

LIBERTY BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

A STUDY ON THE SERMONIC APPLICATION FOR THE LORD'S REIGN BASED
ON THE TEXT OF THE PSALM

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ABSTRACT

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The Psalter particularly includes “Yahweh *Malak* Psalms.” The psalmist proclaims that “the Lord reigns” through the Psalms in terms of the polemical perspective to the world. The Lord reigns over all the earth in virtue of His righteousness, equity, and faithfulness which other gods cannot imitate. The heaven, earth, and all nations will rejoice and worship the Lord because of the blessedness of the Lord’s reign. When people proclaim the Lord’s reign, His reign will be actualized at that place. If people theologically, liturgically, and devotionally apply this point to their life, they will experience the glorious Lord’s reign.

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Glory and thanks be to the faithful Lord!

The Lord's reign be to all the people!

Woon Han Kim

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Psalms contain various themes. One of the prominent themes is that the Lord reigns.¹ The sentence that the Lord reigns is represented in Hebrew, “יְהוָה מַלְכָּה”². In particular, the sentences in which “Yahweh *malak*” occurs are found in six Psalms. The Psalms are 47³, 93, 96, 97, 99, and 146 as “the theme of hymns of praise.”⁴

The Lord’s reign is unfolded within “the language-world of the Psalms.”⁵ “The language world” represents the specific features of the Lord’s reign in the Psalms. For example, in Psalm 93, the poet proclaims that “indeed, the world is firmly established, it

¹ James Luther Mays posits that the Lord’s reign is the Psalms’ theological center. See James Luther Mays, “The Language of the Reign of God,” *Interpretation* 47 (1993): 120 and James Luther Mays, *The Lord Reigns: A Theological Handbook to the Psalms* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1994), 22.

² In this thesis, “יְהוָה מַלְכָּה” will be presented as “Yahweh *malak*,” or “the Lord reigns.”

³ Only this Psalm represents it as “Elohim malak, אֱלֹהִים מַלְכָּה” The others represent as “Yahweh malak.” In reference, “Elohim” in Hebrew can be interpreted as “God.” In regard to the linguistic difference between “Elohim *malak* and Yahweh *malak*,” Walter Brueggemann sees them as effectively identical stating “...for it lacks the specific name Yahweh and has instead the more general statement, ‘God reigns.’ However, specific reference to Yahweh and to the people of Yahweh elsewhere in the psalm makes that linguistic difference only an incidental one.” See Walter Brueggemann, *The Message of the Psalms* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1984), 149.

⁴ Mays, “The Language of the Reign of God,” 118. The genre of the Psalms will be further investigated in chapter three.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 118. Once people who believe in the glorious Lord’s reign proclaim His reign, they will experience the characteristics of the Lord’s reign in their lives. With regard to the greatness of the Lord over all other gods, His reign, and the proclamation of His reign, this thesis will discuss them in the following chapters.

will not be moved; Your throne is established from of old; You are from everlasting.”⁶

This Psalm denotes “a hymn to the eternal, universal and invincible reign of the Lord, a theme it shares with Ps 47; 95-99.”⁷ Even though “the floods and many waters”⁸ threaten the Lord’s reign, the Lord’s mighty strength subdues them. The poet praises this fact through his languages that “The floods have lift up their voice...More than the sounds of many waters...The Lord on high is mighty.”⁹

In Psalm 97:2, the poet praises that the Lord’s reign is righteous and just. The realistic evidences appear in verses ten to twelve. As it were, on account of the Lord’s righteousness and justice, the righteous will be delivered from the wicked giving thank to the Lord.

The poet also represents these facts through his language in the Psalm. At the same time, he invites people to acknowledge the Lord’s reign. James Luther Mays appropriately assists this point stating “...the psalms can and do repeatedly call on ‘all the earth’ to acknowledge the reign of Yahweh in worship.”¹⁰ If the invited people accept his invitation, they could enter into the area of the Lord’s reign through his “language world.” In other words, “ ‘we’ and ‘I’ ” of the Psalms are substantialized to ‘we’ and ‘I’ for

⁶ In this thesis, the main Bible references are quoted from *New American Standard Bible*. See Psalm 93:1-2 in *New American Standard Bible* (Carol Stream, IL: Creation House, INC.,1971).

⁷ John H. Stek, “Notes on the Psalm 93” in *NIV Study Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 893.

