- _____. 1997a. הלל. In VanGemeren, W.A., ed. *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*, vol. 1. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. pp. 1035-1038.
- _____. 1997b. Psalm 73: pilgrimage from doubt to faith. *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 7:1-9, January.
- _____. 2002. *Psalms 101-150*. Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 21. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, Inc. 423 p.
- AVERBECK, R.E. 1997. זכה. In VanGemeren, W.A., ed. *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*, vol. 1. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. pp. 1098-1100.
- _____. 2003. Sacrifices and offerings. In Alexander T.D & Baker, D.W., eds. *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch*. Downers Grove, IL/ Leicester, England: InterVarsity Press. pp. 706-733.
- BEALE, G.K. 2004. *The temple and the church's mission: a biblical theology of the dwelling place of God*. New Studies in Biblical Theology 17. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press. 458 p.
- BELLINGER, W.H. Jr. 2001. The Psalms as a place to begin for Old Testament theology. In Reid, S.B., ed. *Psalms and practice: worship, virtue, and authority*. Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press. pp. 28-39.
- BERLIN, A. 2008. Interpreting torah traditions in Psalm 105. In Natalie B.D. & David S., eds. *Jewish biblical interpretation and cultural exchange: comparative exegesis in context*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press. pp. 20-36.
- BLENKINSOPP, J. 1997. The family in first temple Israel. In Browning, D.S. & Evison, I.S., eds. *Families in ancient Israel: the family, religion, and culture*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press. pp. 48-103.
- BOADT, L. 2004. The use of "panels" in the structure of Psalms 73-78. *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 39(2):533-550, October.

- BOSMA, C.J. 2008. Discerning the voices in the Psalms: a discussion of two problems in psalmic interpretation. *Calvin Theological Journal* 43(2):183 – 212.
- BOSMAN, H.L. 1997. מוֹעֵד. In VanGemeren, W.A., ed. *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*, vol. 2. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. pp. 871-873.
- BOTTERWECK, G.J., 1986. חֶפְצֵי. In Botterweck, G.J., & Ringgren, H., eds. *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, vol. 5. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. pp. 92-107.
- BLOESCH, DG. 1994. *Holy Scripture: revelation, inspiration & interpretation*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press. 384 pp.
- BRATCHER, R.G. and Reyburn, W.D. 1991. *A handbook on Psalms*. New York, NY: United Bible Societies. 1219 p.
- BROWN F., DRIVER S., & BRIGGS C. 1996. *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers. 1185 p.
- BROWN, M.L. 1997. בִּרְךְ. In VanGemeren, W.A., ed. *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*, vol. 1. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. pp. 757-767.
- BROWN, W.P. 2002. *Seeing the Psalms: a theology of metaphor*. Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press. 274 p.
- BROYLES, C.C. 2005. The Psalms and cult symbolism: the case of the cherubim-ark. In D. Firth, D., & Johnston, P. S., eds. *Interpreting the psalms: issues and approaches*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic. pp. 139-156.
- BRUEGGEMANN, W. 1980. Psalms and the life of faith: a suggested typology of function. *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 17: 3-32, June.
- _____. 1984. *The message of the Psalms: a theological commentary*. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House. 206 p.
- _____. 1988. *Israel's praise: doxology against idolatry and ideology*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press. 196 p.
- _____. 1991a. *Abiding astonishment: psalms, modernity, and the making of history*. Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster/John Knox Press. 94 p.
- _____. 1991b. Bounded by obedience and praise: the psalms as canon. *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 50:63-92, June.
- _____. 1995. *The Psalms and the life of faith*. Minneapolis, Minnesota: Fortress Press. 292 p.

