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AN EXPLORATION OF JOB'S USE OF THE PSALMS

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AN EXPLORATION OF JOB'S USE OF THE PSALMS

A Guided Research Paper

Presented to Professor Lance R. Hawley

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By

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Chapter One

Introduction

In Job 7.17-18, Job famously asks God,

What is humanity that you magnify them,
And that you set your heart on them?

And you consider them every morning,
Every moment you test them.¹

Scholars have long recognized this as a “bitter parody” of Ps 8.5, which asks God, “What is humanity that you remember them, and sons of man that you consider them?”²

Whereas the psalmist goes on to praise God by proclaiming, “and you make them a little lower than gods, and you crown them with honor and majesty” (8.6), Job twists this praise, lamenting, “Will you not look away from me? / Will you not abandon me until I swallow my spit?” (Job 7.19).

Describing this literary allusion, Will Kynes asks,

If the author of Job interacted with Psalm 8 in such a knowing and sophisticated way, suggesting that he expected his readers to be familiar with such texts, what other allusions to the Psalms may likewise make significant contributions to the dialogue between Job, his friends, and God?³

Kynes goes on to identify six psalms which figure prominently in the book of Job (Pss 1, 8, 39, 73, 107, and 139). Still, many more allusions and echoes exist

¹ All biblical translations are my own. In order to tend to the poetic nature of both Job and the psalms, my practice for this project is as follows: if I am citing multiple verses, I format the text in lines, as in this example; in cases where I only cite one verse, I separate lines with a /.

² Will Kynes notes that T.K. Cheyne coined the phrase “bitter parody,” now commonly used to describe this link between Ps 8.5 and Job 7.17-18. See Will Kynes, *My Psalm Has Turned into Weeping: Job’s Dialogue with the Psalms* (Boston: De Gruyter, 2012), 1; T.K. Cheyne, *Job and Solomon: Or, The Wisdom of the Old Testament* (New York: T. Whittaker, 1887), 88.

³ Kynes, *My Psalm Has Turned into Weeping*, 2.

throughout the book, which he acknowledges. This project explores allusions in the speech cycles of Job and identifies three major patterns: (1) Job laments with lament psalms; (2) Job laments with praise psalms; and (3) Job rejects praise psalms. In each chapter, I locate Job's allusions of various psalms and articulate how each fits within one of the three patterns listed.

Relevance and Relation to Others' Works in the Area

Inquiries into intertextuality, inner-biblical interpretation, and reception history have become increasingly popular within biblical studies in recent decades, including within the book of Job.⁴ Will Kynes has dedicated much of his work to understanding intertextuality and allusions in the book of Job, especially as it relates to the Psalms, and this project seeks to build on his work. While Kynes's work looks at a select few psalms and explores how they function within the book as a whole, including how Job, the friends, and God engage one another with particular psalms, I am seeking to identify patterns in how the author of Job uses a larger number of psalms in the speeches of Job and describe how they function.⁵

⁴ See, for example, Michael Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985); Brennan W. Breed, *Nomadic Text: A Theory of Biblical Reception History* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2014); Benjamin Sommer, *A Prophet Reads Scripture: Allusion in Isaiah 40-66* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988); Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989); Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2016). For works specifically concerning Job, see Katharine Dell and Will Kynes, eds, *Reading Job Intertextually* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2013); Kynes, *My Psalm Has Turned into Weeping*.

⁵ Along with the six psalms discussed in *My Psalm Has Turned into Weeping*, Kynes explores Psalm 22's use in the book of Job in "Lament Personified: Job in the *Bedeutungsnetz* of Psalm 22," in *Spiritual Complaint: The Theology and Practice of Lament*, ed. Miriam J. Bier and Tim Buckeley (Eugene: Pickwick Publications, 2013), 34-48.

Kynes notes that much of the focus in the modern period on intertextuality between Job and the psalms has been concerning dating the two books, and considerably fewer works seek to understand how these allusions and echoes function within the text.⁶ Yet, one might again return to the question posed at the beginning of this project: if the author of Job interacts with Psalm 8, what other allusions and echoes may be at work in Job, and how might they increase an understanding of Job's argument?

Defining Terms

Throughout this project, I utilize Benjamin Sommer's definitions set forth in *A Prophet Reads Scripture*. First, Sommer offers Earl Miner's standard definition of allusion: a "tacit reference to another literary work, to another art, to history, to contemporary figures, or the like... [requiring] an echo of sufficiently familiar yet distinctive and meaningful elements."⁷ Drawing on Carmela Perri, he explains that "an allusion refers at least doubly: the sign of an allusion marker refers within its text's world as well as allusively, to some referent outside this text."⁸

⁶ See Kynes, *My Psalm Has Turned into Weeping*, 9.

⁷ Sommer, *A Prophet Reads Scripture*, 10. Here Sommer quotes Earl Miner, "Allusion," in *Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*, ed. Alex Preminger (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), 18.

⁸ Sommer, *A Prophet Reads Scripture*, 11. Here Sommer quotes Carmela Perri, "On Alluding," *Poetics* 7 (1978): 290. As Miner's definition makes clear, the phenomenon of allusion can occur in other forms of art beyond writing. I use language of "alluding text" and "evoked text" for simplicity because I am dealing only with texts in this project. I get the phrases "alluding text" and "evoked text" from Sommer.

Sommer's way of identifying an allusion is informed by Ziva Ben-Porat's four stage method of interpreting an allusion, through which the "reader actualizes the allusion."⁹ First the reader recognizes the "marker, an identifiable element or pattern in one text belonging to another independent text." This could be a phrase, sentence, motif, or even a single word in the alluding text that points back to the evoked text.¹⁰

Second, the reader recognizes the evoked text. While similar, this is distinct from the first stage because it is possible, perhaps even common, to recognize an allusion without remembering the context from which the allusion comes. As Sommer writes, "Most readers have experienced a sense that a phrase in a text they are reading is borrowed without knowing where it is borrowed from."¹¹

Third, the reader modifies the interpretation of the alluding text based on the evoked text. Because the reader has identified both the marker and evoked text, they then bring parts of the evoked text and read the alluding text through that lens, which necessarily modifies the interpretation of the alluding text.¹²

Finally, the reader allows the evoked text as a whole to inform the interpretation of the alluding text, finding connections apart from the identified marker of the first

⁹ Sommer, *A Prophet Reads Scripture*, 11. For her own explanation of these stages, see Ziva Ben-Porat, "The Poetics of Literary Allusion," *PTL: A Journal for Descriptive Poetics and Theory of Literature* 1 (1976): 105-128. This method of identifying allusions focuses on the reader rather than authorial intent. This leaves open the possibility that an author may not have intended an allusion, although the readers may hear them, nonetheless. My project follows this "reader-focused" approach to identifying allusions. The nature of this, however, is that my findings are subjective, and, while convincing to me, may not be as convincing to others. Nevertheless, I do argue that each instance is convincing by locating shared words or themes that I believe bolster the case for each instance to be considered an allusion, which I explain in my section on methodology.

¹⁰ Sommer, *A Prophet Reads Scripture*, 11.

¹¹ Sommer, *A Prophet Reads Scripture*, 12. While this may be a common experience, one cannot move onto the third stage of interpreting allusions without identifying the evoked text.

¹² Sommer, *A Prophet Reads Scripture*, 12.

stage.¹³ Sommer writes, “Once the two texts have been linked by the marker’s evocation of the marked, the reader may recall other signs within the alluding text, even though these signs are not linked as marked and marker.”¹⁴ These connections could be similar (or opposing) themes, images, metaphors, etc. This stage is represented in the question posed at the beginning of this project: if the author of Job interacts with Psalm 8, what other allusions and echoes may be at work in Job, and how might they increase an understanding of Job’s argument?

Sommer makes a distinction between an allusion and an echo. Whereas an allusion involves at least the first three stages set forth by Ben-Porat, an echo involves only the first two stages. In other words, the evoked text does not bear interpretive weight in an echo when recognized in the alluding text.¹⁵ While allusions feature more prominently in this project, echoes can still reveal patterns of how the author of Job used various psalms.

Finally, Sommer defines influence. Whereas allusions and echoes rely on an identified marker of an evoked text in an alluding text, influence can be much broader. Sommer explains that “influence-study generally entailed the practice of tracing a text’s generic and thematic lineage.”¹⁶ Influence is not limited to a particular marker of an

¹³ Sommer notes that “allusions do not always require readers to reach Ben-Porat’s fourth stage. Nevertheless, this stage factors heavily into this project.

¹⁴ Sommer, *A Prophet Reads Scripture*, 12.

¹⁵ Sommer writes that, “allusion consists not only in the echoing of an earlier text but in the utilization of the marked material for some rhetorical or strategic end.” See Sommer, *A Prophet Reads Scripture*, 15-16.

¹⁶ Sommer, *A Prophet Reads Scripture*, 14. Here Sommer is using a definition set forth in Louis Renza, s.v. “Influence,” in *Critical Terms for Literary Study*, ed. Frank Lentricchia and Thomas McLaughlin (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 186.

evoked text, then.¹⁷ One might think of influence as similar to Ben-Porat's fourth stage of allusion without the marker recognized in the first stage. While the many allusions and echoes of various psalms throughout the book of Job suggest influence on the work, and while exploring allusions and echoes necessarily entails exploring influence, I do not treat influence apart from allusions and echoes in this project.

Although Sommer does not write about the term intertextuality, it has become prevalent in biblical scholarship.¹⁸ Peter D. Miscall defines intertextuality as "a covering term for all the possible relations that can be established between texts."¹⁹ Intertextuality does not address which text was earlier or later or how one text used another; it simply acknowledges that two texts are connected.²⁰ Like influence, I do not address intertextuality apart from allusions and echoes in this project.

Basic Assumptions and Delimitations

Throughout my study, I assume Job is echoing the psalms, and not vice versa, unless there is reason to assume otherwise, in which case I offer a brief discussion of dating when that arises. Dating both Job and many psalms is notoriously difficult, and one could certainly argue that Job is older than many psalms in question in this study.²¹

¹⁷ Sommer, *A Prophet Reads Scripture*, 15 explains, "whereas allusion posits a relationship between two specific texts (in most cases, between particular sets of lines in those texts), influence refers to relations between authors, whole works, and even traditions."

¹⁸ John Barton, "Déjà lu: Intertextuality, Method or Theory," in *Reading Job Intertextually*, Library of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies, 574, edited by Katharine Dell and Will Kynes (New York: Bloomsbury, 2013), 2.

¹⁹ Peter D. Miscall, "Isaiah: New Heavens, New Earth, New Book," in *Reading Between Texts: Intertextuality and the Hebrew Bible*, edited by Danna Nolan Fewell, Literary Currents in Biblical Interpretation (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992), 44.