⁸ Both are defined as the forces against the Lord’s reign and His eternal kingdom. Stek explains that “the Lord has shown Himself to be mightier than all the forces of disorder that threaten His kingdom...Implicitly they symbolize all that opposes the coming of the Lord’s kingdom.” See Stek, “Notes on the Psalm 93” in *NIV Study Bible*, 893.

⁹ Psalm 93:3-4, NASB.

¹⁰ Mays, “The Language of the Reign of God,” 119.

now.”¹¹ Mays asserts “we must by means of the psalms enter and live in that language world if praise and prayer with their words are to be authentic.”¹² Once we live in the poet’s language depicted in Psalm 93, we would experience the Lord’s reign on behalf of His mighty strength. In spite of the opposite existences, we will believe that “our world is firmly established.”¹³ Once we live in “the language world” depicted in Psalm 97, we would trust that the Lord who is righteous and just will save the righteous from the wicked.

The people who have experienced the Lord’s reign have a responsibility to respond to it.¹⁴ First, they must proclaim the Lord’s reign to the whole world. Second, they must invite people to live in the Lord’s reign. Next, they must lead them to experience the specific features of the Lord’s reign.

This thesis fills the need of three purposes. One of the crucial points for these purposes is that the author implements the sermonic application for proclaiming the Lord’s reign based on the exegesis of Psalm 96. Specifically, this sermonic application will first consider the theological understanding for the Lord’s reign. Second, it will be associated with our liturgical life. Third, it will touch upon our devotional life. To summarize, the perspective of the sermonic application will be “theological, liturgical, and devotional.”¹⁵

¹¹ Ibid., 117.

¹² Mays, *The Lord Reigns*, 6.

¹³ Psalm 93:1, NASB.

¹⁴ Mays defines “Yahweh *malak*” that “the sentence is both con-fessional, the response of the believing congregation to God, and pro-fessional, the witness of the people of God to the world.” See Mays, “The Language of the Reign of God,” 118.

¹⁵ See Mays, “The Language of the Reign of God,” 124., and Mays, *The Lord Reigns*, ix.

THE STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

There are one hundred fifty poems in the Psalter which is divided into five books.¹⁶ Of them, this thesis mainly deals with the six Psalms that mention “Yahweh *malak*.” According to the process of the study, this thesis will relate to other Psalms in order to augment the understanding of the Lord’s reign.

The Lord’s reign is a broad theme in the Bible.¹⁷ In the Old Testament, the Lord’s reign occurs in the Pentateuch, historical books, wisdom books and the prophets. In the New Testament, the theme is shown in the four Gospels, as well as Acts, the letters, and the book of Revelation.

Primarily, this thesis focuses on the texts of the six Psalms. As already mentioned above, this thesis will study “the language worlds” which are composed of the texts of the Psalms through the exegesis.

Based on the study, this thesis suggests what the definition of the Lord’s reign is, why the Lord should be separated from other pagan gods, where the Lord’s reign will impact, how the Lord’s reign will appear to the world and people, and why we have to be obedient to the Lord’s reign.

Synthetically, the sermonic application will be implemented for the contexts of the current world and Christians’ realistic lives in the center of the results of the exegesis and the above suggestions.

¹⁶ Book I is Psalms 1-42, Book II is Psalms 43-72, Book III is Psalms 73-89, Book IV is Psalms 90-106, and Book V is Psalms 107-150. For detailed contents about the collection of the Psalter, See Stek, “Notes to the introduction,” in *NIV Study Bible*, 777-778.

¹⁷ Mays insightfully explains this point. See Mays, “The Language of the Reign of God,” 119ff.

THE STATEMENT OF LIMITATIONS

This thesis has several limitations for applying and studying the Lord's reign.

First, this thesis will not deal with the authorship of the Psalms because the scholars have not reached a consensus on the exact authorship of the Psalms.¹⁸

Furthermore, the issue goes over the purpose of this thesis.

Second, this thesis will not study the superscription of the Psalms. The superscriptions are various and ambiguous.¹⁹ For detailed study, the issue has to be separately considered. This point is far from the purpose of this thesis.

Third, this thesis will not track the date of the Psalms and the transmissive process of the texts of the Psalms as the final form. For this study, this thesis needs the complex historical backgrounds and has to consider the redactional process. These perspectives are different from the intention of this thesis.

Fourth, this thesis does not recognize that the Psalms written in Hebrew have a restriction for applying to the recent Christian community. Above all, this thesis presumes that the whole Psalms are the Words of God. In other words, the Psalms are the final canonical form²⁰ as the Scripture given to not only the Jewish community but also the recent church.

