The Council of Dispensational Hermeneutics
The Literal and Consistent Use of the Messianic Psalms in the New Testament
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Abstract

Contemporary evangelical debates over eschatological views of Israel's future often turn on whether the New Testament preserves or reinterprets the Old Testament's promises concerning Israel and her Messiah. Because the Psalms is the most cited Old Testament book in the New Testament, it provides a strategic test case for evaluating this question. This study argues that the New Testament authors' consistent use of the messianic psalms is best explained by the fact that the Psalter had already integrated the messianic promises found in Genesis, Hannah's Song, and the Davidic covenant into a coherent, intra-canonical royal-messianic framework. Consequently, the New Testament recognizes and applies this framework rather than creating a new one or redefining Israel's royal promises.

Methodologically, the study employs a linguistic, literary, and intertextual analysis consistent with the literal-grammatical-historical method. As opposed to a thematic approach, this paper deliberately identifies linguistic and structural features in the Psalter as the foundation for evaluating the recurrence of messianic themes. In this way, the message of the Psalter is observed as one that is at its core about Israel's promised Messiah will one day rule in a restored Israel and over the nations.

This paper argues that the intentional arrangement of the Psalter, the programmatic role of Psalms 1–2, the placement of key royal psalms at strategic literary seams, and their development of earlier messianic revelation establish a unified messianic expectation within the Hebrew Scriptures. Particular attention is given to Psalms 2, 72, 89, and 110 and to their relationship with Jacob's blessing of Judah in Genesis 49:8–12, Hannah's Song in 1 Samuel 2:1–10, and the Davidic covenant in 2 Samuel 7.

The study concludes that the New Testament's application of these psalms to Jesus' birth, suffering, resurrection, exaltation, and future reign is consistent with the Psalter's own intra-canonical framework and message. Rather than spiritualizing or redefining Israel's promises of a future kingdom under the Messiah, the New Testament identifies Jesus as the promised Davidic Messiah whose present exaltation guarantees the future fulfillment of God's promises to Israel and the nations. In this way, the study demonstrates that the literal-grammatical-historical method operates consistently at the level of individual texts and also across the entire canonical trajectory from Genesis through the Psalter and the New Testament. Thus, re-interpretive hermeneutical models such as the so-called Christocentric hermeneutic are not necessary to see the Messiah in the Old Testament and intrinsically hinder the interpreter from discovering the author's intended linguistic and literary attempts to preserve faith in God's promises concerning the nation of Israel and her Messiah.

Introduction

Interpretations surrounding Israel's eschatological future turn on whether the New Testament presents continuity or discontinuity concerning promises given to Israel in the Old Testament. The Psalms provide a strategic test case because New Testament authors repeatedly appeal to them in identifying Jesus and explaining His suffering, resurrection, exaltation, and future reign. This study therefore asks: To what extent does the New Testament use the messianic psalms consistently with the Psalter's own messianic message? The question of messianic intentionality must first be addressed within the context of the Hebrew Scriptures.[1] This paper argues that the New Testament's consistent use of the messianic Psalms is best explained by the fact that the Psalter itself had already integrated earlier messianic revelation from Genesis, Hannah's Song, and the Davidic covenant into a coherent royal-messianic and intra-canonical framework.[2] The Psalter presents Israel's eschatological king as empowered by the LORD, opposed by the nations, ruling on David's throne, and destined to reign over the ends of the earth. These themes arise from the Psalter's own literary structure and its development of earlier revelation. The New Testament consequently recognizes and applies an already established framework rather than creating a new one or redefining Israel's royal promises. Interpreting the psalms by the New Testament's citations of them would neglect to recognize this authorial intended structure of the whole and thereby fail to interpret the book in accordance with the author's original intent.

The argument proceeds in three stages. First, it establishes the Psalter's coherent messianic structure. Second, it examines how that structure integrates earlier messianic revelation from Genesis 49, Hannah's Song, and the Davidic covenant. Third, it evaluates representative uses of the Psalms in the New Testament and argues that it applies the psalms to Jesus within this same canonical framework. Before developing this argument, the methodological assumptions guiding the study are detailed below.

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[1] Messianic intentionality refers to the reality of the authorial intent of the Old Testament authors to write about the deliverer first introduced in the Bible as the Promised Seed in Gen 3:15. As the Bible unfolds, Scripture reveals that the promised seed is Jesus of Nazareth, born of the virgin Mary, the Son of God incarnate. This paper reserves this term for the authorial intent of the author to write about the Messiah. If the author did not intend the passage to refer to the Messiah, it is not correctly messianic. See Walter C. Kaiser, The Messiah in the Old Testament, Studies in Old Testament Biblical Theology (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995); Desmond T. Alexander, "Messianic Ideology in the Book of Genesis," in The Lord's Anointed: Interpretation of Old Testament Messianic Texts, ed. Philip E. Satterthwaite, Richard S. Hess, and Gordon Wenham (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012), 19–39.

[2] The term "intra-canonical" refers here to the interpretation of a passage within the literary and theological framework of the biblical book or compositional corpus in which it occurs. This approach gives interpretive priority to the passage's immediate context and to the author's broader compositional strategy before moving to a cross-canonical synthesis of related themes elsewhere in Scripture. It considers both intertextual influences from earlier revelation and it examines how an author incorporates and develops such revelation within the structure and message of the book as a whole. For example, the Torah repeatedly brings the expectation of a future royal deliverer to prominence at strategic literary locations, including Genesis 49:8–12, Numbers 24:7–9, 17–19, and Deuteronomy 32:43. Although each passage contributes to its own immediate context, together they participate in the Torah's broader presentation of God's purposes for Israel and the coming Messiah. See John H. Sailhamer, *Introduction to Old Testament Theology: A Canonical Approach* (Zondervan, 1995); Seth D. Postell, "Messianism in Light of Literary Strategy," Bibliotheca Sacra 177, no. 707 (July–September 2020): 329–50.

Method and Hermeneutical Commitments

This study interprets each passage according to its grammatical and historical context while also examining identifiable lexical, syntactical, literary, thematic, and theological correspondences between earlier and later biblical texts. Although thematic correspondences do play a role in identifying the structure of the Psalter, they are first subordinated to the identification of lexical, syntactical, and structural correspondences. The purpose for this hierarchy is due to the ambiguous nature of "themes." To avoid a subjective study, this paper establishes the Psalter's structure in observable and defendable textual evidence rather than subjective themes. Such canonical development does not require alteration of an earlier text's original meaning. Rather, later texts may affirm, clarify, and amplify implications already present within earlier revelation.[3]

The study examines the final form of the Psalter while presupposing a traditional evangelical understanding of the authorship and integrity of the individual psalms. Observations concerning the Psalter's literary arrangement therefore do not depend upon speculative reconstructions involving redactional activity. Final-form relationships are considered insofar as they arise from observable features of the text, including superscriptions, literary placement, uniquely repeated vocabulary, structural correspondences, and coherent theological development.[4]

A challenge of intertextual studies is the subjective nature of identifying echoes and allusions.[5] Without restraints, studies can fall prey to parallelomania. Several intertextual principles frame the identification of allusions in this study. First, the identification of an intertextual relationship requires more than a general similarity of subject matter. Greater weight is given to the cumulative presence of several indicators: distinctive or repeated vocabulary, comparable grammatical or syntactical constructions, shared imagery, correspondence in literary context, and continuity of theological subject matter.[6] Identical verbal repetition may provide especially strong evidence, but synonymous language may also be significant when it occurs within a concentrated cluster of corresponding motifs. No single criterion necessarily proves literary dependence; the argument rests upon the cumulative strength of the evidence. These correspondences may reflect intentional placement, participation in a common theological tradition, or the intentional affirmation and amplification of earlier revelation.

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[3] Abner Chou, *The Hermeneutics of the Biblical Writers: Learning to Interpret Scripture from the Prophets and Apostles* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic, 2018), 39. Chou emphasizes the continuity of the biblical writers' hermeneutic and argues that later biblical authors develop prior revelation in accordance with the authorial logic already present in the earlier text.

[4] Brevard S. Childs, *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979); Gerald H. Wilson, *The Editing of the Hebrew Psalter*, SBL Dissertation Series 76 (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1985), 1, 4, 6–9, 155–60, 182, 186. Childs provides the broader rationale for attending to the canonical or final form of the biblical text, while Wilson identifies observable organizational features within the Psalter, including collections, literary boundaries, and the significance of its final arrangement.

[5] David Ryan Klingler, "Validity in the Identification and Interpretation of a Literary Allusion in the Hebrew Bible" (PhD diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 2010), 91–92.

[6] Klingler, "Validity in the Identification and Interpretation of a Literary Allusion," 91–92; Gary Edward Schnittjer and Matthew S. Harmon, *How to Study the Bible's Use of the Bible: Seven Hermeneutical Choices for the Old and New Testaments* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 2024), 59–60; Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 29–32; G. K. Beale, *Handbook on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament: Exegesis and Interpretation* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012), 32–34.

This methodological distinction is also important for evaluating the New Testament's use of the Psalms. Fulfillment may identify the person in whom a promise reaches its intended realization, but this fulfillment should not be assumed to entail the complete realizations of every detail associated with the promise. Fulfillment, also, does not redefine the original promise, transfer its referents, or cancel dimensions of the promise that remain unfulfilled.[7]

A contrasting hermeneutical approach is represented by George Eldon Ladd, who argues that "Jesus, and the apostles after him, reinterpreted the Old Testament prophecies in light of Jesus' person and mission."[8] Ladd appeals specifically to Peter's use of Psalm 110 in Acts 2, calling it "an amazing bit of reinterpretation of Old Testament prophecy" and arguing that Peter transfers David's throne from Jerusalem to heaven.

The study therefore evaluates both the Psalter's use of earlier Scripture and the New Testament's use of the Psalter according to the same fundamental question: whether the later text affirms and develops the earlier text's meaning or assigns it a different referent and theological content.

The Messianic Structure of the Psalter

The central claim of this study depends first upon establishing that the Psalter itself possesses a coherent messianic message. If the royal or messianic psalms merely function as isolated texts, then later canonical relationships carry little interpretive significance. If, however, these psalms occupy intentional literary positions and together advance a unified messianic expectation, then the Psalter already provides the interpretive framework within which the New Testament could later recognize and utilize.

Recent scholarly discussion of the Psalter's messianic message has been influenced especially by scholars Gerald Wilson, Robert L. Cole, and David C. Mitchell. Wilson provides literary and linguistic evidence that the Psalter's final form reflects an intentional compositional strategy, particularly at the major seams marked by Psalms 41, 72, 89, 106, and 150. Cole argues that the messianic king introduced in Psalms 1–2 remains central at these junctures and throughout the collection especially in Psalm 110. Mitchell further argues that these strategically placed royal psalms form an eschatological trajectory comparable to those found in Zechariah, Ezekiel, and Joel.[9] Seth D. Postell's compositional approach further strengthens this claim by arguing that messianic texts often occur at strategic literary seams within the macrostructures of Old Testament books.[10] On this basis, Postell concludes that the Messiah is "not a marginal topic, but central" to the compositional and literary strategy of the Hebrew Bible. In this way, the

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[7] Michael J. Vlach, The Old in the New: Understanding How the New Testament Authors Quoted the Old Testament (The Woodlands, TX: Kress Biblical Resources, 2021), 153–59, 165–66; Walter C. Kaiser Jr., "Single Meaning, Unified Referents," in Three Views on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament, ed. Kenneth Berding and Jonathan Lunde (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008), 63–65.

[8] George Eldon Ladd, *The Last Things: An Eschatology for Laymen* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), 17; see also his discussion of Ps 110:1–2 and Acts 2:30–36 in 7–18. Ladd argues that the Old Testament "must be interpreted (and often reinterpreted)" by the New Testament and describes Peter's use of Psalm 110 as "an amazing bit of reinterpretation of Old Testament prophecy."

[9] Gerald H. Wilson, The Editing of the Hebrew Psalter, SBL Dissertation Series 76 (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1985), 1, 4, 6–9, 155–60, 182, 186; Robert L. Cole, Psalms 1–2: Gateway to the Psalter, Hebrew Bible Monographs 37 (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2013), 46–47, 52–53, 79–80, 82–88; David C. Mitchell, The Message of the Psalter: An Eschatological Programme in the Book of Psalms, JSOTSup 252 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 82–87.

[10] Seth D. Postell, "Messianism in Light of Literary Strategy," Bibliotheca Sacra 177, no. 707 (July–September 2020): 329–32, 350.

promises of Israel and her Messiah in the occurring in the seams of the Psalter suggests that these two complementary themes are central to the Psalter.

Together, these studies indicate that the Psalter is not merely an anthology of individual compositions but a deliberately ordered book with a coherent royal-messianic message. The possible intertextual influence of earlier messianic prophecies upon this framework, however, remains insufficiently explored, especially in Psalter studies. Walter C. Kaiser Jr. briefly suggests that Hannah's reference to the LORD's king and anointed in 1 Samuel 2:10 may provide a theological foundation for David as he penned psalms such as Psalms 2 and 110.[11] Kaiser's suggestion is developed in this study, especially as it observes the combined recurrence of מֶלֶךְ "king," מְשִׁיחַ "his anointed," and אַפְסֵי־אָרֶץ "the ends of the earth" within the same royal and eschatological context in 1 Samuel 2:10 and Psalm 2:2, 6, 8.

The following discussion first summarizes the evidence for the Psalter's intentional composition and then examines how its major royal psalms integrate earlier messianic revelation from the Torah and 1–2 Samuel into a coherent intra-canonical framework.