²⁰ For a discussion of intertextuality as a method and theory, see Barton, "Déjà lu" 1-16.

In many instances, however, it makes far more sense for Job to be echoing a psalm than vice versa, particularly in the case of praise. Concerning this, one commentator said, “If the words were first used in Job’s sense, would it be possible to ever take the acid out of them?”²² It is much easier to imagine a praise text being parodied than a lament as extreme as Job’s being parodied as a praise without the lament spoiling the new meaning.²³

Due to the subjective nature of identifying and interpreting allusions and echoes, I do not claim to exhaust references to the psalms in the book of Job. One could probably argue for many more allusions and echoes throughout Job that I do not address. Further, my work focuses only on the first two speech cycles of Job. Due to the complex and inconclusive evidence, along with my own lack of finding echoes and allusions to psalms in the third speech cycle, I do not consider it.²⁴ I do not give attention to ways the friends, Elihu, or God might use the psalms, though Kynes’s work shows that each of them do utilize many of the same psalms as Job.²⁵

²¹ On dating Job, David Clines writes, “Of [Job’s] author or date of composition I frankly know nothing and my speculations are not likely to be worth more than the many guesses that already exist.” See David Clines, *Job*, Word Biblical Commentary 17, vol. 1 (Dallas: Word Books, 1989), xxix.

²² James Strahan, *The Book of Job Interpreted* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1913), 85.

²³ Kynes, *My Psalm Has Turned into Weeping*, 69. See also Michael Fishbane, “The Book of Job and Inner-Biblical Discourse,” in *The Voice from the Whirlwind*, edited by Leo G. Perdue and W. Clark Gilpin (Nashville: Abingdon, 1992), 89-90.

²⁴ For a brief explanation of the textual difficulties in the third speech cycle, see Marvin H. Pope, *Job*, The Anchor Bible, vol. 15 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1965), xxi-xxviii. My one exception is Ps 119.11-12 in Job 23.12, which, though in the third speech cycle, is a convincing allusion and is not a portion of the speech cycle that is contested by scholars.

²⁵ In each chapter of *My Psalm Has Turned into Weeping*, Kynes shows that Job and the friends are in dialogue with one another using the same psalms, each offering their own interpretation as a corrective to the other.

Methodology

My methodology includes a two-step process, drawing on Kynes's methodology in *My Psalm Has Turned into Weeping*.²⁶ First, I identify an allusion or echo, beginning by identifying a marker of an evoked psalm in a Joban speech.²⁷ Detecting the marker includes thematic connection between the evoked and alluding texts (this could be either similar or opposing themes), syntactical similarities, verbal repetition, or stylistic techniques (e.g., a similar metaphor). Shared words that are rare bear greater weight than more common words when identifying an allusion, and words like conjunctions or prepositions often do not factor greatly into one's level of confidence about a potential allusion or echo. Not each of these aspects of an allusion or echo is necessarily present in each example. Nevertheless, the more aspects that are present, the stronger the case for an allusion or echo is.

After identifying an allusion or echo, I then explore how the psalm is used, asking questions such as, "What does this line mean in its original context (i.e., its place in the psalm)?" "Does Job's use of this line match the meaning in its original context?" "If not, what does Job do with this line that changes the meaning of it?" "Does this say anything

²⁶ Kynes sets forth an eight-step methodology that oscillates between synchronic and diachronic methods and includes: (1) identifying an intertextuality; (2) attempting to date both texts; (3) evaluating coherence of each text as a potential allusion to the other in order to determine direction of dependence; (4) examining the use of the evoked text in the alluding text; (5) searching for recurrences of the evoked text throughout the entirety of the alluding text; (6) interpreting the alluding text's allusions to the evoked text holistically; (7) returning to the evoked text to explore how its interpretation is affected, knowing it was used in a particular way in the alluding text; and (8) exploring historical implications of both texts with the understanding of this particular allusion (e.g., an allusion may imply that a certain text was deemed authoritative in the eyes of the author). My methodology is simpler than Kynes's because the scope and goal of my work is different; nevertheless, my methodology is informed by parts of his, especially steps (1) and (4). For Kynes's methodology, see *My Psalm Has Turned into Weeping*, 37-59.

²⁷ Whereas Kynes leaves open the question of direction of dependence in his identification step, my assumption is that Job is echoing or alluding to the psalm unless there is a substantial reason to believe otherwise. See Kynes, *My Psalm Has Turned into Weeping*, 37.

about how Job views this psalm/idea/theme?” “Has Job used other psalms in a similar way?”

Identifying an allusion is a subjective effort, and some will be more convinced of certain allusions or echoes than others. Along with the tools proposed, the argument for allusions and echoes is also a cumulative argument, and stronger allusions and echoes open the possibility for slightly weaker allusions and echoes to be included. Again, this is suggested by the question posed at the beginning of this project: if the author of Job interacts with Psalm 8, what other allusions and echoes may be at work in Job, and how might they increase an understanding of Job’s argument? Because scholars nearly unanimously agree that Job 7.17-18 alludes to Ps 8.5, I use this as an example both to demonstrate the method and to begin building a cumulative case for allusions and echoes that are not as unanimous. In the chart below, the shared words are bolded, and the shared syntactical constructions with different vocabulary are italicized.

Psalm 8.5 in Job 7.17-18

Job 7.17-18	Psalm 8.5
<p>מָה־אֲנוֹשׁ כִּי תַגְדֵּלֵנוּ וְכִי־תִשֵּׂית אֱלֹהֵינוּ לְבָדֵךְ</p> <p>וְתִפְקְדֵנוּ לְבִקְרִים לְרִגְעִים תִּבְחָנֵנוּ</p>	<p>מָה־אֲנוֹשׁ כִּי־תִזְכְּרֵנוּ וּבְנֵי־אָדָם כִּי תִפְקְדֵנוּ</p>
<p>What is humanity that you magnify them, And that you set your heart on them?</p> <p>And you consider them every morning. Every moment you test them.</p>	<p>What is humanity that you remember them? And sons of man that you consider them?</p>

The question מה־אנוש occurs only here, Ps 8.5, and Job 15.14, which Kynes argues is also an allusion to Ps 8.5.²⁸ This phrase is followed by a shared syntactical construction that uses כי (בן־אדם is added in the psalm).²⁹ “You set your heart on them” evokes the psalmist’s declaration that God “remembers” (תזכרו) humanity.³⁰ The energetic nun is present throughout both passages. Both also use the verb פקד; these are the only two examples of the energetic nun attached to פקד.³¹ All of these things contribute to scholars nearly unanimously recognizing Job 7.17-18 as an allusion to Psalm 8.³²

After identifying an allusion, the question of how Job uses the psalm arises. In the psalm, the question “What is humanity?” suggests the lofty position of humans, “nearly divine and majestically dominant over all earthly life.”³³ Job evokes this lofty position, further explored in Ps 8.6-9, with the verb גדל (“to magnify”). Yet, for Job, this “lofty” position feels more like extreme scrutiny that has made his life worse.³⁴ From Job’s

²⁸ Kynes, *My Psalm Has Turned into Weeping*, 64; C.L. Seow, *Job 1-21: Interpretation and Commentary*, Illuminations (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013), 509. Seow also finds an allusion to Ps 144.3 in this phrase, which will be discussed in a later chapter.

²⁹ Kynes, *My Psalm Has Turned into Weeping*, 64; Fishbane, “The Book of Job,” 87.

³⁰ Clines, *Job*, 1:192.

³¹ Kynes, *My Psalm Has Turned into Weeping*, 64.

³² For a dissenting view, see Raymond C. Van Leeuwen, “Psalm 8.5 and Job 7.17-18: A Mistaken Scholarly Commonplace?” in *The World of the Aramaeans I: Biblical Studies in Honor of Paul-Eugène Dion*, Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series 324, edited by P. M. Michèle Daviau, John W. Wevers, and Michael Weigl (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 205-215. Van Leeuwen argues that the phrase מה...כי is a formulaic phrase that is common to both the psalmist and Job. He offers Job 15.14 and 21.4-6 as other examples of this formulaic phrase. As Kynes notes, however, this argument has had little effect on the scholarly consensus.

³³ Fishbane, “The Book of Job,” 88. Fishbane writes that the word מה “expresses astonished joy, and the verbs that follow heighten the point.”

³⁴ Clines, *Job*, 1:192; Lindsay Wilson, *Job*, The Two Horizons Old Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015), 62; Samuel E. Balentine, *Job*, Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2006), 139.

perspective, the psalmist has not considered the ambiguity in the fact that God considers (תקפ) humanity.³⁵ Whereas the psalmist sees this as a unique blessing, Job recognizes that God's providence includes pain and suffering and laments God's close attention to creation.³⁶

Kynes argues that Job's rhetorical purpose for this parody is to call God to act justly towards him. While his lived experience of suffering and injustice does not suggest that God is just and good, Job truly believes God to be both just and good, like Psalm 8 declares. He writes,

Therefore, Job's words can stand in tension with his beliefs...Job's parody of Psalm 8...[is] intended for rhetorical effect, not to reject the psalms or the God they describe, but to break through God's apparent injustice to the just God that Job believes resides behind it.³⁷

Job, in Kynes's view, believes in the same high anthropology as the psalmist, namely that humans are only "a little lower than gods" (Ps 8.6), and Job is demanding to be treated as such. Drawing on Gerhard von Rad, he argues, "Job's link 'with the old Yahwistic traditions' may actually be stronger than that of his friends"³⁸ because, unlike the friends, he believes in a wholly just God who "offered himself as saviour of the poor and the sick and as the defending counsel of those who had been deprived of justice."³⁹

³⁵ Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel*, 28; Balentine, *Job*, 139. Clines notes that "testing" (בָּחַן) also is a neutral term and that psalmists invite God's testing, knowing their own righteousness (e.g., Pss 17.3; 26.2; 139.23). Job demonstrates that this, too, is ambiguous, not always welcome in the way some psalmists suggest. See Clines, *Job*, 1:192.

³⁶ Fishbane writes that, for Job, "it is rather that of a dark divinity that hounds and horrifies the dreams of mortals." See Fishbane, "The Book of Job," 88; Gerald H. Wilson, *Job*, New International Biblical Commentary (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2007), 72; John Gray, *The Book of Job*, The Text of the Hebrew Bible, 1 (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2015), 181; Balentine, *Job*, 139.

³⁷ Kynes, *My Psalm Has Turned into Weeping*, 71.

³⁸ Kynes, *My Psalm Has Turned into Weeping*, 70.

While I argue elsewhere that Job uses other psalms as a normative paradigm, in which he questions why his experience does not match what the psalms suggest is normative for a person, this is not one of those cases, contrary to Kynes, as the following verses make clear. After the “bitter parody” in 7.17-18, Job continues in 7.19-20,

Will you not look away from me?
Will you not abandon me until I swallow my spit?