The above understanding broadens people who are reading the Psalms to be able to apply them to their realistic life in terms of the biblical perspective. Brevard S. Childs appropriately upholds this point that "...not only a record of the past, but a living voice

¹⁸ In reference, the author of Psalm 47 is the sons of Korah, the others are anonymous.

¹⁹ Stek, "Notes to the introduction," in *NIV Study Bible*, 778-779.

²⁰ This viewpoint will be discussed in detail in the following chapters.

...By taking seriously the canonical shape the reader is given an invaluable resource for the care of souls, as the synagogue and church have always understood the Psalter to be.”²¹

THE THEORETICAL BASES

The theoretical basis for the topic is mainly associated with “biblical, theological, or historical data that corresponds to it.”²²

First, this thesis will primarily deal with the characteristic features of the Lord’s reign in the texts of the Psalms for the biblical data.²³ In the process, this thesis will look over the theological meaning of the Lord’s reign in the Scripture. In addition, this thesis will scrutinize the structure and literary traits such as the phonetic and stylistic analysis and figures of speech of the Psalms as Hebrew poetry.

Second, the Lord’s reign is closely related to the theological perspective in the Psalms. The Lord’s reign impacts the universe.²⁴ He reigns over all the nations and people.²⁵ His reign is always righteous and just.²⁶ These facts become the important theological background. Furthermore, the poets proclaim that the Lord is the Most High

²¹ Brevard S. Childs, *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979), 523.

²² Liberty Theological Seminary, *Doctor of Ministry Thesis Project Handbook* (Lynchburg: VA, 2007), 14.

²³ When necessary, the author will also consider the characteristics of the Lord’s reign in not only the Old Testament but also the New Testament.

²⁴ Psalm 93:1;97:1-6;99:1;146:6.

²⁵ Psalm 47:2-3, 8-9;96:3, 7, 10-13;97:10-12;99:2

²⁶ Psalm 93:1;96:10;97:2;99:4.

beyond all pagan gods.²⁷ This fact reveals the polemical meaning of the Psalms that “for all the gods of the peoples are idols... You are exalted far above all gods.”²⁸ In other words, the Lord who is the only true God is alone to reign over not only the universe, all the nations and people but also all gods. This point also becomes the important theological background for the theoretical basis for the topic.

In particular, this point is needed for the study of the Ancient Near East context. In this sense, this point is crucially associated with the theologically polemical meaning of the Psalms. In this study, this thesis compares the mythical background and enthronement hymns for the Canaanite deities, like Baal, to the ones of the Lord’s reign. Eventually, the fact that nothing compares to the Lord’s reign will be mainly proved on behalf of the exegesis of the texts based on Psalms 29 and 96.

THE STATEMENT OF METHODOLOGY

This thesis is composed of five chapters. Five chapters will be respectively discussed as follows.

In chapter one, this thesis introduces the background of why the topic is selected and the procedure of how it will be done. As the detailed contents for the introduction, this thesis will explain the statement of the problem, the limitation, and methodology, the theoretical basis for the project, the review of the literature, and the bibliography.²⁹

²⁷ Psalm 96:5;97:7, 9.

²⁸ Psalm 96:5;97:9, NASB.

²⁹ For the introduction, this thesis project follows “Thesis Manual 2.” See Liberty Theological Seminary, *Doctor of Ministry Thesis Project Handbook* (Lynchburg: VA, 2007), 12-15.

In chapter two, this thesis first will scrutinize the meaning of Yahweh *malak*. This part will be related to the Ancient Near East context.

Second, the above study will result in the polemical meaning that the Lord is the true God because the other gods like the Canaanite deity, Baal are only idols. The Lord alone reigns over all pagan gods and the areas which the gods govern.

To theologically demonstrate the above polemical meaning, this thesis will exegete Psalm 29.³⁰

In chapter three, this thesis will mainly exegete Psalm 96. The other Psalms will strengthen and assist the exegesis of Psalm 96 in order to accurately reveal the theological meaning of the Lord's reign.

The procedure of the exegesis for Psalm 96 will first translate the text of Psalm 96. Second, it will look over general considerations, the genre of the Psalm, and thematic unity related to the Psalms. Then it will analyze the structure of the Psalm, grammatical and syntactical analysis, and noticeable poetic devices. Finally, it will summarize the exegesis of the Psalm.