Evidence for the Psalter's Intentional Composition

Wilson's final-form approach marked an important shift from interpretations that treated the psalms in isolation. His analysis treats the Psalter as a deliberately shaped literary collection and that this arrangement contributes to the meaning of the whole composition. This framework allows for the royal and messianic psalms to be interpreted not only individually but also in relation to one another and in the context of their strategic literary placement.[12] Although some final-form or canonical approaches attempt to re-interpret the individual psalms in light of the whole, a literal-grammatical-historical hermeneutic need not adopt that conclusion. The repeated placement of royal and messianic psalms at major literary seams may amplify the importance of the messianic theme within the collection as a whole. These psalms may therefore be read as messianically significant, or as bearing messianic implications, because of their wording, placement, and relationship to the Psalter's broader royal-messianic trajectory, but not in a way that changes or replaces their original meaning. Several text-based observations support a deliberate book-wide structure of the Psalter.

Superscription Clusters and Author Groupings

As Wilson observes, the first three books of the Psalter present recognizable author-groupings that suggest intentional arrangement of its parts. Book I is overwhelmingly Davidic, since Psalms 3–41 are attributed to David either explicitly in their superscriptions or by association with surrounding psalms.[13] Book II begins with a Korahite collection in Psalms 42–49, transitions to the Asaphite psalm in Psalm 50, returns to a renewed Davidic collection in Psalms 51–65, and concludes with the Solomonic Psalm 72. Book III opens with the Asaphite

[11] Walter C. Kaiser Jr., The Messiah in the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), 69.

[12] Wilson compares the study of the Hebrew Psalter's final form with observable organizational practices in ancient Near Eastern hymn collections and the Qumran Psalms collection. The comparison does not prove that each collection was organized according to the same principles, but it demonstrates that the purposeful arrangement of previously existing hymnic materials was plausible in the ancient world [Gerald H. Wilson, The Editing of the Hebrew Psalter, SBL Dissertation Series 76 (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1985), 1, 4, 6–9].

[13] Although Psalms 10 and 33 lack superscriptions, Wilson associates them with the surrounding Davidic collection on the basis of their literary placement; see Wilson, Editing of the Hebrew Psalter, 155–60.

collection in Psalms 73–83 and then moves through psalms attributed to Korah, David, Heman, and Ethan in the superscriptions, culminating in Psalm 89.[14] The strength of these observations lies in the textual evidence found within the superscriptions themselves.

The author groupings create observable collections, and the shifts to a new collection occur at major structural transitions between Books I, II, and III. In this way, the combination of continuity and discontinuity provides textual evidence that the seams of the Psalter are significant literary markers in the collection. These patterns of continuity and discontinuity do not prove every compositional relationship within the Psalter, but they demonstrate that the Psalter's arrangement is not random.

Doxologies and the Five-Book Division of the Psalter

The recurrence of formal doxologies reinforces these structural divisions. Doxologies conclude Psalms 41,[15] 72,[16] 89,[17] and 106,[18] marking the endings of Books I–IV, while the concluding hallelujah arrangement in Psalms 146–150 brings Book V and the Psalter as a whole to its final doxological climax.[19] These doxologies correspond to the traditional five-book division of the Psalter: Book I, Psalms 1–41; Book II, Psalms 42–72; Book III, Psalms 73–89; Book IV, Psalms 90–106; and Book V, Psalms 107–150.

Although the doxologies do not independently establish the entire structure of the Psalter, their placement corroborates the evidence found in the superscriptions and author groupings in support of a deliberately ordered final form. The convergence of doxological boundaries, author-grouping transitions, and major thematic recurrences at the same literary locations provides strong textual evidence that these seams are not only intentionally structured but also hermeneutically significant.[20]

That the seams of the Psalter are important structurally and hermeneutically is especially important for the present study because several of these seams are marked by royal psalms. The evidence for intentional composition thus provides the literary basis for examining how the Psalter develops its messianic message across its seams.[21]

Psalms 1–2 as the Programmatic Introduction to the Psalter

Building upon Wilson's final-form approach, Cole argues that Psalms 1–2 function as the gateway to the Psalter, introducing especially the messianic figure in Psalm 2. In this psalm, the royal figure is opposed by the nations, installed as king on Zion, victorious over the rebellious

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[14] Wilson, Editing of the Hebrew Psalter, 155–60.

[15] Psalm 41:13 [MT 41:14] "Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, From everlasting to everlasting. Amen and Amen."

[16] Psalm 72:18–20 "Blessed be the LORD God, the God of Israel, who alone works wonders. And blessed be His glorious name forever; and may the whole earth be filled with His glory. Amen, and Amen. The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended." The appended statement concerning the conclusion of the Davidic section also supports a deliberate literary arrangement.

[17] Psalm 89:52 [MT 89:53] "Blessed be the LORD forever! Amen and Amen."

[18] Psalm 106:48 "Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, From everlasting even to everlasting. And let all the people say, "Amen." Praise the LORD!"

[19] Wilson, *Editing of the Hebrew Psalter*, 182.

[20] Ibid., 182, 186.

[21] Cole, Psalms 1–2, 82–88; Wilson, Editing of the Hebrew Psalter, 186; Mitchell, Message of the Psalter, 82–87.

nations, and destined to exercise dominion to the ends of the earth. This portrayal establishes a messianic trajectory developed in the seams of the Psalter, especially Psalms 72, 89, and 110. This progression can be identified through recurring linguistic and syntactical elements.[22]

The Royal-Messianic Trajectory in the Psalter's Seams

The relationship between Psalms 2 and 72 provides especially clear evidence that the royal themes of the introduction continue at the conclusion of Book II. Table 1 below summarizes the linguistic and thematic evidence.

Table 1. The Royal Messiah in the Seams of the Psalter

Connection	Psalm 2 Hebrew	Psalm 72 Hebrew
Nations serving the LORD	גּוֹיִם / עִבְדוּ אֶת־יְהוָה (Ps 2:1, 11)	כָּל־גּוֹיִם יַעַבְדֻהוּ (Ps 72:11)
Worldwide dominion	אַפְסֵי־אָרֶץ (Ps 2:8)	אַפְסֵי־אָרֶץ (Ps 72:8)
Blessing in the king	אַשְׁרֵי כָּל־חוֹסֵי בוֹ (Ps 2:12)	וְיאַשְּׁרוּהוּ (Ps 72:17)
Psalter blessing in the seams	אַשְׁרֵי הָאִישׁ (Ps 1:1) אַשְׁרֵי כָּל־חוֹסֵי בוֹ (Ps 2:12)	וְיאַשְּׁרוּהוּ (Ps 72:17)
Messiah's rule in Israel's Land	עַל־צִיּוֹן הַר־קָדְשִׁי אַפְסֵי־אָרֶץ (Ps 2:6, 8)	וְיִמְנְהָר עַד־אַפְסֵי־אָרֶץ (Ps 72:8)

Psalm 2:11 summons the rebellious kings and rulers of the earth identified in verse 1 as גּוֹיִם "the nations" to עִבְדוּ אֶת־יְהוָה "serve the LORD," while Psalm 72:11 proclaims that כָּל־גּוֹיִם יַעַבְדֻהוּ "all nations shall serve him," namely Israel's king. In Psalm 2:6, the LORD installs His anointed king upon Zion, His holy mountain, and promises him dominion extending to אַפְסֵי־אָרֶץ, "the ends of the earth" (Ps 2:8). Psalm 72:8 develops this same vision of royal dominion by describing Israel's king's rule as extending "from sea to sea" and וּמִנָּהָר עַד־אַפְסֵי־אָרֶץ "from the River to the ends of the earth." This geographical description appears to echo the territorial language associated with Israel's land promise while also extending the king's reign to the same worldwide horizon found in Psalm 2:8 (c.f. Exod 23:31). In this way, both psalms occurring in the seams of the Psalter relate the Messiah's rule as beginning in the land of Israel and extending to the whole world.

Psalm 72 also repeats the language of blessing that frames Psalms 1–2. Psalm 1:1 opens the Psalter with the statement אַשְׁרֵי־הָאִישׁ "blessed is the man…" and Psalm 2:12 concludes the Psalter's introduction with the statement, אַשְׁרֵי כָּל־חוֹסֵי בוֹ "blessed are all who take refuge in him." Psalm 72:17 similarly states that the nations וְיאַשְּׁרוּהוּ "shall call him blessed," in reference

[22] Cole, *Psalms 1–2*, 46–47, 52–53, 79–80, 82–88.

to Israel's eschatological king.[23] Thus, the blessing terminology that frames the introduction to the Psalter recurs at important seams, moving from Psalm 1:1, the beginning of the introduction of the Psalter, Psalm 2:12, the conclusion to the beginning of the Psalter, Psalm 41:1, the conclusion to Book I, and in Ps 72:17, the conclusion to Book II of the Psalter.[24] These correspondences place the affliction of Israel's king and worldwide reign within the broader blessing framework of the Psalter.[25] In this way, opposition to the Messiah, the Messiah's rule in Israel and over the world, and blessing for those who trust the Messiah are found in the literary seams of the Psalter.

Psalm 89 continues this trajectory through the language and themes of royal sonship, rule on the Davidic throne, and worldwide dominion. The LORD declares to the king in Ps 2:7, בְּנִי אַתָּה "You are my son," while the Davidic ruler responds, אָבִי אָתָּה "You are my father" in Ps 89:26 [MT 27]. The "kings of the earth" who rebel in Psalm 2:2 correspond to the Davidic king's exaltation as "the highest of the kings of the earth" in Psalm 89:27 [MT 89:28]. Similarly, Psalm 2 promises the nations as the king's inheritance, while Psalm 89 declares that the Davidic ruler will be made the LORD's firstborn, "the highest of the kings of the earth" (Ps 89:27 [MT 89:28]). The emphasis in both psalms falls upon the supremacy of the Davidic king over the nations. The principal correspondences include royal sonship (Ps 2:7; 89:26 [MT 89:27]), the kings of the earth (Ps 2:2; 89:28 [ET 89:27]), royal inheritance and firstborn supremacy (Ps 2:8; 89:27 [MT 28]), and the relationship between royal decree and Davidic covenant (Ps 2:7; 89:3 [MT 89:4]).[26]

The associated language and themes that link Psalm 89 with Psalm 2 occur in a context that introduces a major tension due to a severe crisis confronting the Davidic throne. The psalmist rehearses the promises of the Davidic covenant, but the humiliation of the LORD's anointed appears to contradict those realities. This crisis does not alter messianic expectation. Rather, within the Psalter's final arrangement, it prepares for the renewed emphasis upon the LORD's universal kingship in Book IV and recalls this concern as it already occurred in Books I–III. That the Psalter does not abandon the promise of the Davidic king is evident in the lofty messianic themes of Psalm 110, where David's Lord is enthroned at the LORD's right hand, rules from Zion, and triumphs over hostile kings and nations.[27] Mitchell and Postell further support this royal-messianic reading by locating Psalms 2, 72, 89, and 110 at strategic points within the Psalter's eschatological and Davidic trajectory. Their work reinforces the conclusion that the Psalter's arrangement sustains rather than abandons expectation of a future Davidic Messiah.[28]

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[23] The term אַשְׁרֵי also occurs in Psalm 89:15 (16, ET), the final chapter in Book III of the Psalter.

[24] Cole, Psalms 1–2, 61–62. Cole identifies the אַשְׁרֵי inclusio formed by Psalms 1 and 2; the extension of this observation to Psalms 41 and 72 is proposed here.

[25] Cole, *Psalms 1–2*, 85–87.

[26] Cole, *Psalms 1–2*, 82–83.

[27] Mitchell, Message of the Psalter, 82–87; David "Gunner" Gundersen, "The Future David of Psalm 101: Davidic Hope Sustained in Book IV of the Psalter," Journal of Biblical and Theological Studies 4, no. 1 (2019): 85–106.

[28] Mitchell, Message of the Psalter, 82–87, 250, 259, 297–99; Postell, "Messianism in Light of Literary Strategy," 342; James Luther Mays, Psalms, Interpretation (Louisville: John Knox Press, 1994), 15–16; Jamie A. Grant, The King as Exemplar: The Function of Deuteronomy's Kingship Law in the Shaping of the Book of Psalms, Academia Biblica 17 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2004), 1–12, 41–70, 223–45; J. Clinton McCann Jr., A Theological Introduction to the Book of Psalms: The Psalms as Torah (Nashville: Abingdon, 1993), 25–40; Gundersen, "Future David of Psalm 101," 85–106. For Mitchell's survey of premodern messianic interpretation, see Mitchell, Message of the Psalter, 15–65.

These observations are particularly important for the present study because the three elements that define the Messiah in Psalm 2 already occur together in Hannah's Song (1 Sam 2:10), namely the phrases, the LORD's anointed (Ps 2:2), His king (Ps 2:6), and His worldwide dominion extending to the ends of the earth (Ps 2:8). If Psalm 2 establishes the royal-messianic program that is developed across Psalms 72, 89, and 110 in the Psalter's final form, then Hannah's Song may provide an important intertextual foundation for this eschatological program in the Psalter.[29]

The Afflicted Davidic King in the Structure of the Psalter

The strategic seams at the beginning of the Psalter and at the conclusions of Books I–III draw attention to an eschatological royal figure whose rule begins in Israel and extends to the ends of the earth. Although Psalm 2 climaxes with the enthronement and worldwide rule of the LORD's anointed, it also introduces Him as one opposed by the rebellious nations (Ps 2:1–3). As Psalms 72, 89, and 110 continue this royal-messianic trajectory, Psalm 41 places the affliction and betrayal of the Davidic king within the same literary framework. In this way, the seams of the Psalter involve both the affliction of the Davidic King and his future victory and exaltation.