- _____ & Miller, P.D. 1996. Psalm 73 as canonical marker. *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 72(D):45-56, December.
- _____. 1997. *Theology of the Old Testament: testimony, dispute, advocacy*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press. 777 p.
- _____. 2007. *Praying the Psalms: engaging Scripture and the life of the Spirit*. 2nd ed. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books. 97 p.
- BUTLER, T.C. 1984. Piety in the Psalms. *Review and Expositor* LXXXI(3):385-394, summer.
- CAZELLES. 1974. אֲשֵׁרִי. In Botterweck, G.J., & Ringgren, H., eds. *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, vol. 1. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. pp. 445-448.
- CHILDS, B.S. 1979. *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture*. London, Great Britain: SCM Press Ltd. 688 p.
- CLAYTON, J.N. 2006. An examination of holy space in Psalm 73: is wisdom's path infused with an eschatologically oriented hope? *Trinity Journal* 27(1):117-142, Spring.
- COLLINS, C.J. 1997a. הוֹד. In VanGemeren, W.A., ed. *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*, vol. 2. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. pp. 1016-1017.
- _____. 1997b. כְּבוֹד. In VanGemeren, W.A., ed. *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*, vol. 2. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. pp. 577-587.
- _____. 1997c. פֶּאֶר. In VanGemeren, W.A., ed. *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*, vol. 3. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. pp. 572-574.
- CRAIGIE, P.C. 1983. *Psalms 1-150*. Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 19. Waco, TX: Word Books. 375 p.
- CRAVEN, T. 1992. *The book of Psalms*. Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press. 172 p.
- CREACH, J.F.D. 1996a. Yahweh as refuge and the editing of the Hebrew Psalter. *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series* 217. Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press. 156 p.
- _____. 1996b. Psalm 121. *Interpretation* 50(1):47-51, January.
- _____. 1999. Like a tree planted by the temple stream: the portrait of the righteous in Psalm 1:3. *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, 61(1):34-46, January.
- _____. 2005. The Psalms and the cult. In Firth, D. & Johnston P.S., eds. *Interpreting the Psalms: issues and approaches*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic. pp. 119-137.

- _____. 2008. Cult, worship: Psalms. *In* Longman, T. III & Enns, P. eds. *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Wisdom, Poetry, & Writings*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press. pp. 71-78.
- _____. 2011. The destiny of the righteous and the theology of the psalms. *In* Jacobson, R.A., ed. *Soundings in the theology of Psalms: perspectives and methods in contemporary scholarship*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press. pp. 49-61.
- CRENSHAW, J.L. 2001. *The Psalms: an introduction*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company. 187 p.
- CULVER, R.D. 1980. ראה. *In* Harris, R.L., ed. *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, vol. 2. Chicago, IL: The Moody Bible Institute of Chicago. pp. 823-825.
- DAHOOB, M.S.J. 1966. *Psalms I: 1-50*. The Anchor Bible, vol. 16. Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company. 323 p.
- _____. 1968. *Psalms II: 51-100*. The Anchor Bible, vol. 17. Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company. 399 p.
- DAVIDSON, B. 1970. *The Analytical Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House. 784 p.
- DAVIDSON, R. 1998. *The Vitality of worship: a commentary on the Book of Psalms*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company. 484 p.
- DAVIS, E. 1992. The psalms in Hebrew medical amulets. *Vetus Testamentum* 42(2):173-178, April.
- DAY, J. 1995. *Psalms*. Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press. 159 p.
- DECLAISSE-WALFORD, N.L. 2012. Psalm 145: all flesh will bless God's holy name. *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 74 (1):55-66, January.
- DIAMOND, A.R.P. 1997. ספר. *In* VanGemeren, W.A., ed. *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*, vol. 3. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. pp. 283-285.
- DOUKHAN, J. 1993. *Hebrew for theologians: a textbook for the study of biblical Hebrew in relation to Hebrew thinking*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America. 245 p.
- DRIJVERS, P. 1965. *The Psalms: their structure and meaning*. London: Burns & Oats. 269 p.
- DURHAM, J.I. 1984. The king as "messiah" in the Psalter. *Review and Expositor* LXXXI(3):425-436, summer.
- EATON, J.H. 1975. *Kingship and the Psalms*. Naperville, IL: Alec R. Allenson Inc. 227 p.