In chapter four, the author will first extract the main ideas based on the exegesis of Psalm 96. Then, it will suggest "the practice of the sermon" for Psalm 96. This will become the foundation and practice of the sermonic applications of the Lord's reign for preachers.³¹

³⁰ The study of Psalm 29 is important for an understanding of the Lord's reign. Moreover, Psalm 29 is closely associated with Psalm 96 as well as the Psalms.

³¹The procedures shown in chapter four can be applied to Psalms 93, 97, and 99.

In chapter five, this thesis will be concluded. It will first review the important main points from each chapter. Then, it will suggest a conclusive summary for the meaning and applications of the Lord's reign.

THE REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Mays' three materials, which are an article, monograph, and commentary, are the important primary sources for this thesis.

First, his article entitled "The Language of the Reign of God"³² provides people (readers) with a critical impact for understanding the Lord's reign. In this article, Mays surely asserts "at the heart of the faith professed in the Psalms is the proclamation that the Lord reigns!"³³ To prove the argument, he invites people to "the language world"³⁴ of the Psalms. That is, if people enter into "the language world," they are able to comprehend and be under the Lord's reign.

In particular, Mays emphasizes the liturgical life of church in accordance with the Lord's reign through his saying that "the Psalms are thus the liturgy of the Kingdom of God."³⁵ This point shows that our life contexts are profoundly associated with the Lord's reign. Mays insightfully illustrates experiences from every-day life such as "the sphere of transcendence, the cosmic sphere, the sphere of history, the social sphere, and personal sphere."³⁶ Through these contexts, Mays demonstrates the truth that the

³² Mays, "The Language of the Reign of God," 117-126.

³³ Ibid., 117.

³⁴ Ibid., 117.

³⁵ Ibid., 121.

³⁶ Ibid., 121.

righteous will be saved and encouraged by the Lord's reign, and that in contrast, the wicked will perish on account of the righteousness and justice of the Lord's reign.³⁷ This truth will serve to encourage those who are struggling to live in the Lord's reign in devotional perspective toward increased spiritual discipline. In addition, the liturgical and devotional sides are based on the theological meaning of the Lord's reign.³⁸

Second, his monograph entitled "*The Lord Reigns*"³⁹ demonstrates that the Lord's reign as "the theological center of the Psalter"⁴⁰ influences all spheres such as people and the world.

Prayers and praises of the Lord's reign in the Psalms are the responses of God's people and the world which is created by Him. To explain them, Mays interprets Psalm 13 and Psalm 100.

The Lord's reign is represented by His special person like David to the world.⁴¹ He who has the Lord's power and authority rules over people and the world or nations.⁴² In other words, the Lord accomplishes His reign in virtue of His regent, David.⁴³ Furthermore, His special regent leads His people to greatly hope for the Messiah.⁴⁴

³⁷ Ibid., 124. See Psalm 96:10; 97:2; 99:4.

³⁸ Ibid., 124.

³⁹ Mays, *The Lord Reigns*.

⁴⁰ Mays defines that "the declaration *Yhwh malak* involves a vision of reality that is the theological center of the Psalter." See Ibid., 22.

⁴¹ Mays, *The Lord Reigns*, 19.

⁴² Ibid., 19.

⁴³ Ibid., 19.

⁴⁴ Mays deals with the point in part four, "David as Psalmist and Messiah." See Ibid., 99ff.

With regard to the various figures and features of the Lord's reign, His people can be instructed by His Words such as "His law, decrees, statutes, precepts, commandments, ordinances, covenant, and word."⁴⁵ Mays analyzes this point in chapter five in detail. In particular, his canonical perspective for the Psalter provides us with an important insight in order to accept and understand the Psalter as the Scripture, the Lord's Word.⁴⁶

Third, his commentary⁴⁷ as a part of the commentary series, "*Interpretation*" has two benefits for understanding the Lord's reign. First, in his commentary's introduction, Mays summarizes the various categorical themes throughout the Psalms which are related to the Lord's reign so that readers easily grasp what He reigns.⁴⁸ Second, Mays explains the six Psalms in verse by verse as an expository form. His simple and deep explanations are covered with the characteristic features of the Lord's reign specifically focused on the texts of the Psalms.

For linguistic study, the author utilizes several Bible dictionaries and theological dictionaries. They are greatly helpful for the study. For example, in "*The Anchor Bible Dictionary*," Martin Rose provides readers with abundant contents, biblical background and data, and bibliography for the name of Yahweh.⁴⁹

⁴⁵ Ibid., 19.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 144-145.