The placement of Psalm 41 is reinforced by its use of blessing language, which provides an additional literary connection with the Psalter's major seams. As noted above, blessing language plays a key role in linking strategic psalms within the Psalter. Psalm 1 begins with אַשְׁרֵי הָאִישׁ, "blessed is the man" (Ps 1:1), and Psalm 2 concludes with אַשְׁרֵי כָּל־חוֹסֵי בוֹ, "blessed are all who take refuge in him" (Ps 2:12). This blessing language also appears at the beginning of Psalm 41, where the psalm opens with אַשְׁרֵי מַשְׂכִּיל, "blessed is the one who considers" (Ps 41:1 [MT 41:2]). A related form from the same root also appears near the close of Book II in Psalm 72:17, where the nations וְיאַשְּׁרוּהוּ, "call him blessed." Together these occurrences frame major seams of the Psalter and reinforce its broader royal-messianic structure.[30]

The structural relationship between Psalms 2 and 41 therefore invites the reader to understand the opposition of the LORD's anointed in Psalm 2 alongside the affliction and betrayal experienced by the Davidic king in Psalm 41. Cole argues that the hostility directed toward the royal figure in Psalm 2 becomes personalized in the suffering experiences of David throughout the Psalter and that his voice gives prophetic expression to the Messiah's suffering and piety.[31] This pattern is specifically observed in Psalms 3 and 41, where recurring lexical parallels develop the opposition introduced in Psalm 2. In this way, the personal affliction of the Davidic king in Psalm 2 is personalized in Psalms 3, and 41.[32]

Read together, these psalms place the opposition experienced by the ideal Davidic king alongside the historical suffering of David. Their juxtaposition therefore establishes a literary

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[29] Kaiser, Messiah in the Old Testament, 66–71; James F. Coakley, "1 Samuel 2:1–10, 35: Hannah's Song of the Messianic King," in The Moody Handbook of Messianic Prophecy, ed. Michael Rydelnik and Edwin Blum (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2019), 361–72; Harry A. Hoffner Jr., 1 & 2 Samuel, vol. 1, Evangelical Exegetical Commentary (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2015), 175–77, 185–86; Brian C. Overholtzer, "The Messianic Promise in the Song of Hannah: Tracing an Intertextual Thread from 1 Samuel 2:10 to Genesis 3:15" (ThM thesis, The Master's Seminary, 2025), 77–82, 138–45.

[30] Cole, *Psalms 1–2*, 61–62. Cole discusses the blessing inclusio in Psalms 1–2; the recurrence at Psalms 41 and 72 is the present author's observation.

[31] Cole, *Psalms 1–2*, 61–62.

[32] Cole, *Psalms 1–2*, 82–83.

and theological pattern that prepares the reader to recognize later correspondences between David's afflictions and those of the Messiah.

Conclusion

The evidence presented thus far demonstrates that the Psalter possesses a coherent royal-messianic structure. Yet literary structure alone cannot explain why these particular royal psalms repeatedly emphasize the same themes of Davidic kingship, worldwide dominion, covenant hope, and conflict with the nations. The next question is therefore one of source and development: Where did this messianic framework come from? The following section argues that the Psalter intentionally integrates earlier messianic revelation such as Genesis 49, Hannah's Song, and the Davidic covenant into its strategic royal psalms, thereby creating an intra-canonical framework later recognized by the New Testament.

The Intertextual Integration of Messianic Prophecies in the Structure of the Psalter

The royal seams of the Psalter consistently allude to previous messianic revelation found in the Torah and 1–2 Samuel, especially, Jacob's blessing of Judah in Genesis 49:8–12, Hannah's Song in 1 Samuel 2:10, and the Davidic Covenant in 2 Samuel 7. Genesis 49:8–12 anticipates a ruler from Judah who defeats his enemies, possesses enduring royal authority, and receives the submission of the peoples. Hannah's Song anticipates the LORD's worldwide judgment, the defeat of His adversaries, the strengthening of His king, and the exaltation of His anointed. Psalms 2, 18, 72, 89, and 110 repeatedly integrate these expectations using language that uniquely connects them together. Psalm 2 joins Judah's scepter and international dominion with Hannah's king, anointed one, and ends-of-the-earth language; Psalm 18:51 applies these shared trajectories to David and his seed; Psalm 72 portrays the king's worldwide righteous rule; Psalm 89 places the Davidic promise under covenant crisis; and Psalm 110 brings the trajectory to its climax in David's exalted Lord. Table 2 below summarizes the relative evidential weight of the major correspondences examined in the following section.[33]

Table 2. Relative Strength of Major Messianic Correspondences

Textual Relationship	Evidential Weight	Primary Indicators
1 Sam 2:10 → Ps 2	Very strong	Shared royal-messianic cluster: מָשִׁיחוֹ, מֶלֶךְ, and אַפְסֵי־אָרֶץ within a context of worldwide opposition, judgment, and royal rule
Gen 49:10 → Ps 2	Strong	שֵׁבֶט language, royal authority, international dominion, and the submission of peoples/nations
1 Sam 2:10 → Ps18:50	Strong	Recurrence of מֶלֶךְ and מָשִׁיחוֹ, applied to David and to his seed forever
Gen 49 → Ps 72	Strong/moderate	Royal homage, international submission, worldwide rule, and blessing mediated through Israel's king
1 Sam 2 → Ps 72	Moderate	Shared themes of judgment, concern for the poor and needy, and dominion to the אַפְסֵי־אָרֶץ "ends of the earth"

[33] The ranking distinguishes primary lexical evidence from cumulative supporting correspondences.

Textual Relationship	Evidential Weight	Primary Indicators
Gen 49 → Ps 89	Moderate	Judahite royal promise developed through the Davidic covenant and sustained amid covenant crisis
1 Sam 2 → Ps 89	Strong/moderate	Horn imagery, exaltation, strength, anointed language, and the humiliation/restoration pattern of the Davidic king
Gen 49 → Ps 110	Strong	Enemy subjection, royal staff/rod imagery, rule from Zion, and judgment among the nations
1 Sam 2 → Ps 110	Strong/moderate	יָדִין, עֹז, royal empowerment, worldwide judgment, and victorious exaltation

The list above is not intended to suggest that every correspondence carries the same evidential weight.[34] Some connections rely on shared distinctive vocabulary within a concentrated royal-messianic context, while others are better understood as supporting correspondences within a broader pattern of shared imagery and theological development. The strongest links are those where identical or distinctive vocabulary appears within a concentrated royal-messianic context, especially the relationship between 1 Samuel 2:10 and Psalm 2:2, 6, 8. Other connections, such as Hannah's Song and Psalm 72 or Genesis 49 and Psalm 89, function as supporting evidence within the larger cumulative pattern. The textual evidence explored below will demonstrate how later biblical authors bring these texts and their associated themes together in reference to the Messiah, particularly in the New Testament's presentation of Jesus.

Psalm 2: The Programmatic Convergence of Hannah's Song and Judah's Blessing

Psalm 2 introduces the Psalter's messianic king through language drawn from Jacob's eschatological blessing of Judah and Hannah's Song. Situated at the beginning of the Psalter, it introduces four themes that recur at strategic locations throughout the collection: the hostility of the nations toward the LORD's anointed, the LORD's installation of his king on Zion, the king's identity as the LORD's Son, and the king's future worldwide dominion. Psalm 2 articulates these expectations by using language from earlier messianic prophecies of Genesis 49:8–10 and 1 Samuel 2:10.

Genesis 49:10 in Psalm 2

The lexical and thematic relationship between Genesis 49:10 and Psalm 2:8–9 has been recognized by several scholars,[35] although they differ concerning the strength and nature of the allusion. The most prominent correspondence is the repetition of שֵׁבֶט, "scepter" or "rod," within the shared context of royal authority over the peoples. Genesis 49:10 promises that the שֵׁבֶט will

[34] See the methodological criteria above and Gary Edward Schnittjer, *Old Testament Use of Old Testament: A Book-by-Book Guide* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 2021), xx–xxviii.

[35] Gary Edward Schnittjer, "The Blessing of Judah as Generative Expectation," Bibliotheca Sacra 177 (2020): 30–32; K. A. Mathews, Genesis 11:27–50:26, vol. 1B, New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2005), 892–93; Chee-Chiew Lee, "גוים in Genesis 35:11 and the Abrahamic Promise of Blessings for the Nations," Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society 52, no. 3 (2009): 475–76. Schnittjer identifies the שֵׁבֶט and the subjection of the nations as possible evidence that Psalm 2:7–9 develops Genesis 49:10, although he expresses caution concerning direct literary dependence.

not depart from Judah and anticipates the submission of the עַמִּים to the coming Judahite ruler. Psalm 2:8–9 similarly portrays the LORD's anointed receiving the גּוֹיִם "Gentiles" as his inheritance and exercising authority over them with a שֵׁבֶט of iron. The scepter in both passages signifies the ruler's royal authority, while the immediate international language indicates that this authority extends beyond Israel.[36]

Genesis 49:8–10 develops the scope of this rule progressively. Judah first receives homage from his brothers: יִשְׁתַּחֲווּ לְךָ בְּנֵי אָבִיךָ, "your father's sons shall bow down to you" (Gen 49:8). The scope of the Judahite's authority expands in verse 10, where the עַמִּים "peoples" render submission to the ruler associated with Judah's enduring scepter. The movement from "brothers" and "your father's sons" in verse 8 to the "peoples" in verse 10 indicates that the anticipated ruler exercises authority both within Israel and beyond it to the nations.[37]

Psalm 2 develops this royal expectation on an explicitly international scale. The גּוֹיִם "Gentiles" and לְאֻמִּים "peoples/nations" rebel against the LORD and his anointed (Ps 2:1–2), but the LORD grants the nations and the אַפְסֵי־אָרֶץ, "ends of the earth," to his installed king (2:6, 8). Those rebellious rulers are then warned to submit to the royal son before his judgment falls upon them (2:9–12). The terms גּוֹיִם, לְאֻמִּים, and אַפְסֵי־אָרֶץ are not interchangeable in a strict lexical sense, but together they establish the worldwide scope of both this rebellion and the king's promised international dominion.

The force of the allusion therefore rests not merely upon the recurrence of שֵׁבֶט but upon the convergence of royal authority, the submission of peoples, and the international extent of the ruler's dominion. In this way, Psalm 2 develops the Judahite promise of Genesis 49 by portraying the LORD's anointed king exercising the worldwide authority anticipated for Judah's future ruler.[38] The messianic import of this allusion is further supported in that this Judahite royal trajectory converges in Psalm 2 with the terminology of Hannah's anticipated king and anointed one.

Hannah's Song: 1 Samuel 2:10

The language in Psalm 2 strongly recalls Hannah's description of the Messiah's future victory in 1 Samuel 2:10.[39] The relationship between Hannah's Song and Psalm 2 is evident in a concentrated cluster of three royal-messianic expressions: מְשִׁיחוֹ, "his anointed" (1 Sam 2:10; Ps 2:2); the lexeme מֶלֶךְ, "king," used in both texts for a royal ruler appointed by the LORD (1 Sam 2:10; Ps 2:6); and the exact expression אַפְסֵי־אָרֶץ, "the ends of the earth" (1 Sam 2:10; Ps 2:8). The strength of the relationship rests not upon any one term in isolation but upon the recurrence of all three within the same context of worldwide conflict, divine judgment, and royal rule of the LORD's appointed king.[40]

Two of these correspondences are especially precise. Both texts use the identical form מְשִׁיחוֹ, "his anointed," to describe the LORD's chosen royal figure. They also use the exact

[36] Gary Edward Schnittjer, "The Blessing of Judah as Generative Expectation," Bibliotheca Sacra 177 (2020): 30–32; K. A. Mathews, Genesis 11:27–50:26, New American Commentary 1B (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2005), 892–93; Chee-Chiew Lee, "גוים in Genesis 35:11 and the Abrahamic Promise of Blessings for the Nations," Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society 52, no. 3 (2009): 475–76.

[37] Mathews, Genesis 11:27–50:26, 891–92, 896.

[38] Mathews, Genesis 11:27–50:26, 895–96; Eugene H. Merrill, "Genesis 49:8–12: The Lion of Judah," in The Moody Handbook of Messianic Prophecy, 280–82.

[39] Kaiser, Messiah in the Old Testament, 69.

[40] Kaiser, Messiah in the Old Testament, 69.

phrase אַפְסֵי־אָרֶץ to identify the worldwide extent of the LORD's plan for His king. Hannah declares that the LORD will judge "the ends of the earth," whereas Psalm 2 promises "the ends of the earth" to the LORD's installed king as his possession. The forms of מֶלֶךְ differ: לְמַלְכּוֹ, "to his king," in 1 Samuel 2:10 and מַלְכִּי, "my king," in Psalm 2:6, but both possessive suffixes identify the ruler as one who has been installed king by the LORD.

Psalm 2 therefore develops the royal expectation announced in Hannah's Song. In 1 Samuel 2:10, Hannah prays for the LORD to defeat His adversaries, judges the ends of the earth, give strength to His king, and exalts His anointed. Psalm 2, looks forward to a time when the nations rebel against the LORD and His anointed, which will result in the LORD installing His king in Zion, who will receive the nations and the ends of the earth as his inheritance. Hannah attributes worldwide judgment directly to the LORD and His anointed king.[41] Thus, Psalm 2 consistently presents the role of the king with Hannah's Song by portraying him as the royal agent through whom the rebellious nations are subdued.