- ENDRES, J.C.S.J. 2001. Praying the Psalms: a school of prayer. *In* Reid, S.B., ed. *Psalms and practice: worship, virtue, and authority*. Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press. pp. 62-77.
- ERICKSON, M.J. 1996. *Christian theology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House. 1302 p.
- FRETHEIM, T.E. 1997. רצה. *In* VanGemeren, W.A., ed. *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*, vol. 3. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. pp. 1185-1186.
- FUTATO, M.D. 2007. *Interpreting the Psalms: an exegetical handbook*. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications. 234 p.
- GANE, R.E. 1992. "Bread of the presence" and creator-in-residence. *Vetus Testamentum* 42(2):179-203.
- GERSTENBERGER, E.S. 1988. *Psalms part 1: with an introduction to cultic poetry*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company. 260 p.
- GOLDINGAY, J. 2007. *Psalms, vol. 2*. *In* Longman T. III, ed. *Baker Commentary on the Old Testament: Wisdom and Psalms*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic. 744 p.
- GOLDMAN, A.L. 2000. *Being Jewish: the spiritual and cultural practice of Judaism today*. New York, NY: Simon & Shuster Paperbacks. 288 p.
- GOULDER, M.D. 1996. *The Psalms of Asaph and the Pentateuch: studies in the Psalter, III*. *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series* 233. Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press. 379 p.
- GRANT, J.A. 2005. *The Psalms and the king*. *In* Firth, D., & Johnston, P.S., eds. *Interpreting the Psalms: issues and approaches*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic. pp. 101-118.
- GREEN, B. 1997. *Like a tree planted: an exploration of Psalms and parables through metaphor*. Collegeville, MN: Michael Glazier. 160 p.
- GRISANTI, M.A. 1997. אשר. *In* VanGemeren, W.A., ed. *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*, vol. 1. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. pp. 568-569.
- _____. 1997. גיל. *In* VanGemeren, W.A., ed. *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*, vol. 1. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. pp. 854-857.
- GROGAN, G.W. 1998. *The Old Testament concept of solidarity in Hebrews*. *Tyndale Bulletin* 49(1): 159-173, May.
- GUARDINI, R. 1968. *The wisdom of the Psalms*. Chicago, IL: Henry Regnery Company. 168 p.

- GUNKEL, H. 1998. Introduction to the Psalms: the genres of the religious lyrics of Israel. Macon, GA: Mercer University Press. 388 p.
- _____. 1928. What remains of the Old Testament and other essays. New York, NY: The Macmillan Company. 187 p.
- HAMILTON, V.P. 1980a. אשר. *In* Harris, R.L., ed. Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, vol. 1. Chicago, IL: The Moody Bible Institute of Chicago. pp. 80-82.
- _____. 1980b. שִׁכָן. *In* Harris, R.L., ed. Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, vol. 2. Chicago, IL: The Moody Bible Institute of Chicago. pp. 925-926.
- HARTLEY, J.E. 2003. Holy and holiness, clean and unclean. *In* Alexander T.D & Baker, D.W., eds. Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch. Downers Grove, IL/ Leicester, England: InterVarsity Press. pp. 420-431.
- HAYES, J.H. 1979. An introduction to Old Testament study. Nashville, TN: Abingdon. 400 p.
- HILL, A.E. 1997. סֵתֵר. *In* VanGemeren, W.A., ed. New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis, vol. 3. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. pp. 301-303.
- HUSTAD, D.P. 1984. The Psalms as Worship Expression: Personal and Congregational. *Review and Expositor* LXXXI(3):425-436, summer.
- JACOBSON, R. 2001. Burning our lamps with borrowed oil: the liturgical use of the Psalms and the life of faith. *In* Reid, S.B., ed. Psalms and practice: worship, virtue, and authority. Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press. pp. 90-98.
- _____. 2011. "The faithfulness of the Lord endures forever": the theological witness of the Psalter. *In* Jacobson, R., ed. Soundings in the theology of psalms: perspectives and methods in contemporary scholarship. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press. pp. 111-137.
- JOHNSON, A.R. 1979. The cultic prophet and Israel's psalmody. Cardiff, Great Britain: University of Wales Press. 467 p.
- JOYCE, P. 1989. Divine initiative and human response in Ezekiel. *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Series*, 51. Sheffield: Academic Press. 183 p.
- KEEL, O. 1978. The Symbolism of the biblical world: Ancient Near Eastern iconography and the Book of Psalms. New York, NY: The Seabury Press. 422 p.
- KIM, J. 2008. The strategic arrangement of royal psalms in books IV-V. *Westminster Theological Journal* 70(1):143-157, Spring.