⁴⁷ Mays, *Psalms* (Interpretation; Louisville: John Knox Press, 1994).

⁴⁸ Ibid., 29-36.

⁴⁹ Martin Rose, "Names of God in the OT," in *The Anchor Bible Dictionary* Vol. 4. (ed. David Noel Freedman; New York: Doubleday, 1992), 1001-1011.

On the other hand, “*Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*”⁵⁰ and “*New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*”⁵¹ are beneficial for the study of the Ancient Near East’s background, the word usage of the Scripture (Old Testament), semantic field, and the theological implication and meaning.

For the understanding of the Psalms associated with the Ancient Near East, Othmar Keel’s book⁵² is extremely helpful. In particular, this book is written with, “the iconographic approach,”⁵³ in regard to the Ancient Near East. As a strong noticeable point, this book includes various useful iconographic illustrations with the appropriate explanations for “cosmology, destructive forces, the temple: Place of Yahweh’s presence and sphere of life, conceptions of God, the King, and man before God.”⁵⁴ These will help readers to grasp the theological meaning of the Lord’s reign in the context of the Ancient Near East.

For the exegesis of the Psalms, it is important that the author refers to several useful commentaries. First, Peter C. Craigie’s commentary⁵⁵ stands on the conservative perspective of the interpretation of the Psalms. Additionally, Craigie crucially gives readers a help for Ugaritic studies.⁵⁶ In this sense, His commentary is indispensable for

⁵⁰ G. Johannes Botterweck, Helmer Ringgren, and Heinz-Josef Fabry, *Theological Dictionary of The Old Testament* (trans. Douglas W. Stott; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997).

⁵¹ Willem A. VanGemeren, *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997).

⁵² Othmar Keel, *The Symbolism of the Biblical World: Ancient Near Eastern Iconography and The Book of Psalms* (trans. Timothy J. Hallett; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1997).

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 8-11.

⁵⁴ See Keel’s contents.

⁵⁵ Peter C. Craigie, *Psalms 1-50* (WBC 19; Waco: Word Books, 1983).

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 48-56.

the exegesis and understanding of Psalm 29. Second, Brueggemann's theological commentary is greatly beneficial for insights of homiletics and hermeneutics in terms of "orientation, disorientation, and new orientation."⁵⁷ He classifies Psalms as three themes and tries to associate them with the human life.⁵⁸ In reference, Brueggemann's book entitled by "*Israel's praise*"⁵⁹ is greatly helpful for interpreting and applying for Psalm 96. He first interprets the verb, *בְּשִׁיר* as the key word of the Psalm. The word related by the Lord's salvation implies the proclamation for the Lord's reign. This means that when the Lord's reign is proclaimed by us, His reign is rightly actualized in our real life contexts.⁶⁰ Furthermore, the interpretation opens the valuable possibility that believers can liturgically apply the proclamation for the Lord's reign to their life.⁶¹ Third, Marvin E. Tate's commentary⁶² is useful for the understanding of Psalms 93, 96, 97, and 99. Tate not only compares the Psalms⁶³ to one another but also provides readers with an abundant bibliography. Furthermore, his notes and comments for translating the Psalms include important textual criticism, syntax, and grammatical issue. Fourth, David M. Jr. Howard's book⁶⁴ is a crucial contribution to the exegesis of the Psalms and the

⁵⁷ Brueggemann, *The Message of the Psalms*, 19.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 19.

⁵⁹ Walter Brueggemann, *Israel's Praise: Doxology against Idolatry and Ideology* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988).

⁶⁰ Brueggemann, *Israel's Praise*, 35-38.

⁶¹ Brueggemann, *Israel's Praise*, 37-38.

⁶² Marvin E. Tate, *Psalms 51-100* (WBC 20; Dallas: Word Books, 1990).

⁶³ For example, see Tate, *Psalms 51-100*, 504-509.