If I sinned, what do I do to you, you guard of humanity?
Why do you make me your target, that I am a burden to you?⁴⁰

Rather than the purveyor of justice that Psalm 8 imagines God to be, Job imagines God as unnecessarily vengeful and petty, suggesting he would be better off if God paid him no attention for the rest of his days.⁴¹ Job, then, does not convey faith in a just God that will make things right and bring justice to his life. Further, he does not convey the high anthropology that Psalm 8 does; he believes “man is dead and lacks utterly any value.”⁴² Thus, he chooses to mock those who, like the psalmist of Psalm 8, believe in such a God with a “sarcastic, contentious sneer.”⁴³

³⁹ Gerhard von Rad, *Wisdom in Israel*, trans. James D. Martin (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1972), 222.

⁴⁰ For an explanation of the translation of 7.20 and supplying “if,” see Clines, *Job*, 1:193-194.

⁴¹ Leo G. Perdue, *Wisdom in Revolt: Metaphorical Theology in the Book of Job*, *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series*, 112 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991), 130; Balentine, *Job*, 139; Pope, *Job*, 61-62; Clines, *Job*, 1:192.

⁴² Brevard Childs, “Psalm 8 in the Context of the Christian Canon,” *Interpretation: A Journal of Bible and Theology* 23 (1969): 29; Balentine, *Job*, 138-139; Tremper Longman III, *Job*, Baker Commentary on the Old Testament Wisdom and Psalms (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012), 148; Clines, *Job*, 1:192. Perdue, *Wisdom in Revolt*, 130-131, writes, “In Job God’s surveillance is unrelenting scrutiny leading to merciless destruction both of his servant and humanity in general. Humanity, including Job, is no royal figure or exalted creature, chosen to rule over God’s creation and confident in a gracious providence. Rather humans are slaves, victimized by the destiny allotted them and the terrors wrought by a cruel and suspicious sovereign.”

⁴³ Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel*, 285. Clines notes that, even with 7.19 “Will you not look away from me?” Job diverges from suffering psalmists who often cry out for God’s salvation (e.g., Pss 13.4; 25.19; 59.5; 80.15). See Clines, *Job*, 1:193.

Conclusion

Job's infamous parody of Ps 8.5 in Job 7.17-18 invites one to ask a question posed several times throughout this chapter: if the author of Job interacts with Psalm 8, what other allusions and echoes may be at work in Job, and how might they increase an understanding of Job's argument? This project identifies three major paradigms within which many Psalmic allusions and echoes fit: (1) Job laments with lament psalms (chapter 2); (2) Job laments with praise psalms (chapter 3); and (3) Job rejects praise psalms (chapter 4). Throughout this project, I show that Job's approach to and use of the psalms is not uniform. At times he accepts and joins the psalmist (e.g., lamenting with a lament psalm); other times he accepts the truth of a psalm but offers his own experience as a counterexample (e.g., lamenting with a praise psalm); still, other times he wholly rejects the claims of a psalmist.

Chapter Two

Job Laments with Lament Psalms

Job's use of lament psalms is perhaps the most obvious way one might expect psalmic allusions in the speeches of Job. Yet, Job utilizes such psalms in intricate and complex ways, at times subtly diverging from the psalmists' claims and petitions. This chapter examines Job's use of such psalms, namely Pss 39.5-8; 139.13-16; and 39.14, first identifying markers that suggest an allusion, and then seeking to understand what Job is doing with the psalm to convey his unique lament.⁴⁴

Psalm 39.5-8 in Job 6.8-11

Job 6.8-11	Psalm 39.5-8
<p>מִי־יִשְׁמַע תְּבוּאָה שְׁאֵלָתִי וְתִקְוַתִּי יִתֵּן אֱלֹהִים:</p> <p>וַיֹּאֲלֵ אֱלֹהִים וַיִּדְכָּאֵנִי נִתְרַ לְדָוֹ וַיִּכְבְּעֵנִי:</p> <p>וְנִתְהִי עוֹדוֹ נְחֻמָּתִי וַאֲסַלְתָּה בְּחִילָה לֹא יִחַמְּוֹל כִּי־לֹא כִסְדָתִי אִמְרֵי קְדוֹשׁ:</p> <p>מִה־פִתְחֵי כִי־אֲנִיחַל וּמִה־קִּצְיֵי כִי־אֲאָרִיד נַפְשִׁי:</p>	<p>הוֹדִיעֵנִי יְהוָה קִצְיֵי וּמִדַּת יָמַי מַה־הִיא אֲדַעֶה מַה־תִּגְדַּל אֲנִי:</p> <p>הִגֵּה טְפִחוֹתַי וְנִתְתַּה יָמַי וְסִלְדֵי כִסְיִי נִגְדָּה אֵךְ כָּל־הַקָּבֶל כָּל־אֲדָם נֶאֱכָב סֵלָה:</p> <p>אֵךְ־בְּצִלָּם וְתַמְלֹךְ־אִישׁ אֵךְ־הַקָּבֶל יִהְיֶהוּ אֲצַבֵּר וְלֹא־יִבְרַע מִי־אֲסָפָם:</p> <p>וְעַתָּה מִה־קִּנְיֵיטִי אֲדַגֵּ תּוֹשֵׁלָתִי לֵךְ הִיא:</p>
<p>Oh, that my request might come And would God give my hope</p> <p>And it would please God to crush me, His hand would let loose, and it would cut me off</p> <p>And my comfort might be still, And I would spring in anguish that does not spare, Because I have not put to shame the words of the holy</p>	<p>Let me know, YHWH, my end, And the measure of my days, what is it? Let me know how lacking I am</p> <p>Behold, handbreadths you have made my days And my life is as a nothing in your sight Surely everyone stands in vain</p> <p>Surely, in a shadow everyone walks</p>

⁴⁴ As I mentioned in the introduction, I am following the order of psalmic allusions as they appear in Job, which is why I analyze Job's use of Ps 139.13-16 between 39.5-8 and 39.14.

What is my strength that I would wait? And what is my end, that I should prolong my life?	Surely, they murmur in vain They heap up but do not know who gathers them And now, my Lord, what do I wait for? My hope, it is in you
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Seeing similarities between Job’s speeches in Job 3-31 and Psalm 39, Heinrich Ewald wrote that “either [the author of Psalm 39] has read the book of Job, or the poet of the book of Job was determined by the complaints of this song to attempt a higher solution.”⁴⁵ The first time a Psalm 39 allusion shows up is in Job 6.8-11, in which Job speaks to Eliphaz, saying, “What is my strength that I would wait? / And what is my end, (״צק) that my soul would be patient?” (6.11). In Ps 39.5, the psalmist proclaims, “Let me know, YHWH, my end (״צק) / And the measure of my days, what is it? / Let me know how lacking I am.” Again a few verses later, the psalmist says, “And now, what do I wait for? / My hope, it is in you” (Ps 39.8).

Job 6.8 and Ps 39.8 share the root קהה (“to wait”), with Job replacing the psalmist’s verb with a noun.⁴⁶ Next, Job 6.8 and Ps 39.5-8 share the word קץ (“end”), and the only time this word takes a first person singular pronominal suffix in the Hebrew Bible is in these two passages.⁴⁷ Both passages also use the root יהל (“to wait”), but this

⁴⁵ Heinrich A. Ewald, *A Commentary on the Psalms*, trans. E. Johnson, vol. 1, Theological Translation Fund Library 23 (London: Williams and Norgate, 1880), 205; Kynes, *My Psalm Has Turned into Weeping*, 122. As stated in the introduction chapter, my assumption is that Job is alluding to the psalms unless there is reason to believe otherwise. For a discussion on whether Job uses Psalm 39 or vice versa, see Kynes, *My Psalm Has Turned into Weeping*, 125-130. Kynes argues that it is more likely that Job uses the psalm because “the psalmist’s abbreviated version lacks some of the pathos of Job’s cry. If the psalmist was alluding to Job’s words, it seems unlikely that he would cite them in a way that made them less forceful, since the slight modifications would lessen the impact of the imagery if it was intended to agree with Job’s sentiment, but they are not significant enough to mitigate his endorsement of their message, if that were their purpose.”

⁴⁶ Kynes, *My Psalm Has Turned into Weeping*, 132.

⁴⁷ Kynes, *My Psalm Has Turned into Weeping*, 131; Clines, *Job*, 1:175; Norman C. Habel, *The Book of Job* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1985), 148.

time Job replaces the psalmist's noun with a verb, and it is used in contrasting ways.⁴⁸

Whereas the psalmist offers hope in God, Job expresses that he does not have the strength even to have patience to wait on God to do something in his life.⁴⁹

In his allusion to Ps 39.5-8, Job intensifies the psalmist's lament. Clines argues that קָךְ in these two passages is best understood as "limitations as a human being."⁵⁰ The psalmist states "Surely, in a shadow everyone walks / surely they murmur in vain / they heap up but do not know who will gather them" (39.7), and in doing so, reminds himself of humanity's limitations. This leads the psalmist to offer hope in God (39.8), for he has nowhere else to turn. Whereas the psalmist offers hope in God's eventual deliverance, Job rejects such hope. He does not even have the strength to have patience to wait on God to act in his life, which leads him to say, "What is my strength that I would wait? / And what is my end, that I should prolong my life?" (6.11).⁵¹ Job's use of this psalm then, is such that he intensifies the psalmist's lament, failing to have the hope in God's deliverance that the psalmist offers.

Psalm 139.13-16 in Job 10.8-12

Job 10.8-12	Psalm 139.13-16
<p>קָךְ עֲצָבוֹנִי וְיַעֲשׂוּנִי יַחַד סָבִיב וְתַבְלַעֲנִי:</p>	<p>כִּי־אַתָּה קָנִיתָ כְּלִי־תִי תִּסְכְּנִי בְּבֶטֶן אִמִּי:</p>

⁴⁸ Kynes, *My Psalm Has Turned into Weeping*, 131; Clines, *Job*, 1:175.

⁴⁹ While these connections may not be enough to warrant an allusion to Psalm 39 on their own, they stand alongside another stronger connection between Job 10 and Psalm 39 explained later in this chapter.

⁵⁰ Clines, *Job*, 1:175. Seow also takes this position in Seow, *Job*, 475.

⁵¹ Clines, *Job*, 1:175. Clines writes, "Job has not the strength for patience; nor can he break through his limitations to hope that his life should be prolonged." See also Kynes, *My Psalm Has Turned into Weeping*, 131.