- KLINGBEIL, M.G. 2008. Psalms 5: iconography. *In* Longman T.III & Enns, P. eds. *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Wisdom, Poetry & Writings*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic. pp. 621-631.
- KNIERIM, R. 1973. Old Testament form criticism reconsidered. *Interpretation* 27:435-468.
- KNIGHT, D. A. 2006. *Rediscovering the traditions of Israel*. Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature. 360 p.
- KOESTER, C.R. 1989. *The dwelling of God: the tabernacle in the Old Testament, Intertestamental Jewish literature, and the New Testament*. Washington, DC: The Catholic Biblical Association of America. 228 p.
- KONKEL, A. 1991. The sacrifice of obedience. *Didaskalia* 2(2):2-11, April.
- _____. 1997. דָּמָה. *In* VanGemeren, W.A., ed. *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*, vol. 1. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. pp. 967-970.
- KRAUS, H.J. 1992. *Theology of the Psalms*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press. 235 p.
- LATTEY, C. 1951. Vicarious solidarity in the Old Testament. *Vetus Testamentum* 1(4):267-274, October.
- LaRONDELLE, H.K. 1983. *Deliverance in the psalms: messages of hope for today*. Berrien Springs, MI: First Impressions. 210 p.
- LeFEBVRE, M. 2005. Torah-meditation and the Psalms: the invitation of Psalm 1. *In* Firth, D. & Johnston, P.S., eds. *Interpreting the Psalms: issues and approaches*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic. pp. 213-225.
- LEUPOLD, H.C. 1977. *Exposition of the Psalms*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House. 1010 p.
- LEWIS, C.S. 1958. *Reflections on the Psalms*. New York and London: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. 151 p.
- LONGMAN, T, III. 1984. Psalm 98: a divine warrior victory song. *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 27 (3):267-274, September.
- _____. 1988. *How to read the Psalms*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press. 166 p.
- _____. 2005. The Psalms and Ancient Near Eastern prayer genres. *In* Firth, D. & Johnston, P.S., eds. *Interpreting the Psalms: issues and approaches*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic. pp. 41-59.
- MANN, T.W. 1988. *The Book of the torah: the narrative integrity of the Pentateuch*. Atlanta, GA: John Know Press. 180 p.

- MATTHEWS, V.H. 2003. Family Relationships. *In* Alexander, T.D. & Baker, D.V., eds. *Dictionary of the Old Testament Pentateuch*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press. pp. 291-299.
- MAYS, J.L. 1987. The place of the Torah-Psalms in the Psalter. *Journal of Biblical Literature* 106(1):3-12.
- _____. 1994a. *Psalms: a Bible commentary for teaching and preaching*. Louisville, KY: John Knox Press. 457 p.
- _____. 1994b. *The Lord reigns: a theological handbook to the Psalms*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press. 159 p.
- McCANN, J.C., Jr. 1993. *A theological introduction to the Book of Psalms: the Psalms as torah*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press. 204 p.
- _____. 2009. Psalms. *In* Vanhoozer, K.J., ed. *Theological interpretation of the Old Testament: a book-by-book survey*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic. pp. 157-170.
- _____. 2011. The single most important text in the entire Bible: toward a theology of the psalms. *In* Jacobson, R.A., ed. *Soundings in the theology of Psalms: perspectives and methods in contemporary scholarship*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press. pp. 63-75.
- McCARTER, P.K. 1973. The river ordeal in Israelite literature. *Harvard Theological Review* 66(4):403-412, October.
- MEIER, S.A. 1997. נָעַם. *In* VanGemeren, W.A., ed. *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*, vol. 3. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. pp. 121-123.
- MERRILL, E.H. 1997. אֲשֶׁר. *In* VanGemeren, W.A., ed. *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*, vol. 1. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. pp. 567-568.
- MEYERS, C. 1997. The family in early Israel. *In* Browning, D.S. & Evison, I.S., eds. *Families in ancient Israel: the family, religion, and culture*. Louisville, KY: Westminster, John Knox Press. pp. 1-47.
- MILGROM, J. 1996. Interview. *Shabbath Shalom* 40(1):4-7, April.
- MILLER, P.D. 1983. Trouble and woe: interpreting the biblical laments. *Interpretation* 37(1):32-45, January.
- _____. 1986. *Interpreting the Psalms*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press. 165 p.
- MITCHELL, D.C. 2006. Lord, remember David: G.H. Wilson and the message of the Psalter. *Vetus Testamentum* 56 (4):526-548.
- MOWINCKEL, S. 2004. *The Psalms in Israel's worship*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company. 303 p.