Psalm 2 significantly merges the allusion to Genesis 49:10 and 1 Samuel 2:10 to describe this future eschatological victory of the Messiah. Genesis 49 supplies the Judahite ruler's enduring scepter and the submission of the peoples, while Hannah's Song supplies the terminology of the LORD's king, anointed one, and worldwide judgment. Psalm 2 unites these trajectories in its portrayal of the royal Son who rules the nations from Zion. Since David elsewhere alludes to Hannah's Song (cf. 2 Samuel 22:1–51 = Psalm 18:1–50), especially to the messianic language 1 Samuel 2:10, the case for understanding the recurrence of the same vocabulary in Psalm 2 as an intentional allusion is strengthened. The psalm therefore amplifies the relevance of the earlier messianic revelations without replacing their royal subject or altering the worldwide character of the promised reign. Since these messianic traditions occur in the introduction to the Psalter, it is not surprising that they resurface throughout the Psalter's seams.

Psalm 18: The Davidic Bridge

Psalm 18 does not occur in the seams of the Psalter but its use of Genesis 49 and 1 Samuel 2 suggests that it functions as a Davidic and intra-canonical bridge in the development of the Psalter's messianic message. Psalm 18 is a royal thanksgiving psalm and corresponds to 2 Samuel 22. In its message, it presents David reflecting upon the LORD's deliverance, his victories over enemies, and his dominion over foreign peoples. Within the narrative structure of 1–2 Samuel, David's thanksgiving psalm also stands near the conclusion of the book and contains prominent allusions to Hannah's Song near the beginning of the book.[42] Psalm 18 is therefore significant for the present argument because the intertextual royal-messianic trajectories involving Jacob's blessing of Judah and Hannah's Song converge within David's

[41] According to Hoffner, "Hannah's song would thus close on a nice Davidic touch. This would be fitting, since the central human character in the two books of Samuel is David, Yahweh's chosen king. But more likely v. 10b anticipates messianic kingship. The messianic aspect is implied by the association of Yahweh's anointed king with Yahweh's judging the 'ends of the earth.' No historical Israelite king was exalted at a time when Yahweh judged the ends of the earth. But the final king of Israel's Davidic line, the Messiah, will be exalted on earth at the time when Yahweh will judge all of earth's inhabitants (Matt 19:28; John 5:22, 27; Acts 10:42; 17:31; 2 Tim 4:1, 8)." Harry A. Hoffner Jr., *1 & 2 Samuel*, vol. 1, Evangelical Exegetical Commentary (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2015), 186.

[42] Allen P. Ross, A Commentary on the Psalms: Volume 1 (1–41), Kregel Exegetical Library (Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic, 2011), 437–39; Robert B. Chisholm Jr., "An Exegetical and Theological Study of Psalm 18/2 Samuel 22" (ThD diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 1983), 366–67; Hoffner, 1 & 2 Samuel, 1:175–77.

reflection of the LORD's victories in his role as Israel's king. David applies the language of the LORD's deliverance, enemy defeat, foreign submission, king, and anointed one to his own life, while the conclusion of the psalm extends the promise beyond David to his seed forever.

Jacob's Blessing of Judah: Enemies and Peoples

The passage in Genesis 49:8–12 is an important text for understanding David's kingship because it prophetically establishes Judah as the tribe from which Israel's royal ruler would arise, ultimately culminating in her Messiah. This Judahite ruler is characterized by victory over his enemies and the submission of the peoples. As David penned Psalm 18, this earlier promise appears to inform the way he describes the LORD's victories on his behalf.

Psalm 18 recalls Genesis 49:8, 10 through the language of enemy defeat and the submission of the peoples. Genesis 49:8 declares concerning Judah, יָדְךָ בְּעֹרֶף אֹיְבֶיךָ, "Your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies." Psalm 18:40 [MT 18:41] uses closely related imagery when David says, וְאֹיְבַי נָתַתָּה לִּי עֹרֶף, "You gave me the necks of my enemies."[43] The correspondence is not exact, since Genesis 49 speaks of Judah's hand upon the neck of his enemies, whereas Psalm 18 speaks of the LORD giving David the necks of his enemies. Nevertheless, the shared royal-victory imagery is strikingly similar: in both texts, the enemies of the Judahite ruler are decisively subdued.

The intertextual relationship between these texts is strengthened by David's statement in Psalm 18:43 [MT 18:44], עַם לֹא־יָדַעְתִּי יַעַבְדוּנִי, "A people whom I did not know served me." This statement recalls the submission of the עַמִּים anticipated in Genesis 49:10. The vocabulary is not identical, but the conceptual relationship is close as both passages describe peoples beyond the immediate family or nation of Israel coming under the authority of the Judahite ruler. The combination of enemy-subjection imagery and international submission suggests that David viewed the LORD's victories in his life as consistent with the Judahite royal trajectory announced in Genesis 49. David does not receive the full submission of the peoples and nations as anticipated in Genesis 49:10, 1 Samuel 2:10, or Psalm 2, but he historically participates in it as the Judahite king and recipient of the Davidic covenant.[44] In this way, David is not merely thanking God for victories, but understands them as significantly relevant to the promise of kingship through Judah in Genesis 49:8–12.

Hannah's Song: King, Anointed, and Seed

Psalm 18 also reflects the influence of Hannah's Song. The relationship between Hannah's Song and David's thanksgiving in 2 Samuel 22 is widely recognized as the two poems frame the books of Samuel and share numerous lexical and theological correspondences.[45] Since Psalm 18 reproduces David's thanksgiving in 2 Samuel 22, the literary relationship established between Hannah's Song and David's song also becomes significant for interpreting Psalm 18 within the Psalter's royal-messianic framework. For the present study, the most important correspondence is the recurrence of the royal terminology from 1 Samuel 2:10 in Psalm 18:50 [MT 18:51]. Hannah declares that the LORD "will give strength to his king" and "will exalt the

[43] Josef Sykora, "The Unfavored: Judah and Saul in the Narratives of Genesis and 1 Samuel" (Ph.D. diss., Durham University, 2016), 104; Mathews, *Genesis 11:27–50:26*, 891–93, 895–96.

[44] Mathews, *Genesis 11:27–50:26*, 895–96; Merrill, "Genesis 49:8–12," 280–82.

[45] Brevard S. Childs, Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979), 272–75; Hoffner, 1 & 2 Samuel, 1:175–77.

horn of his anointed" (לְמַלְכּוֹ … מְשִׁיחוֹ). David concludes Psalm 18 by praising the LORD as the one who gives great salvation "to his king" and shows lovingkindness "to his anointed, to David and to his seed forever" (מַלְכּוֹ … מְשִׁיחוֹ … לְדָוִד וּלְזַרְעוֹ עַד־עוֹלָם).[46]

The significance of this recurrence is not merely verbal. In Hannah's Song, the anointed king appears within the context of the LORD's worldwide judgment and the defeat of his adversaries. In Psalm 18, David identifies himself as the LORD's king and anointed one, but he also applies the promise beyond himself to his seed (וּלְזַרְעוֹ) forever. The addition of זֶרַע, "seed," connects David's personal deliverance to the enduring Davidic promise and shows that the royal trajectory does not terminate with David's historical victories. Furthermore, the reference to David's seed recalls the Davidic covenant which culminates with David's offspring who will sit on David's throne forever (c.f. 2 Sam 7:12–13).[47]

Several secondary correspondences reinforce the intertextual relationship between Psalm 18 and Hannah's Song.[48] Hannah declares that there is no rock like God (1 Sam 2:2), while David asks, "Who is a rock, except our God?" (Ps 18:31 [MT 18:32]). Hannah's horn is exalted in the LORD's salvation (1 Sam 2:1), and she anticipates the exalted horn of the LORD's anointed (2:10). David likewise calls the LORD "the horn of my salvation" (Ps 18:2 [MT 18:3]) and concludes with the LORD's great salvation to his king and anointed one (18:50 [MT 18:51]). These parallels support the conclusion that David's song intentionally echoes Hannah's royal-messianic hope.

Psalm 18 therefore brings Genesis 49 and Hannah's Song together in David's own awareness of his participation in God's greater redemptive plans for history. Genesis 49 supplies the imagery of the Judahite ruler's enemies being subdued and foreign peoples submitting to his rule. Hannah's Song supplies the language of the LORD's king, anointed one, salvation, and exaltation. David applies these trajectories to the LORD's deliverances in his own life, while the reference to his seed forever directs the trajectory toward the future Messiah. Psalm 18 thus functions as a canonical bridge between earlier messianic promise and the later royal-messianic structure of the Psalter. In this way, Psalm 18 places David's historical deliverance alongside the future messianic hope that will come through his seed, establishing a pattern in which David's own life anticipates the experience and ultimate victory of the Messiah.

Psalm 72: The Righteous Rule of the Messiah

Psalm 72 concludes Book II of the Psalter and presents an eschatological portrait of the ideal Davidic ruler. The psalm provides one of the clearest examples of the Psalter's integration of earlier messianic revelation into a coherent royal-messianic framework.

Bible scholars note that while this psalm is not explicitly cited with a quotation formula in the NT, its presentation of the Messiah nevertheless appears to have significantly shaped the messianic expectations reflected in the NT.[49] Therefore, the convergence of Genesis 49 and 1

[46] Postell, "Messianism in Light of Literary Strategy," 335–37; Childs, Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture, 272–75; Chisholm, "Psalm 18/2 Samuel 22," 366–67.

[47] Cite someone linking seed in 2 Samuel 22:51/Psalm 18:50/51 to seed in 2 Samuel 7.

[48] See 1 Samuel 2:1–2, 4, 7, 10 and Psalm 18:2, 13, 27, 31–32, 39, 50 [MT 18:3, 14, 28, 32–33, 40, 51]. Hoffner, 1 & 2 Samuel, 1:176–77; Coakley, "Hannah's Song," 361–72.

[49] James Spencer, "Psalm 72: The Messiah as Ideal King," in The Moody Handbook of Messianic Prophecy, 605–7; Allen P. Ross, A Commentary on the Psalms 1–89, vol. 2, Kregel Exegetical Library (Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic, 2013), 532–46; Jerod A. Gilcher, "Journey to the Kingdom: The Three-Fold

Samuel 2 within Psalm 72 provides further evidence for the prominent role that these earlier messianic texts play at the major seams of the Psalter. Additionally, as this thesis argues, this royal-messianic framework was inherited by the NT authors in their presentation of Jesus as the Messiah of the Hebrew Scriptures.

Jacob's Blessing of Judah: Homage, Submission, and Abundance

Psalm 72 develops several textual elements associated with Jacob's blessing of Judah. The primary correspondence is the lexical and syntactical recurrence of לְ + יִשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ + pronominal object (–ךָ / –וֹ) in Genesis 49:8 and Psalm 72:11. Genesis 49:8 states, יִשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ לְךָ בְּנֵי אָבִיךָ, "your father's sons shall bow down to you." Psalm 72:11 expands this homage from Judah's brothers to all kings: וְיִשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ־לוֹ כָּל־מְלָכִים, "may all kings bow down to him." The verbal and syntactical correspondence is significant because both passages describe royal homage rendered to the Israel's king who is presented as ruling both in and over Israel and over nations beyond Israel.

The international scope of this homage also corresponds to the broader movement of Genesis 49:8–10. In Genesis 49:8, Judah's brothers bow before him, while 49:10 anticipates the submission of the עַמִּים "peoples" to the Judahite king. Psalm 72 develops this movement on a worldwide scale. The kings of Tarshish, the coastlands, Sheba, and Seba bring tribute, all kings bow before the ruler, and all nations serve him (72:10–11). AS Schnittjer argues, Psalm 72 presupposes the Davidic promise and presents the idealized kingdom of the Davidic son as the fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant.[50] Psalm 72 therefore places the homage and submission anticipated in Genesis 49 within the larger Abrahamic and Davidic promise of blessing to the nations, locating their fulfillment in the earthly rule of Israel's king.

Hannah's Song: Judgment, Ends of the Earth, and the Poor

The intertextual relationship between Hannah's Song and Psalm 72 is less explicit than the ones observed in Psalms 2, 18, 89, and 110. Nevertheless, Psalm 72 appears to develop several elements associated with the conclusion of Hannah's Song including divine judgment, worldwide rule, royal mediation, and the reversal of the poor and needy. In 1 Samuel 2:10, Hannah declares that the LORD יָדִין אַפְסֵי־אָרֶץ, "will judge the ends of the earth." Psalm 72 similarly prays that the LORD's king יָדִין, "will judge," the LORD's people with righteousness (Ps 72:2), and later describes this king's dominion as extending עַד־אַפְסֵי־אָרֶץ, "to the ends of the earth" (72:8).

In 1 Samuel 2:10, the LORD is the explicit subject of the one who will bring worldwide judgment, while the reference to His king and anointed one places that judgment within a royal-messianic context. Psalm 72 develops the royal dimension of this expectation by asking God to grant His justice and righteousness to the king (72:1–2) and by portraying the king's dominion as extending from Israel's promised territorial boundaries to the ends of the earth (72:8). The king does not replace the LORD as judge. Rather, he administers the LORD's justice as the royal agent of divine rule. The shared eschatological setting, the presentation of the king as the

Compositional Arc of Book II of the Psalter," Perichoresis 22, no. 4 (2024): 48–74. For a rabbinic messianic reading of Psalm 72:17, see b. Sanhedrin 98b; Mitchell, Message of the Psalter, 31–32.