<p>זָכַרְנָא פִּי־כַחְמָר עֲשִׂיתָנִי וְאֶל־עֵפֶר תִּשְׂבֵּנִי:</p> <p>הֲלֹא כַחֲלֵב תִּתִּיכֵנִי וְכַגְבָּנָה תִּקְפִּיאֵנִי:</p> <p>עֹזר וְבִשָּׁר תִּלְבִּישָׁנִי וּבְעֲצָמוֹת וְגִידִים תִּסְכְּכֵנִי:</p> <p>חַיִּים וְחֶסֶד עֲשִׂיתָ עִמָּדִי וְיָפְדֶנְתָּהּ שְׂמֵרָה רֹחִי:</p>	<p>אֹדְךָ עַל כִּי נִרְאוֹת נִפְלִיתִי</p> <p>נִפְלְאִים מֵעֲשִׂיךָ וְנִפְשִׁי יִדְעַת מְאֹד:</p> <p>לֹא־נִכְתַּד עֲצָמֵי מִלְּךָ אֲשֶׁר־עֲשִׂיתִי בְּסִתְּר רָלְמָתִי בְּתַחְתּוֹת אָרֶץ:</p> <p>גִּלְמִי רָאוּ עֵינֶיךָ וְעַל־סִפְרֶךָ כָּלֵם יִכְתְּבוּ יָמִים יִצְרוּ וְלֹא אֶחָד בָּהֶם:</p>
<p>Your hands formed me and made me And together they turn and swallow me</p> <p>Remember that, like clay, you made me And will you turn me to dust?</p> <p>Did you not pour me out like milk? And curdle me like cheese?</p> <p>You clothed me with skin and flesh And you knit me with bones and muscle</p> <p>You have made life and love for me And your care has kept my spirit</p>	<p>For you yourself formed my inward parts You knit me in my mother’s belly</p> <p>I will praise you Because I am fearfully and wonderfully made</p> <p>And your works are wonderful My soul knows much</p> <p>My bones were not hidden from you When I was made in secret I was skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth</p> <p>Your eyes saw my substance And upon your book, all of them were written All my days were fashioned And not one of them existed</p>

In an allusion to Ps 139.13-16, Job, in Job 10.8-12, reflects on God’s providence in creating him. Job 10 “marks the height of Job’s acrimony,” and 10.8-12 is placed between a section of accusation (10.2-7) and lament (10.15-17), combining both while speaking to God.⁵² While the portion of the psalm that Job alludes to here reads more like a praise psalm than a lament psalm, Kynes notes that “Psalm 139 is best considered a

⁵² William P. Brown, “*Creatio Corporis* and the Rhetoric of Defense in Job 10 and Psalm 139,” in *God Who Creates: Essays in Honor of W. Sibley Towner*, eds. William P. Brown and S. Dean McBride Jr. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000) 115.

psalm of supplication.”⁵³ In considering this allusion, I examine how both the psalmist and Job construe their lament in relation to this section of praise.

This allusion utilizes both common language and themes found in Psalm 139. The strongest connection between these two texts is the verb סָכַךְ, which occurs only in these two texts. Moreover, in both these texts, it appears in the same context of God forming a person before birth.⁵⁴ Further, the verb עָשָׂה (“to make”) and noun עֲצָם (“bone”) both link these passages.⁵⁵

Alongside these semantic connections, both texts use similar imagery, further suggesting a textual relationship. Both texts describe God’s process of creating a human before birth, and both lament toward God, despite this recognition, grounding their complaint on the fact that they have been created with such close attention and care.⁵⁶ Yet Job’s language is more descriptive and extensive than the Psalmist’s, which suggests that Job utilized the psalm, not vice versa.⁵⁷

To examine how Job uses Ps 139.13-16, what appears to be a section of praise, as a lament, one must first analyze how the psalmist builds on that praise, turning it into a lament and petition toward God. In Ps 139.19, the psalmist unexpectedly shifts from praise to lament and petition, saying, “If you would kill,

⁵³ Kynes, *My Psalm Has Turned into Weeping*, 101; John Goldingay, *Psalms*, vol. 3, Baker Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 625, 636. Goldingay writes, “a little like Ps. 89, the first three-quarters of Ps. 139 has great significance in its own right but its particular meaning in its context emerges only at the end.”

⁵⁴ Clines, *Job*, 1:248; Kynes, *My Psalm Has Turned into Weeping*, 102. Clines notes, however, that nouns from this root do occur elsewhere.

⁵⁵ Kynes, *My Psalm Has Turned into Weeping*, 102.

⁵⁶ Balentine, *Job*, 174; Habel, *The Book of Job*, 199; Longman, *Job*, 178; Seow, *Job*, 588-589.

⁵⁷ Brown, “*Creatio Corporis* and the Rhetoric of Defense,” 118-119.

O God, my enemies / And the men of blood would turn from me.”⁵⁸ Rather than a disconnected thought, however, the psalmist’s petition to God builds on the praise offered though the 139.1-18. For the psalmist, because God has proved to be trustworthy in the past, he can continue to trust that God will “lead me in the everlasting way” (139.24b), even though his present circumstance does not appear to be consistent with what he knows to be true of God, namely that all of God’s “works are wonderful” (139.14b).⁵⁹

Like the psalmist, Job, too, recognizes God’s providence in creating him, drawing on the psalmist’s imagery of God knitting him before birth. Unlike the psalmist, however, Job does not have the confidence that this will lead to God’s deliverance of him. Opposite Psalm 139, Job offers what appears to be a praise but then twists it into a lament with no confidence that God will protect him.⁶⁰ In Job 10.12, Job proclaims, “You have made life and love for me / and your care has kept my spirit.” Yet in the next verse, Job accuses God of holding these things from him: “But these things you hid in your heart / I know that this is with you” (10.13). Further reinforcing his point, in 10.18, Job asks, “Why did you bring me forth from the womb? / If only I died, and an eye had not seen me.” Rather than

⁵⁸ Artur Weiser, *The Psalms: A Commentary*, Old Testament Library, trans Herbert Hartwell (Philadelphia, Westminster Press, 1962), 806; Goldingay, *Psalms*, 626.

⁵⁹ Goldingay, *Psalms*, 626.

⁶⁰ Brown writes, In stark contrast [to the psalmist], Job begins with a statement that undercuts the self-referential confidence that pervades the psalmist’s rhetoric: ‘I loathe my life.’ Job rejects what the psalmist rapturously affirms, namely, his identity before God and humanity. Whereas the psalmist gratefully acknowledges the protection afforded him, Job laments his beleaguered condition. Where the psalmist discerns the aesthetic intricacy of his personal being, knit and woven by God, Job finds only frayed threads.” Brown, “*Creatio Corporis* and the Rhetoric of Defense,” 122. See also, Longman, *Job*, 178-179.

trusting God to deliver him from enemies, Job accuses God of intentionally keeping goodness from him and constantly waiting for Job to mess up so that God can punish him (10.16-17).⁶¹ In Job 10.20, finally, Job rejects God's care entirely, saying, "Are not the days of my life little? / Turn from me, so I might find a little cheer."⁶² In this accusation and rejection, Job implicitly identifies God as his enemy; unlike the psalmist, then, he cannot turn toward God for protection because it is God who is oppressing Job.

Psalm 39.14 in Job 10.20-22

Job 10.20-22	Psalm 39.14
<p>הֲלֹא־מַעַט יְמֵי שִׁית וְחֻדְלִי לְשִׁית מִמְּנֵי וְאַבְלִיגָה מָעַט:⁶³</p> <p>בְּטָרִם אֱלֹהִים וְלֹא אֶשׁוּב אֶל־אֲרֶץ תְּשׁוּבָה וְצִלְמֹת:</p> <p>אֲרֶץ עֵיפֹתָהּ כְּמוֹ אֶפֶל צִלְמֹת וְלֹא סְדָרִים וְתַפֵּעַ כְּמוֹ־אֶפֶל:</p>	<p>תִּשָּׁע מִמְּנֵי וְאַבְלִיגָה בְּטָרִם אֱלֹהִים וְלֹא אֶשׁוּב:</p>
<p>Are not the days of my life little? Leave! Turn from me, so I might find a little cheer</p> <p>Before I walk and do not return To the land of shade and deep darkness</p> <p>The land of darkness like gloom Deep darkness and no light, It casts like darkness</p>	<p>Look away from me, so I might be cheerful Before I walk and am no more</p>

⁶¹ Habel, *The Book of Job*, 199; Longman, *Job*, 179

⁶² Kynes, *My Psalm Has Turned into Weeping*, 10; Habel, *The Book of Job*, 201; Longman, *Job*, 181.

⁶³ Here I follow the MT. For an explanation of the textual difficulties of this verse, see Gray, *The Book of Job*, 202-205; Clines, *Job*, 1:222-223.

A few chapters after Job's allusion to Psalm 39 in Job 6, he returns to Psalm 39, this time with a more emphatic allusion than his previous one in Job 6. As Kynes notes, however, textual corruption in Job 10.20-22 has led to few scholars pursuing a textual relationship between Psalm 39 and Job 10. Yet, as he shows, working through the textual difficulties reveals a "striking similarity" between Job 10.20-21 and Ps 39.14.⁶⁴

Following the MT's *Qere* rendering of Job 10.20, nearly every word of Ps 39.14 is represented in Job 10.20-22. Each has the rare word בלג in identical *hiphil* construction as part of the phrase ממני ואבליגה following a synonymous imperative, calling God to turn away from the speaker. In both, this line is followed by the phrase בתרם אלך, which is the only two occurrences of these two words paired in this order.⁶⁵ Finally, each text deepens the lament with "synonymous statements of imminent absence from the world," ולא אשוב ("and I do not return") for Job and ואינני ("and [I] am no more") for the psalmist.⁶⁶

Like the earlier allusion to Psalm 39 in Job 6, the distinction between the psalmist and Job comes in expressed hope in the psalmist's words, and the lack of such hope in Job's words, though this distinction is more subtle than in Ps 39.5-8 and Job 6.8-11. In Ps 39.13, the psalmist appeals to God, saying,

Hear my prayer, YHWH
Give ear to my cry

And I weep
Do not ignore my tears

For I am your foreigner
A sojourner, like all my fathers

⁶⁴ Kynes, *My Psalm Has Turned into Weeping*, 124

⁶⁵ Kynes, *My Psalm Has Turned into Weeping*, 125. Kynes notes that Gen 45.28 is the only other place in the Hebrew Bible where these words occur together in any order. See Kynes, *My Psalm Has Turned into Weeping*, 125n22.

⁶⁶ Kynes, *My Psalm Has Turned into Weeping*, 125.