- MURPHY, R.E. 1980. The faith of the psalmist. *Interpretation*34(3):229-239, July.
- NASUTI, H.P. 1999. Defining the sacred songs: genre, tradition and post-critical interpretation of the Psalms. Sheffield:Continuum International Publishing Group. 231 p.
- _____. 2001. The sacramental function of the Psalms in contemporary scholarship and liturgical practice. In Reid, S.B., ed. *Psalms and practice: worship, virtue, and authority*. Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press. pp. 78-89.
- NAUDE, J.A. 1997a. הַזֶּה. In VanGemeeren, W.A., ed. *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*, vol. 2. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. pp. 56-61.
- _____. 1997b. קִדְּשׁ. In VanGemeeren, W.A., ed. *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*, vol. 3. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. pp. 877-887.
- OESTERLEY, W.O.E. 1962. The Psalms: translated with text-critical and exegetical notes. London: S.P.C.K. 599 p.
- OLIVIER, J.P.J. 1997. תַּנְמֵם. In VanGemeeren, W.A., ed. *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*, vol. 4. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. pp. 306-308.
- OSWALT, J.N. 1980. בִּרְךְ. In Harris, R.L., ed. *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, vol. 1. Chicago, IL: The Moody Bible Institute of Chicago. pp. 132-133.
- _____. 1996. Tabernacle. In Elwell, W.A., ed. *Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books. pp. 755-757.
- PETERSEN, D.L. & RICHARDS, K.H. 1992. *Interpreting Hebrew poetry*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press. 117 p.
- PLEINS, J.D. 1993. *The Psalms: songs of tragedy, hope, and justice*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books. 229 p.
- PORTER, J.R. 1965. Legal aspects of the concept of corporate personality in the Old Testament. *Vetus Testamentum* 15(3):361-380, July.
- PRICE, J.D. 1997. עֲדָן. In VanGemeeren, W.A., ed. *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*, vol. 3. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. pp. 329-330.
- REID, S.B. 2001. Power and practice: performative speech and piety in Psalm 132. In Reid, S.B., ed. *Psalms and practice: worship, virtue, and authority*. Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press. pp. 40-51.
- RINGGREN, H. 1963. *The faith of the psalmists*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press. 138 p.

- RICHARDS, K.H. 1992. Bless/blessing. *In* Freedman, D.N., ed. *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, vol. 1. New York, NY: Doubleday. pp. 753-755.
- ROBERTS, K.L. 2001. My tongue will sing aloud of your deliverance: praise and sacrifice in the Psalms. *In* Reid, S.B., ed. *Psalms and practice: worship, virtue, and authority*. Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press. pp. 99-110.
- RODRIGUEZ, A.M. 2000. The sanctuary. *In* Dederen, R. & Reid, G.W., eds. *Handbook of Seventh-day Adventist theology*. Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association. pp. 375-417.
- ROGERSON, J.W. 1992. Corporate personality. *In* Freedman, D.N., ed. *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, vol. 1. New York, NY: Doubleday. pp. 1156-1157.
- ROWLEY, H.H. 1956. Individual and community in the Old Testament. *Theology Today* 12(4):491-510, January.
- SABOURIN, L. S. J. 1974. *The Psalms: their origin and meaning*. New York: Alba House. 450 p.
- SARNA, N.M. 1993. *Songs of the heart: an introduction to the Book of Psalms*. New York: Schocken Books Inc. 298 p.
- SELMAN, M.J. 2003. Law. *In* Alexander T.D & Baker, D.W., eds. *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch*. Downers Grove, IL/ Leicester, England: InterVarsity Press. pp. 497-515.
- SEYBOLD, K. 1997. *Introducing the psalms*. Edinburgh, Scotland: T&T Clark. 260 p.
- SMITH, M.S. 1988. "Seeing God" in the psalms: the background to the beatific vision in the Hebrew Bible. *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 50(2):171-183, April.
- SMITH, T.L. 1974. A crisis in faith: an exegesis of Psalm 73. *Restoration Quarterly* 17(3):162-184.
- STRAWN, B.A. 2008. Imagery. *In* Longman T.III & Enns, P. eds. *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Wisdom, Poetry & Writings*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic. pp. 306-314.
- TALLEY, D. 1997a. חמד. *In* VanGemeren, W.A., ed. *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*, vol. 2. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. pp. 167-169.
- _____. 1997b. חפץ. *In* VanGemeren, W.A., ed. *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*, vol. 2. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. pp. 231-234.