[50] Schnittjer, Old Testament Use of Old Testament, 471, 476, 489–92; Postell, "Messianism in Light of Literary Strategy," 342–43.

LORD's agent, and the reappearance of both יָדִין and אַפְסֵי־אָרֶץ within Psalm 72 together provide cumulative support for an intertextual relationship between Hannah's Song and Psalm 72.

The connection is further strengthened by the shared concern for the lowly. Hannah celebrates the LORD as the one who raises the דָּל, "poor," from the dust and lifts the אֶבְיוֹן, "needy," from the ash heap (1 Sam 2:8). Psalm 72 repeatedly describes the king's righteous reign in terms of deliverance for the דָּל and the אֶבְיוֹן (Ps 72:12–13). Significantly, Psalm 72:13 brings the two terms together in the expression דַּל וְאֶבְיוֹן, "the poor and needy." Kselman also identifies Hannah's אֶבְיוֹן // דָּל pairing as important to the structure of Psalm 72. He observes that Hannah contrasts the דָּל and אֶבְיוֹן with the נְדִיבִים, "nobles," and a כִּסֵּא כָבוֹד, "throne of honor" (1 Sam 2:8), while Psalm 72 similarly places לְבֶן־מֶלֶךְ, "to the king's son" (72:1), in structural correspondence with לִבְנֵי אֶבְיוֹן, "the children of the needy" (72:4). The psalm thus portrays the social reversal anticipated in Hannah's Song as a defining feature of the Messiah's worldwide rule.[51]

Psalm 72 therefore joins the homage and international submission anticipated for the Judahite ruler in Genesis 49 with Hannah's expectation of worldwide judgment, royal agency, and the reversal of the lowly. The result is a portrait of Israel's Messiah whose righteous authority extends from Zion to the ends of the earth. The psalm does not detach the kingdom hope from Israel or dissolve it into a merely spiritual reign. Rather, Psalm 72 amplifies the significance of earlier royal-messianic promises by showing that the Davidic king from Judah will execute the LORD's justice, deliver the needy, receive the submission of the nations, and mediate blessing to the whole earth as Israel's king.

Psalm 89: Covenant Promise, Crisis, and Restoration

Psalm 89 concludes Book III of the Psalter and stands at one of the Psalter's most important literary seams. The psalm begins by celebrating the LORD's covenant faithfulness to David but ends by lamenting the apparent rejection of the LORD's anointed. In this way, Psalm 89 moves from covenant promise to covenant crisis. It is in this tension that the psalm appeals to the messianic promises of old.[52]

Jacob's Blessing of Judah and the Davidic Covenant

Genesis 49:10 presents the future Judahite ruler's royal authority through the emblematic שֵׁבֶט, "scepter," which will not depart from Judah. This Judahite promise is developed in the Davidic covenant, where the LORD promises David an enduring house, kingdom, and throne (2 Sam 7:12–16). The verbal connections are significant. Genesis 49:10 promises לֹא־יָסוּר שֵׁבֶט מִיהוּדָה, "the scepter will not depart from Judah," while 2 Samuel 7:15 promises concerning David's seed, וְחַסְדִּי לֹא־יָסוּר מִמֶּנּוּ, "my covenant love will not depart from him." The repetition of לֹא־יָסוּר within these royal contexts strengthens the connection between the two passages. Genesis 49 associates Judah's ruler with an enduring royal staff, while 2 Samuel 7 speaks of the disciplinary שֵׁבֶט by which the royal son may be corrected (2 Sam 7:14). Genesis 49 anticipates

[51] Compare 1 Samuel 2:8 with Psalm 72:4, 12–13. John S. Kselman, "Psalm 72: Some Observations on Structure," Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research 220 (1975): 79. Kselman compares the דָּל and אֶבְיוֹן pairing in Hannah's Song with Psalm 72's structural contrast between לְבֶן־מֶלֶךְ and לִבְנֵי אֶבְיוֹן. See also Ross, Psalms 1–89, 536–42 for the contextual relationship between Psalm 72 and Hannah's Song.

[52] Eugene H. Merrill, "Psalm 89: God's Faithful Promise of Messiah," in The Moody Handbook of Messianic Prophecy, 631–39.

continuing rule, while 2 Samuel 7 explicitly affirms that David's house, kingdom, and throne will be established עַד־עוֹלָם, "forever" (2 Sam 7:16).

Psalm 89 directly recalls the Davidic covenant, which itself develops the earlier Judahite promise of Genesis 49.[53] Psalm 89 repeatedly affirms the permanence of the Davidic promise. The psalmist recounts that the LORD has made a covenant with his chosen one, sworn to David his servant, and promised to establish his seed and throne forever (Ps 89:3–4 [MT 89:4–5]; c.f. 2 Sam 7:12–13). Later the psalm declares that David's seed and throne will endure like the heavens, the sun, and the moon (89:29, 36–37 [MT 89:30, 37–38]). The psalm therefore does not treat the Davidic covenant as revoked. Its lament arises precisely because the covenant appears to have failed despite the LORD's oath.[54]

The recurrence of שֵׁבֶט in the psalm is significant as its use most directly recalls the covenant-discipline language of 2 Samuel 7:14 and, through that covenantal context, continues the development of the Judahite promise of Genesis 49. In Genesis 49:10, the שֵׁבֶט symbolizes Judah's enduring royal authority. In 2 Samuel 7:14, the same term appears in the context of covenant discipline, where a disobedient son in David's royal line may be corrected בְּשֵׁבֶט אֲנָשִׁים וּבְנִגְעֵי בְּנֵי אָדָם, "with the rod of men and with the blows of the sons of men." Psalm 89 closely reproduces this combination of שֵׁבֶט and נגע: "I will punish their transgression with a rod and their iniquity with blows" (וּפָקַדְתִּי בְשֵׁבֶט פִּשְׁעָם וּבִנְגָעִים עֲוֹנָם; Ps 89:32 [MT 89:33]). Nevertheless, the psalmist immediately adds that the LORD will not remove His covenant loyalty, betray His faithfulness, violate His covenant, or alter what has gone forth from His lips (89:33–34 [MT 89:34–35]). In this way, Psalm 89 recognizes both features of the Davidic covenant: the threat and even enactment of covenant discipline and the perpetuity of the promise to David's royal line. The broader psalm therefore sustains hope for the future ruler from Judah who will reign in Israel from David's throne. His authority is further portrayed as extending over the sea and rivers and above the kings of the earth (89:25, 27 [MT 89:26, 28]).

Hannah's Song and the Hope of Exaltation

Psalm 89 also appears to develop the royal pattern anticipated in Hannah's Song. Hannah's prayer begins with her own horn being exalted in the LORD's salvation (1 Sam 2:1; רָמָה קַרְנִי) and concludes with the LORD giving strength to his king and exalting the horn of his anointed (1 Sam 2:10; וְיִתֶּן־עֹז לְמַלְכּוֹ … וְיָרֵם קֶרֶן מְשִׁיחוֹ). The cluster of קֶרֶן, רום, עֹז, and מָשִׁיחַ places Hannah's ultimate hope in the LORD's future vindication and exaltation of His anointed king.[55]

The same royal-exaltation vocabulary reappears in Psalm 89. The psalmist declares that the LORD is the glory of his people's strength and that by his favor their horn is exalted (וּבִרְצוֹנְךָ תָּרוּם קַרְנֵנוּ; Ps 89:17 [MT 89:18]). The language is then applied specifically to David: "I have

[53] Nahum M. Sarna, "Psalm 89: A Study in Inner Biblical Exegesis," in Biblical and Other Studies, ed. Alexander Altmann (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1963), 45–46. See also Schnittjer, Old Testament Use of Old Testament, 181–82, 498–500. Schnittjer identifies Genesis 49:10 and 2 Samuel 7:14–15 as a probable interpretive allusion based especially on the shared לֹא־יָסוּר construction and identifies Psalm 89:3–4, 19–37 as an interpretive use of 2 Samuel 7:11–16. See also 2 Samuel 12:10, where the language of "not departing" is applied to judgment of David's house.

[54] Schnittjer, *Old Testament Use of Old Testament*, 498–500.

[55] Coakley, "Hannah's Song," 361–72; Kaiser, Messiah in the Old Testament, 66–71; Hoffner, 1 & 2 Samuel, 1:178–80, 185–86; Overholtzer, "Messianic Promise in the Song of Hannah," 77–82, 138–45. These sources support the royal-messianic significance of Hannah's language; the proposed relationship with Psalm 89 rests especially upon the lexical correspondence between 1 Samuel 2:1, 10 and Psalm 89:17, 20, 24, 38.

found David my servant; with my holy oil I have anointed him" (89:20 [MT 89:21]), and "in my name his horn will be exalted" (89:24 ;וּבִשְׁמִי תָּרוּם קַרְנוֹ [MT 89:25]). The recurrence of the same רום + קֶרֶן combination is particularly significant: Hannah's 1) רָמָה קַרְנִי Sam 2:1) and וְיָרֵם קֶרֶן 1) מְשִׁיחוֹ Sam 2:10) correspond to Psalm 89's תָּרוּם קַרְנֵנוּ (Ps 89:17 [MT 89:18]) and תָּרוּם קַרְנוֹ (Ps 89:24 [MT 89:25]). Psalm 89 therefore applies to David the same horn-exaltation language that begins and concludes Hannah's Song, while also placing it within the context of the LORD's anointed king.

This makes the lament even more striking. The one whose horn was to be exalted now appears rejected: "But you have cast off and rejected; you have been full of wrath against your anointed" (Ps 89:38 [MT 89:39]). The psalm concludes by an appeal of the psalmist for the LORD to remember the reproaches of His servants as well as how the LORD's enemies have reproached the footsteps of His anointed (Ps 89:50–51 [MT 89:52–53]).

Psalm 89 therefore places the Davidic crisis within a pattern of humiliation and anticipated exaltation that resembles the reversal pattern of Hannah's Song. The psalm does not abandon Hannah's hope of the exalted anointed one. Instead, it laments the apparent contradiction between that hope and Israel's historical experience, thereby sustaining the expectation that the apparent humiliation of the Davidic king cannot be the final resolution of the LORD's covenant promise.

Convergence of Genesis 49 and Hannah's Song in Psalm 89

Psalm 89 brings together the Judahite promise of Genesis 49 and the royal hope of Hannah's Song within a severe crisis confronting the Davidic monarchy.[56] Genesis 49 supplies the expectation of an enduring Judahite ruler whose royal authority will not depart. Hannah's Song supplies the pattern of the LORD strengthening his king and exalting the horn of his anointed after the defeat of his enemies. The Davidic covenant joins these trajectories by locating the enduring Judahite kingship in David's house and seed, and Psalm 89 interprets the apparent humiliation of the Davidic dynasty in light of the continuing validity of that covenant. David's throne appears humiliated, the anointed king appears rejected, and the covenant seems contradicted by history. Yet the psalm does not reinterpret the promises or transfer them away from David's line. Its lament depends upon the continuing validity of the covenant despite the apparent humiliation of the Davidic king and dynasty. Psalm 89 therefore sustains expectation for the faithful Davidic ruler through whom the LORD will fulfill his irrevocable covenant and bring the exaltation anticipated in Hannah's Song.

Psalm 110: Culmination in David's Exalted Lord

Psalm 110 brings the intertextual messianic trajectories in the Psalter to a climax in David's exalted Lord. The psalm presents this royal figure as one who sits at the LORD's right hand until his enemies are made his footstool and whom the LORD appoints by oath as a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek. This royal-priestly figure rules from Zion, has his

[56] Daniel J. Estes, Psalms 73–150, ed. E. Ray Clendenen, New American Commentary 13 (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2019), 160–61. The superscription attributes Psalm 89 to Ethan the Ezrahite. While this may be the same Ethan the Ezrahite mentioned in 1 Kings 4:31, this possible identification cautions against assuming an exilic date for the psalm. The precise historical setting of the crisis, however, remains uncertain. Estes observes that Psalm 89 portrays the continuation of the Davidic monarchy as being in jeopardy while noting the uncertainty surrounding its precise historical setting.

enemies subjected beneath his feet, judges among the nations, and exercises strength supplied by the LORD. In the Psalter's final arrangement, Psalm 110 canonically follows the covenant crisis of Psalm 89 by portraying David's exalted Lord ruling from Zion and triumphing over the nations.[57]

Jacob's Blessing of Judah: Enemies, Staff, and Nations

Genesis 49:8–10 portrays the future Judahite ruler through three related motifs: military defeat of his enemies, rule by use of the royal שֵׁבֶט, and the submission of the peoples. Psalm 110:1–2, 5–6 develops the same royal profile through a cumulative cluster of lexical and thematic correspondences.

First, Psalm 110:1 develops the enemy-subjection imagery associated with Jacob's blessing for Judah. Genesis 49:8 declares, יָדְךָ בְּעֹרֶף אֹיְבֶיךָ, "Your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies," while Psalm 110:1 promises that the LORD will make אֹיְבֶיךָ הֲדֹם לְרַגְלֶיךָ, "your enemies a footstool for your feet." The psalm does not quote Genesis 49 directly, but both passages portray the ruler's enemies as decisively defeated. The foot imagery in Psalm 110:1 may also resonate with Genesis 49:10, where the ruler's staff is associated with the position "between his feet." This correspondence should be treated as supporting rather than primary evidence, since the stronger link lies in the shared context of royal victory and enemy submission.