Although the psalmist ultimately asks God to “look away from me,” he does express some hope that God might show mercy to him, characterizing himself as a גַּר (“foreigner”) and תּוֹשֵׁב (“sojourner”) in hopes that God will remember God’s own law that Israel protect such people who struggle, drawing on Lev 25.35, which also uses the words גַּר and תּוֹשֵׁב together, alongside עֹמֵךְ.⁶⁷ The reader is left with the conflicting words of Ps 39.13 and 39.14.⁶⁸

Job’s words in 10.20-22 are not so ambiguous, leaving the reader with only one message: that of despair and hopelessness. The most Job can hope for is that he dies, though Job does not expect even a freedom from pain in death. Instead, Job expects to go to “a land where creation is undone,” a reversal of the goodness found in the order God brings to creation in Gen 1.2-4.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ Other occurrences of these words that command the people to care for the גַּר or תּוֹשֵׁב include Lev 19.34; Deut 10.19, 27.19.

⁶⁸ Peter Craig tries to resolve the tension of conflicting words, saying, “‘Look away from me’ (v 14a): the sense is ‘turn aside the face of anger and discipline’...it has the ring of a person who, in old age, has regained his perspective on the transitory nature of human life and can face death with calmness.” Peter C. Craig, *Psalms 1-50*, Word Biblical Commentary, 19 (Waco: Word Books, 1983), 310. Yet, Walter Brueggemann and William H. Bellinger Jr., *Psalms*, New Cambridge Bible Commentary (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 193, are correct to note the surprise that the change in tone in 39.14 brings, saying, “Up to this point, the psalmist has been pleading for YHWH to come and deliver him from transgressions and troubles. Now the petition is for the oppressive divine presence to turn away so that a smile may be possible before the end...The conclusion is both poignant and a weary end, the hope for a smile before I ‘am no more.’” With Brueggemann and Bellinger, I invite the reader to appreciate the tension of the words rather than seek to resolve them.

⁶⁹ Clines, *Job*, 1:251; Habel, *Job*, 201.

Conclusion

As this chapter has shown, Job alludes to a couple lament psalms throughout his speeches, namely Psalms 39 and 139. While this may be expected, as Job's speeches are full of powerful laments, Job utilizes these lament psalms in subtle ways, subverting the psalmists' own hope that God might deliver him from the suffering he experiences. Job rejects such hope, instead reeling in sheer despair. In the next chapter, I turn to examples of Job lamenting with praise psalms.

Chapter Three

Job Laments with Praise Psalms

As was shown in the previous chapter, the author of Job uses Psalm 8 in a subtle way to say much more in a few lines than he might be able to say otherwise, drawing on the reader's own familiarity with Psalm 8 and inviting the reader to reconsider the claim Psalm 8 makes. Will Kynes argues that Psalm 8 functions as a “normative paradigm” for Job, in which Job views the claims of the psalm as fundamentally true, in the case of Psalm 8, claims of theology and anthropology; yet his own experience does not match that of the psalmist's.⁷⁰ Rather than reject the claims of the psalm entirely, Kynes argues, Job calls on God to correct the situation by bringing justice to Job. Therefore, Job views the psalm as normative for life; when his experience does not match it, the problem must lie with God. While I reject Kynes's argument that Job uses Psalm 8 as this sort of normative paradigm for what life “should” be like, as I discussed in the previous chapter, I do find that Job uses this pattern in alluding to other psalms. This chapter explores Job's use of praise psalms as a normative paradigm.

Psalm 119.103 in Job 6.25

Job 6.25	Psalm 119.103
<p>מה־נִמְרָצוּ אִמְרֵי־יֹשֶׁר וּמֵה־יִוָּקְרִים הוֹקֵם מִקָּם:</p>	<p>מֵה־נִמְלָצוּ לְחֵפֵי אִמְרֵי־יְהוָה מִדְּבַשׁ לִפִּי:</p>
<p>How are honest words sickening? But how does your reproof reprove?</p>	<p>How pleasant your words are to my palate, More so than honey to my mouth</p>

⁷⁰ Kynes, *My Psalm Has Turned into Weeping*, 76; see also 69-71.

Speaking to the friends, Job invites them to offer correction in 6.24, saying, “Teach me, and I will be silent. How have I gone astray? Help me understand.” Knowing they cannot help him understand, he then asks them, “How are honest words sickening? / But how does your reproof reprove?” (6.25) This alludes to Ps 119.103, which proclaims, “How pleasant your words are to my palate, more so than honey to my mouth.”

Both Job and the psalm use מַה at the beginning of the verse to express amazement at the goodness of words (אמר), in Job’s case, honest words, and in the psalmist’s case, the words of God. In both texts, מַה is followed by a rare *niphal* perfect verb with only one consonant difference. The meaning of מָרַץ in Job 6.25 has stumped scholars, which has led to a variety of proposals. This root in the *niphal* is used elsewhere only in Mic 2.10 and 1 Kgs 2.8, both with the sense of “sick” or “terrible.”⁷¹ As some scholars note, however, this meaning seems odd in Job 6.25. G.R. Driver views מָרַץ as a cognate of the Akkadian word *marāsu* (“to be ill displeasing”) and understands the line as a question: “How are honest words bitter?” He writes that this question is “practically equivalent to the exclamation ‘How sweet are honest words.’”⁷² Bernard Duhm follows the Targum and emends נִמְלִצוּ to נִמְרָצוּ to match Ps 119.103.⁷³ Patrick Skehan argues that the Job poet substituted ר for ל for the sake of alliteration, noting that this phenomenon also occurs in Job 6.16 with יתעלם.⁷⁴ Alongside this proposal, others suggest that נִמְלִצוּ is intended

⁷¹ Seow, *Job*, 482; Fancis Brown, S.R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966), 599; Clines, *Job*, 1:161. The only other use of this root is in Job 16.3, which is in the *hiphil*.

⁷² G.R. Driver, “Some Hebrew Words,” *Journal of Theological Studies* 29 (1927-1928): 394-395; see also Clines, *Job*, 1: 161.

⁷³ Bernard Duhm, *Das Buch Hiob* (Freiburg: Mohr, 1897), 39.

⁷⁴ Patrick William Skehan, “Second Thoughts on Job 6,16 and 6,25,” *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 31 (1969): 210-212; E. Dhorme, *A Commentary on the Book of Job*, trans. Harold Knight (London: Thomas

because ל and ר are often interchangeable in some dialects.⁷⁵ I ultimately follow Seow and Clines, who argue for the sense of “sickening” or “terrible.” Although, scholars do not agree on what is at work with the verb נמרצו, each of these suggestions points toward an allusion to Ps 119.103.⁷⁶

Job’s statement in 6.25 is in the context of interrogating his friends (6.22-27), challenging the nature of their friendship and claiming they have been unnecessarily hurtful to him. First, he says that he did not ask them for money (6.22), which could have spoiled the friendship.⁷⁷ Further, Job has never asked his friends to liberate him from danger, which would have, in turn, put themselves in danger. Instead, he only asks his friends for loyalty (6.14).⁷⁸ He then invites them to explain what he has done wrong to deserve the suffering he has experienced (6.24). Up to this point, Eliphaz, the only friend who has spoken, has only made general statements that hint at Job’s guilt, but now Job

Nelson, 1967), 86, 91-92. Skehan describes this phenomenon as “permutation of liquids” and writes that it is “so ready a feature of Aramaic, which has penetrated even the Hebrew Bible elsewhere, when *'armonot*, “fortifications,” borrows an *l* from *'almanot*, “widows”; see Is 13,22 and Ez 19,7.

⁷⁵ Pope, *Job*, 54; Aloysius Fitzgerald, “The Interchange of *L*, *N*, and *R* in Biblical Hebrew,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 97 (1978): 485. Fitzgerald sees both this dialectal shift and alliteration at play here.

⁷⁶ See also Seow, *Job*, 482. Robert Gordis, *The Book of Job: A Commentary, New Translation, and Special Studies*, Moreshet, 2 (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1978), 76, argues that “the suggestion to emend or equate our verb with נמרצו ‘be sweet’ on the basis of Ps. 119:103 is too weak for Job to use in our bitter passage and also inapplicable to 16:3.” Instead, he argues that “the frequent semantic phenomenon of *addad*” is employed, meaning a word was intended to have the opposite meaning, and thus “to be ill” was intended to mean “to be strong.” Clines disagrees and writes that this is unconvincing. See Clines, *Job*, 1:161.

⁷⁷ Pope, *Job*, 54. Clines, *Job*, 1:180; Pope writes, “Lending and borrowing among friends was a sure way to spoil friendship long before Shakespeare put the famous observation in the mouth of Polonius. Jeremiah said, ‘I have not lent or borrowed, yet everyone curses me,’ Jer xv 10.” Seow notes the awkwardness of “give to me” (לי הבו) without a direct object and says this “conveys not a specific request but general neediness or instability.” See Seow, *Job*, 481.

⁷⁸ Clines, *Job*, 1:180. Concerning this, Clines writes, “If only Job knew that what he in fact desires from them, namely, to take part in a struggle against God for vindication, is a far more demanding test of loyalty than any of these four sarcastically worded requests he says he might have made!”

asks for specifics that clarify how he might deserve such suffering.⁷⁹ If they can offer such an explanation, Job says, he will be silent (אחריש).

This leads to Job's allusion of Ps 119.103 in Job 6.25. Psalm 119, the longest psalm in the psalter, is an extended acrostic poem that expresses love for God's law and commands.⁸⁰ In Ps 119.97-104, the psalmist uses "wisdom words" to offer love for God's laws: "wise" (חכם, 119.98); "intelligence" (שכל, 119.98); "to perceive" (בין, 119.100, 104).⁸¹ Psalm 119.103 expresses wonderment at God's words (אמרתך), comparing them to sweet honey in the psalmist's mouth. Psalm 119.97-98 says,

How I love your instruction
All day, I meditate on it

Your commandment makes me wiser than my enemies
because forever it is with me

The beauty of the words, then, is that they make the psalmist wiser, even wiser than "my teachers" (119.99) and "the elders" (119.100).

In alluding to Ps 119.103, Job rejects that the friends' words are offering wisdom, and even relevant commentary, on Job's situation, though only Eliphaz has spoken so far.⁸² While honest words are not sickening, at least in the sense that they offer wisdom

⁷⁹ Clines, *Job*, 1:180.

⁸⁰ Nancy deClaisse-Walford, Rolf A. Jacobson, and Beth Laneel Tanner, *The Book of Psalms*, New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014), 870. deClaisse-Walford explains that the acrostic structure, along with the content of the psalm, marks Psalm 119 as a wisdom composition.

⁸¹ deClaisse-Walford, *The Book of Psalms*, 883.