- _____. 1997c. תשח. *In* VanGemeren, W.A., ed. *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*, vol. 2. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. pp. 318-319.
- TANNER, B. 2011. Rethinking the enterprise: what must be considered in formulating a theology of the psalms. *In* Jacobson, R.A., ed. *Sounding in the theology of psalms: perspectives and methods in contemporary scholarship*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press. pp. 139-150.
- TATE, M.E. 1990. *Psalms 51-100*. Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 20. Dallas, TX: Word Books. 578 p.
- TERRIEN, S. 1952. *The Psalms and their meaning for today*. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company. 278 p.
- _____. 2003. *The Psalms: strophic structure and theological commentary*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company. 971 p.
- VAN BEECK, F.J. 1992. Israel's God, the psalms, and the city of Jerusalem: life experience and the sacrifice of praise and prayer. *Horizons* 19(2):219-239, Fall.
- VAN DER TOORN, K. 1992. Ordeal. *In* Freedman, D.N., ed. *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, vol. 5. New York, NY: Doubleday. pp. 40-42.
- VAN LEEUWEN, R.C. 1997. Form, image. *In* VanGemeren, W.A., ed. *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*, vol. 4. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. pp. 643-648.
- VAN PELT, M.V. & KAISER, C. Jr. 1997. הגה. *In* VanGemeren, W.A., ed. *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*, vol. 1. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. pp. 1006-1008.
- WALLACE, R.E. 2011. The narrative effect of Psalms 84-89. *The Journal of Hebrew Scripture* 11(10):2-15.
- WATSON, W.G.E. 2006. *Classical Hebrew poetry: a guide to its techniques*. London and New York, NY: T&T Clark International. 460 p.
- WEISER, A. 1962. *The Psalms: a commentary*. London: SCM Press. 841 p.
- WENDLAND, E.R. 1994. Continuity and discontinuity in Hebrew poetic design: patterns and points of significance in the structure and setting of Psalm 30. *In* Wendland, E.R., ed. *Discourse perspectives on Hebrew poetry in the Scripture*. UBS Monograph Series, No. 7. New York, NY: United Bible Societies. pp. 28-66.
- WESTERMANN, C. 1974. The role of lament in the theology of the Old Testament. *Interpretation* 28(1):20-38, January.
- _____. 1980. *The Psalms: structure, content, and message*. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House. 128 p.

- _____. 1981. Praise and lament in the Psalms. Atlanta, GE: John Knox Press. 301 p.
- WEVER, J.W. 1956. Study in the form criticism of individual complaint psalms. *Vetus Testamentum* 6(1):80-96, January.
- WILLIAMS, W.C. 1996. Family life and relationships. In Elwell W.A., ed. *Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology*. pp. 243-245.
- _____. 1997. בָּרַךְ. In VanGemeren, W.A., ed. *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*, vol. 1. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. pp. 755-757.
- WILSON, G.H. 1986. The use of the royal Psalms at the 'seams' of the Hebrew Psalter. *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 35:85-94.
- _____. 1997. שָׁכַן. In VanGemeren, W.A., ed. *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*, vol. 4. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. pp. 109-111.
- WILSON, M.R. 1980. נָעַם. In Harris, R.L., ed. *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, vol. 2. Chicago, IL: The Moody Bible Institute of Chicago. pp. 585.
- _____. 1992. The Shape of the Book of Psalms. *Interpretation* 46:129-142.
- _____. 2005. The structure of the Psalter. In D. Firth, D., & Johnston, P. S., eds. *Interpreting the Psalms: issues and approaches*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic. pp. 229-246.
- WILSON, M.R. 1989. Our father Abraham: Jewish roots of Christian faith. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company. 374 p.
- WILSON, W. 1900. *Wilson's Old testament word studies*. McLean, VA: Mac Donald Publishing Co. 566 p.
- WHYBRAY, N. 1996. Reading the psalms as a book. *Journal of Semitic Studies Supplement Series* 222. Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press. 137 p.
- WOOD, L.J. 1980. זִיָּד. In Harris, R.L., ed. *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, vol. 1. Chicago, IL: The Moody Bible Institute of Chicago. pp. 239-240.
- WRIGHT, C.J.H. 1997. נָחַל. In VanGemeren, W.A., ed. *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*, vol. 3. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. pp. 77-81.