Second, the two passages employ synonymous terms for the ruler's staff. Genesis 49:10 uses שֵׁבֶט, whereas Psalm 110:2 describes the מַטֵּה־עֻזְּךָ, "staff of your strength," which the LORD sends forth from Zion. Both terms may designate a staff or rod functioning as an emblem of royal authority. Chen accordingly identifies מַטֵּה in Psalm 110:2 as corresponding to the שֵׁבֶט promised to Judah in Genesis 49:10. The force of the correspondence does not rest upon the synonym alone but upon its occurrence within the same royal setting: the ruler possesses the staff, exercises authority over his enemies, and extends his rule beyond Israel.[58]

Third, both passages place this royal authority within an international context. Genesis 49:10 anticipates the submission of the עַמִּים, "peoples," to Judah's ruler. Psalm 110 similarly depicts the ruler governing amid his enemies, shattering kings, and judging among the גּוֹיִם, "nations" (Ps 110:2, 5–6). Although עַמִּים and גּוֹיִם are not identical, they are semantically related and together describe the international extent of the ruler's authority. Psalm 110 therefore develops the submission anticipated in Genesis 49 into an explicit scene of eschatological judgment and victory among hostile nations.

The cumulative case rests upon the convergence of enemy terminology, foot imagery, royal staff language, Judahite-Davidic kingship, and international dominion. Psalm 110 does not reinterpret the eschatological royal expectation of Genesis 49 or detach Israel's hope from the rule of her Judahite king. Rather, it develops the earlier portrait by presenting David's Lord as the victorious ruler whose authority extends from Zion to the nations.

Hannah's Song: Strength, Judgment, and Exaltation

[57] Michael A. Rydelnik, "Psalm 110: The Messiah as Eternal King Priest," in The Moody Handbook of Messianic Prophecy, 673–85; Schnittjer, Old Testament Use of Old Testament, 520–23. For Jewish messianic readings, see Midrash Psalms110; Avot de-Rabbi Nathan 8.4; Mitchell, Message of the Psalter, 31–33.

[58] Kevin Chen, "Psalm 110: A Nexus for Old Testament Theology," Criswell Theological Review 17, no. 2 (2020): 58–60; Rydelnik, "Psalm 110," 678–87.

Three correspondences link Hannah's concluding oracle with Psalm 110 and together develop its pattern of the LORD's empowerment of Israel's king, worldwide judgment, and victorious royal exaltation.

The first link concerns the source of the ruler's strength. In 1 Samuel 2:10, Hannah declares, וְיִתֶּן־עֹז לְמַלְכּוֹ, "He will give strength to his king." In Psalm 110:2, David similarly states מַטֵּה־עֻזְּךָ יִשְׁלַח יְהוָה מִצִּיּוֹן, "The LORD will send forth the staff of your strength from Zion." Both passages use עֹז and attribute the ruler's power to the LORD. Hannah announces the divine granting of royal strength; Psalm 110 portrays that divinely supplied strength being extended through the king's staff from Zion. This is not an exact quotation, but it is a meaningful supporting correspondence within the shared context of royal empowerment, enemy subjection, and international dominion.

The second and strongest verbal correspondence concerns worldwide judgment. First Samuel 2:10 states, יְהוָה יָדִין אַפְסֵי־אָרֶץ, "The LORD will judge the ends of the earth," while Psalm 110:6 states, יָדִין בַּגּוֹיִם, "He will judge among the nations." Both passages employ the identical verbal form יָדִין within a context of hostile enemies, worldwide judgment, and royal victory. Allen Ross accordingly identifies 1 Samuel 2:10 as a relevant parallel to Psalm 110:6 and understands the LORD as the subject who executes judgment among the nations.[59] The geographical expressions differ, but "the ends of the earth" and "among the nations" describe the same international scope.

The subject of יָדִין in Psalm 110:6 is debated. Ross understands the LORD to remain the subject of the judgment in verses 5–6, whereas Michael Rydelnik argues that David's Lord, the Messiah, is the subject of the actions in verses 5–7.[60] If the LORD is the subject, the psalm directly develops Hannah's expectation that the LORD will judge the nations. If David's Lord is the subject, the psalm presents the king as the royal agent through whom the LORD executes the judgment announced in Hannah's Song. Either reading preserves the correspondence. Whether the LORD judges directly or accomplishes that judgment through His royal Messiah, the worldwide judgment anticipated in 1 Samuel 2:10 is realized within the victory the LORD grants to His king.

The third correspondence concerns victorious exaltation. Hannah declares that the LORD וְיָרֵם קֶרֶן מְשִׁיחוֹ, "will exalt the horn of his anointed" (1 Sam 2:10). Psalm 110:7 concludes with the statement, עַל־כֵּן יָרִים רֹאשׁ, "Therefore he will lift up his head." The passages share the root רום, although the verb is common and the objects differ. Hannah refers to the horn of the anointed one, whereas Psalm 110 refers to the ruler's head. Nevertheless, both employ bodily imagery to portray royal victory, restored honor, and exaltation. Chen relates the lifting of the ruler's head in Psalm 110:7 to texts describing the exalted horn of the LORD's anointed, including 1 Samuel 2:1, 10 and Psalm 89.[61]

The immediate context strengthens this reading. Psalm 110 depicts the defeat of hostile kings, judgment among the nations, the crushing of an enemy head, and the subsequent lifting of the ruler's own head in victory. This correspondence is less decisive than the identical use of יָדִין, but it provides supporting lexical and thematic evidence that Psalm 110 develops Hannah's expectation of the victorious exaltation of the LORD's anointed.

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[59] Allen P. Ross, A Commentary on the Psalms (90–150), vol. 3, Kregel Exegetical Library (Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic, 2016), 355–57.

[60] Ross, Psalms 90–150, 355–57; Rydelnik, "Psalm 110," 683–85.

[61] Chen, "Psalm 110," 53 n. 8.

The crushing and enemy-subjection imagery also places Psalm 110 within the earlier trajectory of Genesis 3:15. Iosif Zhakevich argues that Psalm 110:1 consciously alludes to Genesis 3:15 through the otherwise distinctive combination of the roots שׁית and איב, with "enemy/enmity" functioning as the object of "put" in both passages.[62] According to this reading, Psalm 110 presents the subjection of the Messiah's enemies as the reversal of the enmity and curse introduced in Genesis 3. The later references to crushing kings and an enemy head in Psalm 110:5–6 reinforce this broader Genesis 3:15 background.

Taken together, these correspondences follow the royal movement of Hannah's Song: the LORD supplies strength, judgment reaches the nations, and the anointed ruler is exalted in victory. Genesis 3:15 introduces the conflict and promises victory over the serpent; Genesis 49 identifies the victorious ruler with the line of Judah; and Numbers 24 develops this expectation through the exaltation of Israel's king and his triumph over hostile nations.[63] Hannah's Song draws these earlier promises together by announcing that the LORD will judge the ends of the earth, give strength to his king, and exalt the horn of his anointed. Psalm 110 gathers and advances this trajectory found in the Torah and 1–2 Samuel in its portrayal of David's exalted Lord, through whom the LORD subdues his enemies, judges the nations, reverses the curse, and establishes his rule from Zion.

Conclusion

The cumulative evidence demonstrates that the Psalter did not invent its messianic theology. Rather, it intentionally integrated earlier royal revelation into a coherent intra-canonical framework centered upon the coming Davidic Messiah. This conclusion has significant implications for interpreting the New Testament. If the Psalter already provides this integrated framework, then the central question is no longer whether the New Testament rereads isolated Old Testament passages in unexpected ways. Instead, the question becomes whether the New Testament recognizes the messianic framework that the Psalter itself has already established. The final section addresses that question.

The Recognition and Application of the Psalter's Messianic Framework in the New Testament

The first two sections have established two foundational conclusions. First, the Psalter possesses a coherent royal-messianic structure centered upon strategically placed psalms. Second, that structure intentionally integrates earlier revelation from Genesis 49, Hannah's Song, and the Davidic covenant into a unified canonical framework. The remaining question is whether the New Testament recognizes that same framework or instead reinterprets Israel's Scriptures in a fundamentally different way. The evidence suggests the former.

The Convergence of 1 Samuel 2, 2 Samuel 7, and Psalm 89 in Luke 1

Luke's birth narrative provides an ideal place to begin because it introduces Jesus through the same royal-messianic framework already established in the Hebrew Scriptures. If the

[62] Iosif J. Zhakevich, "Reverse of the Curse: An Allusion to Genesis 3:15 in Psalm 110:1," The Master's Seminary Journal33, no. 2 (Fall 2022): 241–46.

[63] Postell, "Messianism in Light of Literary Strategy," 335–36; Overholtzer, "Messianic Promise in the Song of Hannah," 77–82; Chen, "Psalm 110," 58–60.

Gospel authors recognized the Psalter's integrated messianic framework, that recognition should appear in the announcement of Jesus' identity and mission. Luke's infancy narrative does exactly that.

The messianic trajectories expressed in Hannah's Song, the Davidic covenant, and Psalm 89 converge in Luke 1. Gabriel announces that Mary's son will receive "the throne of his father David" and reign forever over the house of Jacob (Luke 1:32–33), language that noticeably recalls the Davidic covenant in 2 Samuel 7:12–16. Alva J. McClain explains that these verses identify Jesus as the heir to David's throne and observes the relationship between Gabriel's announcement, Mary's song, and Zacharias' prophecy.[64] McClain also connects Zecharias' words with the kingdom expectations of Psalms 72 and 89. Although he does not make the specific intertextual argument advanced here, his observations support reading Luke 1 as a convergence of Davidic and Psalter-shaped messianic expectation.

The text itself further supports this convergence. In response to Gabriel's announcement that her son would sit upon David's throne, Mary offers praise to God that recalls Hannah's prayer and song (cf. 1 Sam 1:11; 2:1–10).[65] Mary's declaration that God "has done mighty deeds with His arm" and "has scattered those who were proud" (Luke 1:51) may also recall Psalm 89:10 [MT 89:11], where the LORD crushes Rahab and scatters His enemies with His mighty arm. Thus, Mary's song itself brings together language associated with Hannah's Song and Psalm 89, the psalm that concludes Book III and presents the apparent crisis of the Davidic covenant. Whereas Psalm 89 laments the crisis confronting the Davidic kingship, Mary's echo of the psalm, following Gabriel's announcement, signals that God will act through Jesus to vindicate His covenant with David and restore the Davidic king.

Zacharias continues the same royal-messianic network in his prophetic song. In Luke 1:69, he blesses the LORD for raising up a "horn of salvation" in the house of David. The expression combines the salvation-horn imagery of Psalm 18:2 with the royal horn imagery associated with the LORD's anointed in 1 Samuel 2:10 and with David in Psalm 89:17, 24 [MT 89:18, 25]. The phrase thus joins the expectation of David's royal seed with prominent terminology that occurs at significant points within the Psalter's royal-messianic structure. Psalm 89 is especially important because it closes Book III by rehearsing the Davidic covenant and then lamenting the apparent rejection of the Davidic king. Against that canonical backdrop, Zacharias' announcement that God has raised up a horn of salvation "in the house of David" presents Jesus as God's answer to the covenantal crisis expressed at the conclusion of Psalm 89.

Zacharias also speaks of themes prominent in Psalm 89, including the Davidic king, salvation from enemies, and the LORD's covenant faithfulness. His prophecy then broadens this covenantal framework by recalling the oath sworn to Abraham and the fulfillment of God's

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[64] Alva J. McClain, *The Greatness of the Kingdom: An Inductive Study of the Kingdom of God* (Winona Lake, IN: BMH Books, 2001), 282.

[65] J. Daniel Hays notes that numerous scholars identify parallels between Hannah's Song in 1 Samuel 2:1–10 and Mary's song in Luke 1:46–56; see J. Daniel Hays, "1–2 Samuel," in *Dictionary of the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, ed. G. K. Beale, D. A. Carson, Benjamin L. Gladd, and Andrew David Naselli (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2023), 737. Hoffner similarly observes that the reversal-of-fortunes theme in Hannah's Song permeates Mary's Magnificat; see Hoffner, *1 & 2 Samuel*, 1:183. See also Coakley, "1 Samuel 2:1–10, 35," 369–70. Plummer identifies several Old Testament parallels behind the Magnificat, including 1 Samuel 1:11; 2:1, 7; Psalm 89:10; and 2 Samuel 22:51, which is parallel to Psalm 18:50 [MT 18:51]; see Alfred Plummer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to S. Luke*, International Critical Commentary (London: T&T Clark, 1896), 30–35. Eugene H. Merrill also identifies Luke 1:51 as an allusion to Psalm 89:10, where the LORD scatters His enemies with His mighty arm; see Merrill, "Psalm 89," 637.

promises to Israel (Luke 1:70–75). Luke 1 therefore brings together the Psalter's messianic framework by alluding to the Davidic throne, the exalted horn, the defeat of enemies, covenant faithfulness, and the fulfillment of the promises to Abraham and David.[66]

The significance of this convergence is that Luke identifies Jesus within the same royal-messianic framework already developed in the Psalter. Nothing within Luke 1 itself signals that these promises have been spiritualized, allegorized, or transferred away from Israel. Rather, the coming of Jesus, Israel's Messiah, is presented within the same Davidic, Israelite, and covenantal categories established by the Old Testament. Luke retains the language of David's throne, the house of Jacob, the house of David, Abraham, covenant, enemies, and kingdom as he identifies Jesus as the fulfillment of these expectations. The use of the OT in Luke 1 thus confirms the faithfulness of the God of Israel to His covenant promises. The convergence of Hannah's Song, the Davidic covenant, Psalm 89, and the Psalter's broader messianic structure follows the canonical trajectory already evident within the Old Testament: the royal horn anticipated by Hannah, promised through the Davidic covenant, and placed in apparent jeopardy at the conclusion of Psalm 89 is raised up in Jesus. Luke recognizes and applies an established messianic framework rather than constructing a new one through the rereading of isolated texts. His presentation of Jesus supports the central claim of this study: the New Testament identifies Him as the promised Davidic Messiah without redefining the royal, national, and covenantal expectations attached to that hope.