⁸² Rather than Job viewing the friends' words as sickening, some have suggested that Job is referring to his own words as upright, expecting his own words to be sickening to the friends. In this interpretation, Lance R. Hawley, *Metaphor Competition in the Book of Job*, Journal of Ancient Judaism Supplements (Gottingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2018), 95-96, argues, "Job sarcastically questions how honest speech is so sickening to the friends, that they feel compelled to rebuke him." See also Habel, *The Book of Job*, 150. Hawley is correct that "this interpretation recognizes the parallel between 'upright words' (אמריישר) and 'words of one who despairs' (אמרי נאש) in v.26... This understanding of 'upright words' as

and understanding, something Job appears to affirm, he implies that the friends are not capable of such words. Instead, their words do more harm than good, and he rhetorically asks them, “But how does your reproof reprove?” By asking this, Job contrasts the friends’ words with those that the psalmist praises, namely words that make the hearer wiser after hearing them. Rather than the beautiful words worthy of Job’s praise, then, the friends only offer hollow “reproofs.”

Psalm 1.1 in Job 10.3

Job 10.3	Psalm 1.1
<p>הטוב לך? כי־תעשק כי־תמאס יגיע כפיך ועל־עצת רשעים הופעת:</p>	<p>אשר־יהאיש אשרו לא הלה בעצת רשעים ובדרך תטאים לא עמד ובמושב לצים לא ישב:</p>
<p>Is it good for you that you oppress? That you reject the labor of your hands, And over the counsel of the wicked you shine?</p>	<p>Blessed is the one who Does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, And in the way of sinners, he does not stand, And in the seat of scoffers, he does not sit.</p>

In Job 10, Job continues his response to the friends in chapter 9. Though in chapter 10 he seems to speak directly to God, he is actually telling the friends what he might say to God if he had the opportunity to speak directly to God.⁸³ Job begins (10.1-2),

My soul loathes with my life
Let me give vent to my complaint upon myself.⁸⁴
Let me speak with the bitterness of my soul.

Job’s words also makes more sense of נמרצו as a verb of provocation.” Against this, I decide that Job means the friends’ words because he is more clearly talking about the friends’ words both before and after 6.25a, in 6.24, inviting them to speak, and 6.25b-26.

⁸³ Seow, *Job*, 576.

⁸⁴ For the translation of this line, see Clines, *Job*, 1: 221; Brown, Driver, and Briggs, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon*, 753.

I will say to God, “do not condemn me
Show me why you contend with me”

Following this, Job asks three cutting questions, beginning with 10.3: “Is it good for you [God] that you oppress? That you reject the labor of your hands, and over the counsel of the wicked (עצת רשעים) you shine?” In asking this, Job alludes to Ps 1.1, in which the psalmist proclaims, “Blessed is the one who does not walk, in the counsel of the wicked (בעצת רשעים), and in the way of sinners, he does not stand, and in the seat of scoffers he does not sit.”

The major identification marker in this text is the phrase “the counsel of the wicked” (עצת רשעים), in Job with the preposition על, and in Psalm 1 with the preposition ב.⁸⁵ This phrase only occurs in these two texts, Job 21.16, and Job 22.18, both of which Kynes argues are also allusions to Ps 1.1.⁸⁶ Though only two words, the rarity of the phrase constitutes an allusion.⁸⁷

As Kynes writes, “the message of Psalm 1 directly contradicts Job’s experience.”⁸⁸ Psalm 1 recognizes that the righteous one will be “blessed” (אשרי). Those who stand in the counsel of the wicked, however, are like chaff, blown away by the wind (Ps 1.4). Psalm 1 concludes, “For YHWH knows the way of the righteous ones, but the way of the wicked ones will perish” (Ps 1.6). Yet Job has not experienced such protection

⁸⁵ Seow, *Job*, 579, writes, “Traditionally, the pious are charged to avoid the ‘counsel/council of the wicked’ (Ps 1:1), but God does the opposite by favoring them.”

⁸⁶ Kynes, *My Psalm Has Turned into Weeping*, 145. I discuss 21.16 later in this chapter. 22.18 is spoken by Eliphaz, so I will not address this allusion, although Kynes does in, *My Psalm Has Turned into Weeping*, 155.

⁸⁷ Kynes notes stronger parallels between Job 21.16 and Ps 1.1 than Job 10.3 and Ps 1.1, which I discuss later in the chapter when considering Job 21.16.

⁸⁸ Kynes, *My Psalm Has Turned into Weeping*, 152.

from God that the psalmist proclaims. Although he is “blameless and upright, and he fears God and turns from evil” (Job 1.1), his life looks more like the wicked described in Psalm 1, “like chaff, which is blown in the wind” (Ps 1.4). With this allusion, then, Job is questioning the normative paradigm set forth in Psalm 1, as he has not received the blessing and protection that Psalm 1 promises.

Psalm 8.6 in Job 19.9

Job 19.9	Psalm 8.6
כְּבוֹדִי מֵעַלֵּי הִפְשִׁיט וְיָסַר עֲטֹרַת רֹאשִׁי:	וַתַּחַסְרֵהוּ מֵעֵט מַאֲלֵהִים וְכִבֹּד וְהָדָר תַּעֲטֶרְהוּ:
My glory he has stripped off from me, And he has taken off the crown from my head.	You have made them a little lower than gods, And crowned them with glory and honor.

Earlier in Job, the author demonstrated an awareness of Psalm 8, strengthening the case for other potential allusions to Psalm 8 elsewhere in the book.⁸⁹ In another allusion to Psalm 8, Job laments to the friends, “My glory he has stripped off from me. And he has taken off the crown from my head” (Job 19.9). This recalls Ps 8.6, in which the psalmist praises God, saying, “You have made them a little lower than gods, and crowned them with glory and honor.” Both texts share the word כְּבוֹד and the root עֲטַר.⁹⁰

In Job 15.14-16, Eliphaz also alludes to Psalm 8, and Job 19.9 functions as Job’s response to Eliphaz’s interpretation of that. Eliphaz asks, “What is humanity that one can be clean? Or one born of a woman that they might be righteous?” (Job 15.14).⁹¹ Next, he

⁸⁹ Will Kynes finds four allusions to Psalm 8 in Job: Job 7.17-18 (Job); 15.14-16 (Eliphaz); 19.9 (Job); 25.5-6 (Bildad). See Kynes, *My Psalm Has Turned into Weeping*, 63-79.

⁹⁰ Habel, *The Book of Job*, 300; Kynes, *My Psalm Has Turned into Weeping*, 73-74; Clines, *Job*, 1:444; Perdue, *Wisdom in Revolt*, 174; Fishbane, “The Book of Job,” 93.

⁹¹ Regarding identification markers of Psalm 8 in this text, Kynes writes, “As in Job 7.17-18, the introductory כִּי מֵאִנוֹשׁ and similar structure connect Eliphaz’s question with that of Ps 8:5. Eliphaz may also

states, “[God] does not trust his holy ones, and heaven is not clean in his eyes. Even less one who is detested and corrupted, one who drinks iniquity like water” (Job 15.15-16). In alluding to this psalm, Eliphaz’s point is to emphasize “the rottenness of the very human claim to innocence.”⁹²

Job’s own allusion to Ps 8.6 in 19.9 offers a correction to Eliphaz’s anthropology offered in 15.14-16. While Eliphaz assumes that humanity is inherently worthless to God, Job accuses God of unjustly stripping his glory and crown away from him. This implies that glory and a crown “intrinsically belong” to humanity.⁹³ Therefore Job, not Eliphaz, affirms the truth of Ps 8.6, namely that a human being crowned with glory and honor *should* be the norm; in Job’s case, however, this has not been true.

Psalm 119.11-12 in Job 23.12

Job 23.12	Psalm 119.11-12
<p>מִצְוֹת שְׁפַתִּי וְלֹא אֶמִישׁ מִחֻקֵי צִפְנֹתַי אֶמְרֵי-פִי:</p>	<p>בְּלִבִּי צִפְנֹתַי אֶמְרֹתֶיךָ לִמְעַן לֹא אֶחַטְא־לְךָ: כְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה לְמַדְנִי חֻקֶיךָ:</p>
<p>I have not departed from the commands of his lips, And in my bosom, I have treasured the words of his mouth.</p>	<p>I treasure your words in my heart, So that I will not sin against you. Blessed are you, Lord, Teach me your statutes.</p>

use the assonant verb זכה (“to be pure”) to match זכר in the psalm.” See Kynes, *My Psalm Has Turned into Weeping*, 71.

⁹² Fishbane, “The Book of Job,” 93.

⁹³ Kynes, *My Psalm Has Turned into Weeping*, 74; Balentine, *Job*, 302. Balentine writes, “[Job] declares that God is guilty of perverting what it means to be a human being created in the image of God. God has stripped him of his ‘glory’ and ‘crown’ (v.9), the very attributes that enable him to live out God’s own decision to create him as a noble human being with noble responsibilities.”

In an allusion to Ps 119.11-12, Job proclaims, “I have not departed from the commands of his lips, and in my bosom, I have treasured the words of his mouth” (Job 23.12). In both passages, the verb צפנתי is used with אמר, describing God’s words.⁹⁴ Further, חק is used in both texts, although in Job, translators often struggle to make sense of מחקי and, instead, follow the LXX, rendering “my bosom” instead of “my statutes.”⁹⁵ Nevertheless, these connections suggest an allusion to Ps 119.11-12.

In Job 23, Job laments that he cannot find God to receive a fair hearing, though he has certainly tried. He says, “Oh, that I would know where I could find him. I would enter his dwelling. I would present my case before him, and I would fill my mouth with arguments” (Job 23.3-4).⁹⁶ Beginning in Job 23.11, he expresses his own righteousness, and in 23.12, he says, “I have not departed from the commands of his lips, and in my bosom, I have treasured the words of his mouth.” In this allusion to Ps 119.11-12, Job expresses that, although he has remained righteous, he has not shared the experience of the psalmist, who proclaims, “Blessed are the ones whose way is blameless, the ones who walk in the law of the Lord. Blessed are the ones who keep his testimonies, who seek him in all their heart” (Ps 119.1-2). As in previous allusions, Job affirms that his own righteousness *should* have resulted in blessing. Yet his experience has not been that which the psalm promises.

⁹⁴ David J.A. Clines, *Job*, Word Biblical Commentary 18A, vol. 2 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2006), 598.

⁹⁵ See Robert Alter, *The Wisdom Books Job, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes: A Translation with Commentary* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2010), 99; Pope, *Job*, 156; Gray, *The Book of Job*, 311; Clines, *Job*, 2:579.

⁹⁶ For an explanation of translating מיייתן, see Clines, *Job*, 2:575.

Psalm 72.12 in Job 29.12

Job 29.12	Psalm 72.12
כִּי־אֶמְלֹט עֵינַי מִשְׁוֹעַ אֵיתוֹם וְלֹא־עֹזֵר לוֹ:	כִּי־יִצִיל אֶרְבָּיוֹן מִשְׁוֹעַ אֵעֲנֵי וְאֵין־עֹזֵר לוֹ:
Because I delivered the poor who cried out, And the orphan who had no help.	Because he delivers the needy who cry out, And the poor, who had no help.

In Job 29, Job alludes to Ps 72.12, saying, “Because I delivered the poor who cried out, and the orphan who had no help.” This verse shares much vocabulary and structure with Ps 72.12. The words עני, משוע, and עזר לו are shared by both texts.⁹⁷ Further, the syntax of both lines in each text is the same. The a-line begins with כי followed by a verb that means delivered and ends with משוע; a different word for “poor” is used between the verb and משוע in each text. The b-line is parallel in each text, both continuing the a-line by offering another object for the verb in the a-line: in Job, “the orphan” (יתום), and in Psalm 72, “the poor” (עני). In each, this is followed by a negator attached to עזר־לו.

Throughout Job 29, Job recounts his own righteousness, noting that, whenever people saw him in public, they too would see his righteousness (Job 29.7-11). The reason for such recognition was because he “delivered the poor who cried out, and the orphan who had no help” (29.12). Psalm 72 praises the king for his righteousness; like Job, he too, “delivers the needy who cried out, and the poor who had no help” (72.12). The psalm goes on to ask God to continue blessing the king because of the king’s righteousness, saying (72.15-17)

Let him give him life, gold from Sheba,
and may one pray for him constantly,
all the days, may he be blessed.

⁹⁷ Habel, *The Book of Job*, 410; Pope, *Job*, 188; Clines, *Job*, 2:988.

Let there be an abundance of grain in the land,
 On top of the mountains, let there be much fruit,
 Like Lebanon, its fruit,
 May they blossom from the city like plants of the earth

Let his name be forever,
 Before the sun, let his name increase,
 And be blessed in him,
 Let all the nations bless him

While Job sees himself as equally righteous as the king in Psalm 72, he has not received the same fortune that the psalmist foresaw the king receiving. Lamenting this, he looks back on the days when he had a strong influence in the community (Job 29.21-25).⁹⁸ Now, however, he only has the three friends, and they are not even capable of treating him with the compassion he once offered others. Job says “I chose their way, and I sat at the head. And I lived like a king among the troops, like one who comforts the one who mourn” (29.25). His friends, however, have not comforted him at all. Instead, they have only criticized him.⁹⁹ In alluding to Ps 72.12, then, Job is recognizing that his righteousness should have rewarded him in the way the psalmist foresaw the king being rewarded. Nevertheless, he has not experienced that at all, and instead has only experienced suffering.

Conclusion

Several of Job’s allusions to various psalms throughout his speeches reveal a pattern in which Job views the psalm as a normative paradigm for life. For example, Ps 1.1 describes the righteous person as living a blessed life, while the wicked suffer

⁹⁸ G. Wilson, *Job*, 321; Alter, *The Wisdom Books*, 122.

⁹⁹ G. Wilson, *Job*, 322; Balentine, *Job*, 442. Balentine writes, “Job offers the friendship of loyal compassion that he expected but has not received from his friends.”

destruction. Yet Job's experience contrasts with this paradigm for life, and he has suffered immensely despite his own righteousness. In these allusions, Job does not so much reject the psalms as he does use them as a theological foundation for his own lament. In the next chapter, I discuss Job lamenting alongside lament psalms.

Chapter Four

Job Rejects Praise Psalms

In the introduction to this project, I examined Job's use of Ps 8.5 in Job 7.17-18, the proverbial "slam dunk" of psalmic allusions in Job.¹⁰⁰ As I argued, in that allusion, Job rejects the psalmist's message, namely that humanity is treasured in God's eyes, an unimaginable fact to the psalmist. Job, however, twists this praise into a lament, suggesting that his life is worse because of God's careful attention and care.

In earlier chapters, I examined psalms in which Job does not fully reject the message of the psalmist. For instance, in Job 6.8-11, Job laments with Ps 39.5-8; while he does intensify the psalmist's lament, he does not reject the message of the psalmist.¹⁰¹ Nevertheless, there are occasions when Job does fully reject the message of a psalm, and in this chapter, I examine Job 21.16; 10.8; and 12.21, 24, arguing that he does just that.

Psalm 1.1 in Job 21.16

Job 21.16, 18	Psalm 1.1, 4
<p>הֲוֹ לֹא בְיָדָם טוֹבָם עֲצַת רְשָׁעִים רְחֹקָה מִנִּי: יִהְיוּ כְּתֵבֵן לְפָנֵי רְיָח וְכַמֵּץ גִּבְבָּתוֹ סוֹפָה:</p>	<p>אֲשֶׁר־יִהְיֶה אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר לֹא הֵלֵךְ בְּעֲצַת רְשָׁעִים וּבְדַרְךְ חַטָּאִים לֹא עָמַד וּבְמוֹשָׁב לְצִיִּים לֹא יָשָׁב: לֹא־יִכֵּן הַרְשָׁעִים כִּי אִם־כַּמֵּץ אֲשֶׁר־תִּדְפְּנוּ רְיָח:</p>
<p>Is not their prosperity in their hands? The counsel of the wicked is distant from me. How often are they like straw before the wind? And like chaff that a storm steals?</p>	<p>Blessed is the one who does not walk, In the counsel of the wicked, And in the way of sinners, he does not stand, And in the seat of scoffers, he does not sit. The wicked do not stand, Except like chaff, which blows in the wind.</p>

¹⁰⁰ See pages 13-16

¹⁰¹ See pages 18-20.

Job again alludes to Ps 1.1 in Job 21.16, asking “Is not their prosperity in their hands? / The counsel of the wicked is distant from me.” As in Job 10.3, he uses the phrase “counsel of the wicked” (עצת רשעים), which appears only in these two places, Job 22.18, and Ps 1.1.¹⁰² Along with this marker, Job 21.18 and Ps 1.4 both use the rare word מץ (“chaff”) with the כ preposition as a metaphor for the wicked, describing how they blow in the wind (רוח).¹⁰³

In Job 21, Job responds to Zophar (Job 20), who claims that the wicked see destruction as their end.¹⁰⁴ Job rejects Zophar’s argument, instead asking, “Why do the wicked live? / They grow old and are strong in power” (21.7). In 21.16, he rejects his friends’ suggestions that he is among the wicked, saying, “The counsel of the wicked is distant from me.” He further questions his friends how often they actually see the wicked receiving their just desserts, asking, “How often are they like straw before the wind? / And [how often are they] like chaff that a storm steals?” (21.18).¹⁰⁵ Contrary to what they have suggested up to this point, Job believes that the wicked regularly do not see destruction, and instead they often prosper.

Like the Psalmist of Psalm 1, Job believes that his own righteousness should have protected him from such suffering; yet his lived experience contrasts with this belief, as

¹⁰² Kynes, *My Psalm Has Turned into Weeping*, 145-146; G. Wilson, *Job*, 229.

¹⁰³ Kynes, *My Psalm Has Turned into Weeping*, 145-147; Alter, *The Wisdom Books*, 91. Kynes argues that, while מץ is used a few other times in the Hebrew Bible (Pss 15.5; 83.14; Isa 17.13; Hos 13.3), it is even rarer for מץ to appear alongside רוח. Of each of these occurrences, it is most likely that Job specifically has Ps 1.1 in mind due to its proximity with עצת רשעים in Job 21.16. Further, Job has already shown an awareness of Ps 1.1 in Job 10.3, discussed earlier.

¹⁰⁴ G. Wilson, *Job*, 222.

¹⁰⁵ On translating this verse as a question, Clines writes, “The interrogative, explicit in v 17, is implied here.” See Clines, *Job*, 2:511; Gordis, *The Book of Job*, 231; Dhorme, *Job*, 316.

he has suffered immensely. Kynes asks, “But, can Job reject his friends’ narrow understanding of [retribution] theology without discarding [Psalm 1] altogether?”¹⁰⁶ He goes on to suggest that, despite the tension in his own theology that Job must feel, Job continues to be faithful to the belief in Psalm 1, namely that retribution theology is a helpful lens through which to view God’s actions.

This suggestion seems to ignore Job’s own words in this passage. Job rhetorically asks his friends how often they have actually seen the wicked experience destruction, implying they never have. He then invites God to deliver on the promise of Psalm 1 (Job 21.19-20):

“God stores their iniquity for their children,”
Let it be given to them, so they may know it

Let their eyes see their misfortune
And let them drink the water of the almighty

The effect of Job’s rhetorical question concerning God’s promise and his facetious invitation toward God to actually keep that promise amounts to a rejection of retribution theology as a helpful lens, and in turn, a rejection of the retribution claims of Psalm 1.¹⁰⁷ Job recognizes that, despite the retribution claims of Psalm 1, the wicked will not receive destruction and, instead, will continue to prosper. He will continue to experience suffering, despite his own righteousness.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁶ Kynes, *My Psalm Has Turned into Weeping*, 150.

¹⁰⁷ Seow, *Job*, 872, writes, “Job does not deny the possibility of such retribution, but he suggests it is not very common (v.17), thus undermining the claim that just retribution is the rule. If it were the rule, one should expect to see retributive destruction of the wicked all the time, or at least much more frequently.”

¹⁰⁸ Clines, *Job*, 2:528, writes, “The prosperity of the wicked is ‘in their own power’; it lies under no threat from a just God. And their plans for their continuing success, indeed for their perpetration of further wickedness, is outwith the scope of divine concern...So Job’s animus is not against the wicked, but

Psalm 119.73 in Job 10.8

Job 10.8	Psalm 119.73
<p>יְדִיךָ עָצְבוּנִי וְיַעֲשֶׂהוּנִי יַחַד סָבִיב וְתַבְלַעַנִי:</p>	<p>יְדִיךָ עָשִׂהוּנִי וְיַכְוִנֵנִי תְּבִינֵנִי וְאַלמְדָה מִצִּוְתֶיךָ:</p>
<p>Your hands formed me and made me And together you turn and swallow me</p>	<p>Your hands made me and established me Give me wisdom, and let me learn your commands</p>

In Job 10.8-12, Job alludes to Psalm 139, which I discussed in the second chapter.¹⁰⁹ Yet in Job 10.8, Job also alludes to Ps 119.73. Unlike Psalm 139, in which Job laments alongside the psalm, Job rejects the psalmist’s desire to honor God with his devotion, instead wishing God would simply stop paying him so much attention.

Job says, “Your hands formed me and made me” (10.8a) which is reminiscent of Ps 119.73a, “Your hands made me and established me.” Both verses use *דִּיךְ* as the subject followed by two verbs with the same sense, “to establish, form.” Although Job and the psalmist utilize one different verb, *עָצַב* in Job and *כָּוֵן* in the psalm, both use *עָשָׂה*, and all four verbs are masculine plural with a first-person suffix, with the second verb in each line constructed in the *wayyiqtol*.