The New Testament Use of the Suffering Davidic King of the Psalter

The infancy narratives establish that Jesus is the promised Davidic Messiah. The Gospel of John then demonstrates how the early church understood Jesus' suffering was understood in light of the psalms. John's fulfillment citations do not simply collect isolated proof texts. Rather, they repeatedly draw from the Psalter's portrait of the afflicted Davidic king, thereby recognizing the same canonical framework already identified in the preceding sections. To be sure, John 13:18 quotes Psalm 41:9; John 15:25 cites the hatred-without-cause motif from Psalm 69:4, possibly in connection with Psalm 35:19; John 19:24 cites Psalm 22:18; and John 19:36 corresponds closely to Psalm 34:20.[67] These passages raise an important hermeneutical question: How can psalms that originally speak of David's suffering be applied to Jesus without reinterpreting the original meaning of the Old Testament text?

Kaiser helpfully explains that "David in his person and office carried the full weight of the messianic promise-plan of God."[68] He further explains that David had been given this knowledge in 2 Samuel 7, where the promise-plan communicated to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob was now repeated and applied to David and his "seed" through an everlasting house, throne, and kingdom.[69] In 2 Samuel 22–23, David's words appear to link God's promises to him with the

[66] John V. Fesko observes that Luke emphasizes God's promises to David and Abraham in Luke 1:30–33, 54–55, 68–73; see John V. Fesko, "Biblical Theology," in *Dictionary of the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, ed. G. K. Beale, D. A. Carson, Benjamin L. Gladd, and Andrew David Naselli (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2023), 69.

[67] D. A. Carson, The Gospel According to John, Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 470–71, 527, 611–13, 627; Edward W. Klink III, John, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2016), 586–87, 667, 796–97, 816–17; Michael J. Vlach, The Old in the New: Understanding How the New Testament Authors Quoted the Old Testament (The Woodlands, TX: Kress Biblical Resources, 2021), 156–59.

[68] Kaiser, Messiah in the Old Testament, 107–8.

[69] Ibid.; Vlach, Old in the New, 153–55, 165–66.

future plan for the promised Seed, the Messiah (cf. 2 Sam 22:51 // Ps 18:50; 2 Sam 23:1–7).[70] Since a "seed" resembles the stock from which it comes, there is contextual precedent for expecting David's seed to resemble David. In this way, the Psalter presents Israel's Messiah not only as the Davidic deliverer but also as one whose suffering would correspond to the suffering of David.[71]

An examination of David's life in 1–2 Samuel and his writings in the Psalms reveals that David was not a king who knew only victory. He experienced suffering, opposition, and betrayal. In the Psalter, the close relationship between David's enemies and the enemies of the Messiah is significantly introduced in Psalm 2 and recurs throughout the Psalter. The Psalter's Davidic king and righteous sufferer are repeatedly opposed, betrayed, and threatened with destruction, yet preserved and vindicated by God, while their enemies ultimately face judgment and destruction. This pattern appears in several psalms that recur in the fulfillment formulas used in the Gospel of John. It is especially strong in Psalms 34, 41, and 22, and somewhat weaker, though still present, in Psalms 35 and 69. John's fulfillment citations therefore need not be understood as isolated appeals to accidental verbal parallels; they repeatedly identify Jesus with the suffering Davidic figure already embedded within the Psalter's royal-messianic framework.

The strongest link occurs between John 13:18, John 17:12, Psalm 41, and Psalm 2. In Psalm 2, the enemies of the LORD and His anointed are warned that if they do not submit to the king, they will perish: וְתֹאבְדוּ, "you will perish" (Ps 2:12). In Psalm 41:5, David's enemies desire the opposite outcome: they want the Davidic sufferer to die and his name to perish, וְאָבַד שְׁמוֹ. Then in Psalm 41:9, David is betrayed by a close companion who has eaten his bread. John 13:18 identifies Judas through this betrayal text, and John 17:12 describes Judas as ὁ υἱὸς τῆς ἀπωλείας, "the son of destruction."[72]

The relationship creates a striking thematic reversal: the enemies of the LORD's anointed seek the destruction of the Davidic sufferer, yet Psalm 2 announces that those who oppose the LORD's king are themselves the ones who will perish. Judas's identification as "the son of destruction" resonates with this broader pattern, though John 17:12 should not be understood as a direct quotation of either Psalm 2 or Psalm 41. John's use of Psalm 41 is therefore best understood not as an isolated appeal to David's experience but as the recognition that this experience was purposely linked to the larger portrait of the opposed Davidic king already established by the Psalter's royal-messianic structure.

A similar, though less prominent, link exists between John 15:25 and Psalm 35:19 / Psalm 69:4. John 15:25 cites the hatred-without-cause statement in explanation of the world's hatred of Jesus. The language recalls Psalm 35:19, שֹׂנְאַי חִנָּם, "those who hate me without cause," and Psalm 69:4, which uses the same phrase, שֹׂנְאַי חִנָּם, along with אֹיְבַי שֶׁקֶר, "my false enemies."[73] Although Psalm 2 does not use the Hebrew verb שׂנא, "hate," it does describe the irrational and groundless opposition of the nations who plot a vain thing against the LORD and His anointed. Thus, while the lexical correspondence with Psalm 2 is indirect, the thematic pattern is consistent: John 15:25 identifies Jesus as the Davidic sufferer who experiences the same kind of groundless hatred that the Psalter associates with opposition to the LORD's king.

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[70] Kaiser, Messiah in the Old Testament, 107–8; Vlach, Old in the New, 153–55.

[71] Walter C. Kaiser Jr., "Single Meaning, Unified Referents," in Three Views on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament, ed. Kenneth Berding and Jonathan Lunde (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008), 63–65; Vlach, Old in the New, 153–59.

[72] Carson, John, 470–71; Klink, John, 586–87; Vlach, Old in the New, 156–57.

[73] Carson, John, 527; Klink, John, 667; Vlach, Old in the New, 157.

The quotation of Psalm 22:18 in John 19:24 can also be linked to Psalm 2 through the larger movement and lexical associations of Psalm 22. The psalm as a whole moves from the affliction of David to the worldwide recognition of the LORD's reign. This movement is especially significant because Psalm 22 concludes with "all the ends of the earth" turning to the LORD, using the same key expression, אַפְסֵי־אָרֶץ, found in Psalm 2:8, where the LORD promises the nations and the ends of the earth to His anointed. Thus, Psalm 22 presents the suffering Davidic figure in a psalm that ends with the very global horizon promised to the Messiah in Psalm 2:8, Ps 72:8, and 1 Samuel 2:10.[74] In this way, John 19:24 associates Jesus' death with a psalm whose suffering Davidic figure is ultimately bound up with the LORD's purposes for the ends of the earth.[75] When John cites Psalm 22:18, he is not misappropriating, altering, or detaching Psalm 22 from its original Davidic setting. Rather, he identifies Jesus with the Davidic sufferer whose affliction ultimately stands within the LORD's worldwide purposes announced elsewhere in the Psalter.

John 19:36 also shares lexical and thematic links with the opposed Messiah of Psalm 2. John 19:36 says, ὀστοῦν οὐ συντριβήσεται αὐτοῦ, "Not one of his bones will be broken." Psalm 34:20 LXX likewise says that the LORD keeps the righteous sufferer's bones and that not one of them οὐ συντριβήσεται, "will be broken."[76] Psalm 2:9 LXX uses the same verb root for the anointed king's destruction of the rebellious nations: συντρίψεις αὐτούς, "you will shatter them." The link between Psalm 2 and Psalm 34 is further strengthened by the repetition of the formula חסה בו + אַשְׁרֵי.[77] Psalm 2:12 declares, אַשְׁרֵי כָּל־חוֹסֵי בוֹ, "Blessed are all who take refuge in him," while Psalm 34:8 says, אַשְׁרֵי הַגֶּבֶר יֶחֱסֶה־בּוֹ, "Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him." Psalm 34:22 then continues the same refuge theme by affirming that none who take refuge in the LORD will be condemned. These correspondences suggest that Psalm 34 participates in the same broader canonical vocabulary of refuge, opposition, preservation, and judgment found in Psalm 2, although they should be treated as cumulative evidence rather than proof of direct literary dependence between the two psalms.

This creates a striking reversal. In Psalm 2:9, the Messiah will shatter the rebellious nations, while in Psalm 34:20 and John 19:36, the righteous sufferer's bones will not be shattered. In this way, the Messiah suffers and even dies, but He is not ultimately shattered. Instead, Psalm 2 says that He will be the one who shatters the rebellious nations. The shared συντρίβω terminology therefore provides a suggestive canonical reversal: the righteous Davidic sufferer is preserved from the very destruction that ultimately falls upon those who oppose the LORD's anointed. John's use of these suffering-Davidic psalms, therefore, does not reinterpret the Old Testament against its original meaning. Rather, it identifies Jesus as the Davidic Messiah whose suffering, betrayal, preservation, and vindication correspond with the messianic shape of the Psalter itself.[78]

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[74] Kaiser, Messiah in the Old Testament, 116–17.

[75] Carson, John, 611–13; George R. Beasley-Murray, John, 2nd ed., Word Biblical Commentary 36 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1999), 347–48; Klink, John, 796–97; Vlach, Old in the New, 158.

[76] On the possible Passover and Psalm 34 backgrounds of John 19:36, see Carson, John, 627; Beasley-Murray, John, 354–57; Vlach, Old in the New, 159.

[77] (Psalm 2:12: אַשְׁרֵי כָּל־חוֹסֵי בוֹ; Psalm 34:8 [MT 34:9]: אַשְׁרֵי הַגֶּבֶר יֶחֱסֶה־בּוֹ)

[78] Kaiser, "Single Meaning, Unified Referents," 63–65; Vlach, Old in the New, 153–59.

The Resurrected and Enthroned Messiah: Psalms 16 and 110 in Acts 2

Whereas John's Gospel emphasizes the suffering Messiah, Peter's sermon in Acts 2 turns to the Psalter's teaching concerning the Messiah's resurrection and exaltation. Together these passages demonstrate that the New Testament applies the full range of the Psalter's messianic expectations.

In Acts 2:25–32, Peter appeals to Psalm 16:8–11 to demonstrate that Jesus' resurrection was not an unexpected event but the fulfillment of David's prophetic expectation. Peter does more than quote Psalm 16; he explicitly interprets it. After citing the psalm, he argues that David "looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ" (Acts 2:31). Consequently, the central hermeneutical question is not simply whether Psalm 16 can be applied to Jesus, but whether David consciously intended to speak of the coming Messiah when he composed the psalm. Peter's answer is unequivocal. David wrote as a prophet whose words anticipated the resurrection of the Messiah.[79]

Peter supports this conclusion with three arguments drawn directly from Israel's Scriptures. First, David was a prophet (Acts 2:30). Second, David knew that God had sworn an oath to seat one of his descendants upon his throne, recalling the promises of the Davidic covenant (2 Sam 7:12–16; cf. Ps 89:3–4; 132:11). Third, David himself died and remained in the grave, making it impossible for Psalm 16:10 to find its ultimate fulfillment in David's own experience. Therefore, Peter concludes that David "looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ" (Acts 2:31). Rather than reading Christ back into the psalm, Peter grounds his interpretation in David's prophetic office, the Davidic covenant, and the language of Psalm 16 itself.[80]

Peter's argument is cumulative rather than dependent upon a single verse. The resurrection of Jesus is interpreted within the broader framework of God's covenant promises to David. Because David was a prophet and knew that God had sworn an oath to seat one of his descendants upon his throne, Peter concludes that David foresaw and spoke concerning the Messiah's resurrection.[81] This understanding also coheres with the canonical shape of the Psalter. As the introduction to the Psalter, Psalm 2 presents the LORD's anointed as opposed by the nations yet destined for worldwide dominion. Psalm 16 likewise portrays David's confidence in the LORD amid danger and the certainty that death will not ultimately frustrate God's covenant purposes. Peter's appeal to the Davidic covenant in Acts 2:30 closely resembles this canonical movement, connecting David's preservation with the future triumph of the promised Davidic King. Read within the Psalter's broader royal-messianic framework, Psalm 16 adds the expectation that death itself cannot frustrate the LORD's covenant purposes for the promised Davidic king.

A second feature of Psalm 16 further strengthens Peter's interpretation. Psalm 16:10 speaks of the LORD's חָסִידְךָ ("Your Holy One" or "Your Faithful One"). While David certainly speaks from his own experience throughout the psalm, Peter argues that the language of verse 10 ultimately exceeds David's own circumstances because David experienced bodily decay whereas Jesus did not (Acts 2:29–31). Kaiser observes that the title חָסִיד functions much like other

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[79] Walter C. Kaiser Jr., "Single Meaning, Unified Referents," in Three Views on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament, 75–81; see also Vlach, *The Old in the New*, 190–95.