Despite the similarities in the a-line of each verse, the two authors dramatically diverge in the b-line, and this changes the interpretation of the a-line. The psalmist takes joy in this fact and seeks to honor God with his devotion, saying, “Give me wisdom, and let me learn your commands.” Job, however, does not share such a desire of devotion to God; instead, he experiences God’s close attention as a sorrow and laments that he has been personally fashioned by God, for he believes God’s hands to be “turn[ing] and

against God; and it is not so much that God allows the wicked to prosper...but that a God who allows the wicked to prosper is inevitably a God who allows the righteous to suffer.”

¹⁰⁹ See pages 20-24.

swallow [ing]” him. As he continues, Job does not expect this to change. He says, “Remember that, like clay, you made me / To dust return me” (Job 10.9), asking that God let him return to his peace.¹¹⁰

The psalmist offers further trust in God’s righteousness and hopes that God might pay even closer attention to him in the next verse:

Let your steadfast love be a comfort to me
According to your words to your servant

Let your mercy come to me, and I will live
For your law is my delight

Job, on the other hand, hopes that God will stop tending to him so he can experience a bit of relief, saying in 10.14, “If I sin, you watch me / and you do not acquit me of my iniquity,” emphasizing his desire that God would leave him alone. A few verses later, he continues, “Are not the days of my life little? / Turn from me, so I might find a little cheer” (Job 10.20).¹¹¹ Therefore, in alluding to Ps 119.73, Job rejects the psalmist’s desire to dedicate his life to God and God’s commands. He instead wants to be as far from God as possible, in hope of finding some relief from his suffering.

Psalm 107.40 in Job 12.21, 24

Job 12.21, 24	Psalm 107.40
<p>שׁוֹפֵךְ בּוֹז עַל־נְדִיבִים וּמְזִים אֶפְיָקִים רָפָה: מְסִיר לֵב רָאשֵׁי עַם־הָאָרֶץ וַיִּתְעַם בְּתֵהוּ לֹא־דָרָךְ:</p>	<p>שׁוֹפֵךְ בּוֹז עַל־נְדִיבִים וַיִּתְעַם בְּתֵהוּ לֹא־דָרָךְ:</p>

¹¹⁰ For translating חלב as “clay,” see Clines, *Job*, 1:221. Pope, *Job*, 76, understands 10.9b as a question, “And back to dust will you return me?” Yet Seow, *Job*, 588, writes that, “this is awkward and unnecessary.” Others who take this as an indicative include Clines, *Job*, 1:215; G. Wilson, *Job*, 106; Habel, *The Book of Job*, 181.

¹¹¹ Habel, *The Book of Job*, 201; Longman, *Job*, 181.

He pours contempt on princes And loosens the belt of the strong ones ¹¹²	He pours contempt on princes And leaves them to wander without a way
He turns the hearts of the chiefs of the land And leaves them to wander without a way	

Job 12.21a is nearly a direct quote of Ps 107.40a, with every word of the line being represented; the only difference between the two lines is that Job adds a *waw mater lectionis* in the participle שׁוֹפֵךְ.¹¹³ In a few verses later, Job again returns to Ps 107.40 and each word of the b-line is used in Job 12.24b.¹¹⁴ Every word, then, is used in Job 12.21, 24, and Kynes writes that “this extensive and exact correspondence cannot be a coincidence.”¹¹⁵

Although Job uses every word of Ps 107.40, he certainly does not agree with the psalmist’s sentiment. Psalm 107.39 offers context for the contempt that God has for the princes, namely because they have been oppressing vulnerable people. In 107.41, the psalmist writes, “He exalts the needy from affliction / He makes their families like sheep.” In 107.42, the psalmist then proclaims, “The upright see [God’s works] and are happy / All evil closes its mouth.” Therefore, the psalmist rejoices in the contempt God pours on the princes because of their oppressive behaviors and praises God for it, calling on the hearers to “Consider the steadfast love of YHWH” (Ps 107.43b).

¹¹² For this translation of וּמִזִּיה אֲפִיקִים, see Clines, *Job*, 1:280.

¹¹³ Kynes, *My Psalm Has Turned into Weeping*, 81. Kynes writes, “The addition of the *waw* as a *mater lectionis* in Job to indicate the historically long vowel is an orthographic feature that appears with more frequency in later books. However, active *qal* participles like this one are often written defectively without the *waw*, and this one may have been a later scribal addition...”

¹¹⁴ Clines, *Job*, 1: 301; Kynes, *My Psalm Has Turned into Weeping*, 81; Pope, *Job*, 91; Gray, *The Book of Job*, 220.

¹¹⁵ Kynes, *My Psalm Has Turned into Weeping*, 81.

Job, however, does not praise God in his claim in Job 12.21, 24, which is highlighted especially by what Job omits from his psalmic allusion. Whereas in the psalm, the princes were punished because of their moral failings, Job makes no mention of the reason for their punishment.¹¹⁶ This generalized punishment God administers suggests that Job believes they “receive the punishment with no moral distinction indicated.”¹¹⁷ And as Kynes notes, this omission of context cannot be the result of Job’s lack of knowledge of the context of Ps 107.40, for every word of the verse is represented in Job. Therefore, whereas the psalmist has great hope and praise for the way God administers judgments and punishments to various peoples, including rulers, Job is convinced that God punishes regardless of one’s moral standing.

Conclusion

Several of Job’s allusions to various psalms throughout his speeches reveal a pattern in which Job wholly rejects the psalmist’s message, which I examine in this chapter. For example, in Job 21.16, Job alludes to Psalm 1, in which the psalmist proclaims a message of retribution, that the righteous will live and the wicked will not stand. This contrasts with Job’s own experience, however, and he rejects the retribution theology proposed by the psalmist, knowing that he will continue to suffer despite his own righteousness. While the psalmists seem to promote a retribution theology, Job uses

¹¹⁶ Clines writes, “there is no hint of any wrongful action on their part that may account for their dispersal to chaos.” See Clines, *Job*, 1:303; Kynes, *My Psalm Has Turned into Weeping*, 86-87. It is possible that Job sees himself among the morally upright princes who receive the same punishment as the unjust ones.

¹¹⁷ Kynes, *My Psalm Has Turned into Weeping*, 87; Clines, *Job*, 1:303.

them to reject such a theology. In this chapter, I also explore Job's use of Ps 119.73 in Job 10.8 and Ps 107.40 in Job 12.21, 24, other occasions where this pattern is at work.

Chapter Five

Conclusion

As I have argued throughout this project, Job interacts with the psalter through allusions and echoes of many different psalms. Nearly all scholars accept the allusion of Ps 8.5 in Job 7.17-18.¹¹⁸ This leads Will Kynes to ask the question that I have myself proposed in various wordings throughout the project:

If the author of Job interacted with Psalm 8 in such a knowing and sophisticated way, suggesting that he expected his readers to be familiar with such texts, what other allusions to the Psalms may likewise make significant contributions to the dialogue between Job, his friends, and God?¹¹⁹

Following this question, Kynes identifies and examines six psalms that the author of Job uses throughout the book of Job in *My Psalm Has Turned into Weeping*. My project follows in Kynes's footsteps, identifying many more psalmic allusions and identifying three dominant patterns in which Job utilizes these psalms. To limit my scope, I focus only on Job's speeches in the first two speech cycles.

In the second chapter, I identified instances in which Job laments by alluding to lament psalms. I specifically discussed Ps 39.5-8 in Job 6.8-11; Ps 139.13-16 in Job 10.8-10; and Ps 39.14 in Job 10.20-22. While this may be the most obvious way one might expect Job to use the psalms, my analysis showed that Job does not merely allude to the psalm, but he also puts his own twist on it. For example, in both Ps 39.14 and Job 10.20-22, the authors ask God to look away from him, "so that I might find a little cheer." Yet before this, the psalmist expresses hope that God will deliver him, recognizing himself as

¹¹⁸ See pages 13-16.

¹¹⁹ Kynes, *My Psalm Has Turned into Weeping*, 2.

a “foreigner” and hoping that God will remember God’s own law that Israel should protect such people who struggle (Ps 39.13). The reader is left with the ambiguity of hope of God’s deliverance in 39.13 and the lament of 39.14. Job, however, is not so ambiguous in his own lament. Job simply hopes to die and descend into “the land of shade and deep darkness” (Job 10.21). Job, therefore, intensifies the psalmist’s lament, not to break with the psalmists but to highlight his own intense suffering.

In the third chapter, I discuss allusions in which Job laments by using praise psalms. Rather than simply rejecting these praise psalms, however, Job accepts their theological foundation and uses that to lament that his own experience does not resonate with that of the psalmists. For example, in Job 19.9, Job alludes to Ps 8.6, referring to the “glory” and “crown” that God has placed on the head of humanity. The psalmist praises God for this. Job, though, laments that his own experience is not representative of what the psalmist describes, and he says, “My glory he has stripped off from me / And he has taken off the crown from my head” (19.9). Against, Eliphaz, who ironically rejects Psalm 8 by assuming that humanity is inherently worthless to God, Job accuses God of unjustly stripping his glory and crown away from him; in doing so, Job implies that the glory and crown “intrinsicly belong” to humanity.¹²⁰ Therefore, he accepts the truth claim of the psalm, even though his experience does not resonate with it. Other examples of this pattern that I discuss include Ps 119.103 in Job 6.25; Ps 1.1 in Job 10.3; Ps 119.11-12 in Job 23.12; and Ps 72.12 in Job 29.12.

Finally, in the fourth chapter, I discuss times when Job wholly rejects the psalmists’ praise. For example, in Job 12.21, 24, Job alludes to Ps 107.40 with a nearly

¹²⁰ Kynes, *My Psalm Has Turned into Weeping*, 74.

direct quotation. The psalmist praises God because “He pours contempt on princess / And leaves them to wander without a way,” as a punishment for the injustices they have caused. On the other hand, God “exalts the needy from affliction” and protects the vulnerable (Ps 107.39). Job rejects this claim, seen through Job’s omission of any mention of the morality of the rulers that God punishes. Instead, God administers a generalized punishment, one that they “receive...with no moral distinction.”¹²¹ Therefore, whereas the psalmist has a hope for God’s righteous administration of punishment and judgment, Job believes that God punishes regardless of one’s moral standing. Other examples of this pattern include Ps 1.1 in Job 21.16 and Ps 119.73 in Job 10.8.

Through this project, I argue that Job does not take a single approach in alluding to various psalms. Instead, his interaction with various psalms, both praise and lament, fits into three major patterns, and he subtly nuances much more often than he simply rejects or accepts them.

¹²¹ Kynes, *My Psalm Has Turned into Weeping*, 87.

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