[80] Kaiser, "Single Meaning, Unified Referents," 77–81; Allen P. Ross, A Commentary on the Psalms 1–89, vol. 1, Kregel Exegetical Library (Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic, 2011), 399–401, 411–12.

[81] Walter C. Kaiser Jr., The Uses of the Old Testament in the New, 190–95

representative messianic expressions in the Old Testament, allowing David, as the covenant representative of the royal line, to speak in a way that ultimately points beyond himself to the Messiah.[82]

This observation also invites comparison with Hannah's Song. Immediately before announcing the future reign of the LORD's anointed over the ends of the earth, Hannah declares that "He keeps the feet of His holy one" (חֲסִידוֹ; 1 Sam 2:9, Ketiv).[83] Psalm 16 likewise affirms that the LORD's חָסִידְךָ will not experience decay (Ps 16:10). Chou explicitly appeals to 1 Samuel 2:9–10 as an earlier messianic context for this terminology, observing a possible correspondence between Hannah's reference to the LORD's חֲסִידוֹ, "his holy one," and her concluding reference to מְשִׁיחוֹ, "his anointed." The connection is further suggestive because Hannah has already declared that the LORD מוֹרִיד שְׁאוֹל וַיָּעַל, "brings down to Sheol and raises up" (1 Sam 2:6), while Psalm 16:10 brings שְׁאוֹל and חָסִידְךָ together in its expression of confidence that the LORD will not abandon the speaker to Sheol or allow His faithful one to see decay. Since Hannah's song contributes foundational royal-messianic themes that recur throughout the Psalter, including the anointed king, worldwide dominion, and the defeat of God's enemies (1 Sam 2:10; cf. Pss 2; 72; 89; 110), it provides an important canonical background for Psalm 16. More specifically, the combination of Sheol, divine preservation, חָסִיד, and the immediately following reference to the LORD's anointed provides a meaningful earlier canonical parallel to Psalm 16:10. This correspondence does not by itself establish direct literary dependence, but it strengthens the case that Psalm 16 participates in a messianic trajectory already present in Hannah's Song.

After establishing Jesus' resurrection through Psalm 16, Peter immediately turns to Psalm 110 to demonstrate His present exaltation. According to Psalm 110:1, David's Lord sits at the LORD's right hand until His enemies are made a footstool for His feet. Peter identifies Jesus as the one presently enthroned at God's right hand while awaiting the future subjugation of His enemies. Thus, Jesus is both David's descendant according to the covenant and David's Lord according to Psalm 110.

Peter's use of Psalm 110 likewise follows the canonical movement of the Psalter. Psalms 2 and 72 present the glorious reign of the Davidic King and the worldwide scope of His kingdom. Psalm 89 then laments the apparent contradiction between the Davidic covenant and the humiliation of the LORD's anointed, whose throne has been cast down. Situated at the close of Book III, Psalm 89 raises the question of how God's promises to David will be fulfilled. In the Psalter's final arrangement, Psalm 110 provides a canonical answer to that crisis by portraying David's Lord enthroned at the LORD's right hand. The humiliated Davidic anointed one of Psalm 89 thus finds his canonical counterpart in the exalted Lord of Psalm 110, who awaits the final defeat of His enemies.

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[82] Kaiser, "Single Meaning, Unified Referents," 77–80. See also Abner Chou, The Hermeneutics of the Biblical Writers: Learning to Interpret Scripture from the Prophets and Apostles (Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic, 2018), 144–45. Chou argues that God's חָסִיד in Psalm 16:10 functions as a distinctive designation that refers to the Messiah and explicitly appeals to 1 Samuel 2:9–10 as an earlier messianic context for the expression.

[83] The Ketiv of 1 Samuel 2:9 reads the singular חֲסִידוֹ, "his faithful one," while the Qere reads the plural חֲסִידָיו, "his faithful ones." Hoffner prints the textual variation and renders the line with a singular referent: "He guards the steps of his faithful"; see Hoffner, 1 & 2 Samuel, 1:169, 174. Chou, Hermeneutics of the Biblical Writers, 144–45, likewise notes the significance to the singular reading of 1 Samuel 2:9 and relates the "holy one" of 2:9 to the Messiah/anointed one of 2:10. The proposed relationship with Psalm 16:10 therefore rests not merely upon the recurrence of חָסִיד, but upon its occurrence within Hannah's larger sequence of descent to and ascent from שְׁאוֹל (1 Sam 2:6), preservation of the חֲסִידוֹ (2:9 Ketiv), and the victory of the LORD's מְשִׁיחוֹ (1 Sam 2:10).

Peter's proclamation in Acts 2 follows this same theological trajectory. Jesus' humiliation and death were not the failure of the Davidic promise but the necessary prelude to His resurrection, exaltation, and future reign. Rather than reinterpreting the Psalter, Peter proclaims the literal fulfillment of the messianic hope already embedded within its canonical structure.

Peter's use of Psalms 16 and 110 therefore follows the same intra-canonical logic observed within the Psalter. The Davidic covenant identifies the royal line, Psalm 16 anticipates the Messiah's victory over death, and Psalm 110 announces His exaltation and future victory over His enemies. Peter does not combine unrelated proof texts; he recognizes the coordinated messianic framework already present in Israel's Scriptures.

The Future Rule of the Messiah over the Nations

The royal-messianic expectations of the Old Testament converge in prominent places in the New Testament, including texts that anticipate the Messiah's future victory over His enemies and rule over the nations. In the letter to the Hebrews, the author explicitly joins Psalm 2, the Davidic covenant of 2 Samuel 7, and Psalm 110. Hebrews 1:5a quotes Psalm 2:7: "You are My Son, Today I have begotten You," and immediately follows it with a quote from 2 Samuel 7:14: "I will be a Father to Him and He shall be a Son to Me." As the introduction continues, the author cites Psalm 110:1: "Sit at My right hand, Until I make Your enemies A footstool for Your feet" (Heb 1:13). The sequence identifies Jesus as the royal Son of Psalm 2, the promised Davidic Son of 2 Samuel 7, and David's exalted Lord of Psalm 110.[84] The convergence of these messianic texts resembles the messianic framework already developed within the Psalter. Furthermore, the designation of Jesus as the "firstborn" (Heb 1:6) resonates with the Davidic royal language of Psalm 89:27 [MT 89:28], where the LORD declares concerning the Davidic king, "I also shall make him My firstborn, the highest of the kings of the earth."[85] This convergence is significant because Hebrews does not construct Jesus' messianic identity from unrelated proof texts. Rather, it brings together the same Davidic and royal-messianic traditions that were already integrated in the Old Testament.[86]

The above verses in Hebrews identify Jesus as the promised Messiah of the Hebrew Scriptures using royal psalms that occupy strategic positions within the Psalter. Hebrews 10:12–13 appeals to Psalm 110 to explain Jesus' present and future ministry in relationship to the temporal nature of that text. In Psalm 110:1, the Messiah will sit at the LORD's right hand עַד, "until," his enemies are subjected to him. In this way, Hebrews 10:12–13 portrays Christ as presently seated at God's right hand, having accomplished the decisive victory through His

[84] George H. Guthrie, "Hebrews, Letter to The," in Dictionary of the New Testament Use of the Old Testament, ed. G. K. Beale, D. A. Carson, Benjamin L. Gladd, and Andrew David Naselli (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2023), 294–295; Guthrie identifies Heb 1:5–14 as a catena or "string of pearls," observes that Ps 2:7 and 2 Sam 7:14 are brought together through their common sonship language, and describes Ps 110:1 as the climactic quotation of the catena, emphasizing the Son's enthronement at God's right hand.

[85] Eugene H. Merrill, "Psalm 89: God's Faithful Promise of Messiah," in The Moody Handbook of Messianic Prophecy: Studies and Expositions of the Messiah in the Old Testament, ed. Michael Rydelnik and Edwin Blum (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2019), 631–43.

[86] Guthrie, "Hebrews, Letter to the," 294–95; see also Seth D. Postell, "Messianism in Light of Literary Strategy," Bibliotheca Sacra 177 (2020): 329–50; Abner Chou, The Hermeneutics of the Biblical Writers: Learning to Interpret Scripture from the Prophets and Apostles (Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic, 2018), 113–155 Chou argues that the New Testament writers interpret prior revelation in continuity with the authorial logic already established in the Old Testament.

sacrifice, while the final subjection of His enemies remains future.[87] The text reads, "but He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God, waiting from that time onward until (ἕως) His enemies be made a footstool for His feet." Both the Hebrew of Psalm 110:1 and the Greek of Hebrews 10:13 use temporal markers to preserve the sequence between the Messiah's session at the LORD's right hand and the subsequent subjection of His enemies. In this way, Hebrews 10:12–13 portrays Christ as presently seated at God's right hand while the final subjection of His enemies remains future.

Other books in the New Testament further affirm the recognition and application of the Psalter's messianic framework. First Corinthians 15:25–26 draws upon the temporal language of Psalm 110:1, distinguishing Christ's present exalted authority from the future complete subjection of His enemies.[88]The Book of Revelation likewise draws repeatedly from psalms within the Psalter's royal-messianic framework in its presentation of Jesus as the Messiah and especially in its expectation of His future rule over the nations.[89] Revelation 1:5 describes Jesus as the "firstborn" and "ruler of the kings of the earth," language that resonates with Psalm 89:27 [MT 89:28], while Revelation 2:26–27; 12:5; and 19:15 repeatedly apply the rod-of-iron language of Psalm 2:8–9 to His rule and victory over the nations.

Conclusion

This paper has argued that the New Testament uses the messianic Psalms literally and consistently rather than reinterpreting the Psalter's own references to Israel and her Messiah as referring to the church. This was demonstrated by observing how the Psalter integrates the messianic promises of Genesis 49, 1 Samuel 2, and 2 Samuel 7 into its own literary seams, placing royal-messianic psalms at strategic structural locations that align the Messiah's opposition, suffering, vindication, exaltation, and worldwide rule. The New Testament authors identify Jesus within this same canonical framework when explaining His birth, suffering, resurrection, exaltation, and future reign. Their use of the Psalms is therefore not an isolated rereading of individual prooftexts, but the recognition and application of a messianic message already integrated within Israel's Scriptures. As the Psalter juxtaposed the suffering and the exaltation of the Messiah, the New Testament authors referenced those same texts to identify Jesus as Israel's long-awaited Messiah. The Psalter thus remains a critical witness to the identity of Jesus as Messiah while maintaining the hope of Israel's future, literal restoration.

The conclusion to this study carries hermeneutical, theological, and ministerial implications. Hermeneutically, a canonical consideration of Israel and the Messiah in the Psalter indicates a framework of continuity rather than discontinuity. The Messiah, ruling as the eschatological Davidic king over a literal Zion in the land of Israel and over the ethnic people of

[87] John F. MacArthur Jr., Hebrews, MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago: Moody Press, 1983), 254–56; Michael Rydelnik, "Psalm 110: The Messiah as Eternal King Priest," in The Moody Handbook of Messianic Prophecy, ed. Michael Rydelnik and Edwin Blum (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2019), 673–91. Both authors recognize Psalm 110 as messianic and distinguish the Messiah's exalted position from the still-future subjection of His enemies.

[88] George H. Guthrie, "Hebrews, Letter to the," in Dictionary of the New Testament Use of the Old Testament, ed. G. K. Beale, D. A. Carson, Benjamin L. Gladd, and Andrew David Naselli (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2023), 295; Guthrie explicitly relates Ps 110:1 to 1 Cor 15:25–27 in the context of the subjection of Christ's enemies.

[89] John F. MacArthur Jr., Revelation 12–22, MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago: Moody Press, 2000), 11. MacArthur explicitly links Revelation 12:5 to Psalm 2:7–9 and identifies Revelation 2:26–27 and 19:15 as parallel expressions of Christ's future rule over the nations.

Israel, is integral to the Psalter's literary structure, and this relationship is maintained by the New Testament authors as they allude to these psalms. Canonical studies should therefore engage the Psalter's intra-canonical framework of continuity when tracing themes such as Israel and the Messiah across the biblical canon.

This hermeneutical implication adds further weight to the evidence dispensational theology presents concerning the future of Israel. In contrast to non-dispensational systems, dispensationalism maintains that the LORD will fulfill His promises to Israel, and that these promises do not find their fulfillment in the church age. Because the Psalter ties the Messiah's identity to an eschatological Israel through Genesis 49, 1 Samuel 2, and 2 Samuel 7, the New Testament's use of the psalms that allude to these passages establishes a strong line of literal intertextual usage across the canon. Non-dispensational systems such as covenant theology ought to reckon with the weight of this evidence for continuity between the promises for Israel and the Messiah.

Three ministerial applications follow. First, pastors should study, preach, and teach God's future plans for Israel according to the New Testament's consistent use of the messianic psalms. Second, pastors and scholars holding to a confessional position need to measure historical or creedal positions on the relationship between Israel and the church against this canonical continuity. Historical Christianity has largely presented a replacement view of Israel, but the Reformation principle of *sola scriptura* calls Christians to re-examine that inheritance. Third, evangelicals should remember the critical role of messianic prophecy in evangelism. At the core of the Christian faith is the claim that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah promised in the Hebrew Scriptures. Since the Psalms are the most quoted Old Testament book in the New Testament, and many of them testify to Jesus as Messiah, losing this witness to reinterpretation would be detrimental to the message of the gospel.