⁶⁴ David M. Jr., Howard, *The Structure of Psalms 93-100* (Biblical and Judaic Studies 5; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1997).

theological meaning of the Lord's reign. For example, readers need to study the structure and the unity of Psalms 93-100 as well as how the importance of Yahweh's kingship influences these Psalms and even all the Psalms. Howard's book is important for these studies. Fifth, Stek's notes on the Psalms⁶⁵ are extremely helpful for the understanding of Psalms 29, 47, 93-100, and 146. The author will actively utilize the introduction, significant arrangement of the Psalter, and expository analysis of the Psalms. Sixth, J. Clinton McCann's commentary⁶⁶ is useful to respectively illuminate the perspectives of God and men in the Psalms. Seventh, Willem A. VanGemenen's commentary⁶⁷ comprises several essential contents such as "literary analysis, devices, and genre, types of Psalms, composition, structure, Psalm titles, background or historical information, and musical or liturgical information"⁶⁸ for the study of the Psalms.

In reference, the author will use several commentaries other than the above commentaries. Additionally, the author will criticize Mitchell Dahood's commentary⁶⁹ and Charles Augustus Briggs and Emilie Grace Briggs' commentary⁷⁰ in terms of the theological perspective of this thesis.

⁶⁵ Stek, "Notes on the Psalm" in *NIV Study Bible*.

⁶⁶ J. Clinton McCann, *The Book of Psalms* (The New Interpreter's Bible IV; Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996).

⁶⁷ Willem A. VanGemenen, *Psalms* (The Expositor's Bible Commentary V; Grand Rapids: Zondervan 1991).

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 3-4.

⁶⁹ Mitchell Dahood, *Psalms I* (AB 16; New York: Doubleday, 1965).

⁷⁰ Charles Augustus Briggs and Emilie Grace Briggs, *The Book of Psalms* vol. 1 (ICC; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1952).

For the essential understanding of the Psalms, three scholars' books are greatly important. First, Hermann Gunkel began with a fundamental study of the Psalms in regard to the classification of the Psalms.⁷¹

On the other hand, Gunkel's contemporary scholar, Sigmund Mowinckel argues for Gunkel's perspective. Mowinckel asserts not that Psalms are "no real cult Psalms"⁷² but that Psalms are "--with very few exceptions—real cult Psalms, made for cultic use."⁷³ Moreover, Claus Westermann⁷⁴ categorizes Psalms to be associated with human life and real context. As this point is reflected, Westermann divides Psalms into two major categories, "Praise and Lamentation."⁷⁵

For the study of Psalms in this thesis, Childs's book⁷⁶ is indispensable. First, Childs provides readers with the important selected bibliography. Second, Childs summarizes the comprehensive processes of Psalms' study through several scholars who crucially influenced it. Third, as the author strongly upholds, it is his canonical perspective of Psalms. This is not the only contribution to the understanding of Psalms as the Word of God. The canonical perspective also implies that Psalms are the Words of

⁷¹ Refer to Hermann Gunkel and Joachim Begrich, *Introduction to Psalms: The Genres of the Religious Lyric of Israel* (trans. James D. Nogalski; Macon: Mercer University, 1998).

⁷² Sigmund Mowinckel, *The Psalms in Israel's Worship* (trans. D. R. Ap-Thomas; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1962), 29.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 30.

⁷⁴ Claus Westermann, *Praise and Lament in the Psalms* (trans. Keith R. Crim and Richard N. Soulen; Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1981). In reference, this book's original publication was 1965.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, v-vii.

⁷⁶ Childs, *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture*.

God given to the recent believers as “the meaningful spiritual resources”⁷⁷ and can be interpreted for the purpose in terms of “the theological and hermeneutical standpoint.”⁷⁸

For applying the Psalms of the Lord’s reign to sermons, Sidney Greidanus’ book⁷⁹ is invaluable. Greidanus focuses on how modern preachers biblically interpret and preach the Bible. In other words, the two poles of this book are “interpretation and preaching of the Bible.” For this, Greidanus first explains various interpretations from chapter three to five. Then he suggests various useful sermonic forms in the following chapters. This point provides us an important insight of how modern preachers apply the texts of the Psalms for the Lord’s reign to our real life contexts.

For the sermonic application, Haddon Robinson and Bryan Chapell’s books are indispensable. Robinson emphasizes the relation of the text and congregation in terms of the theme of the sermon.⁸⁰ More insightfully, Robinson recognizes that one of the most important points in the purpose of the sermon is why the text should be preached to today’s life context.⁸¹ His perspectives are the fundamental basis for the sermonic application of the Lord’s reign.

Bryan Chapell appropriately explains the importance of the sermon outline.⁸² In particular, Chapell highlights that its consistency is crucial for the outline, structure, and

⁷⁷ Ibid., 523.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 522-523.

⁷⁹ Sidney Greidanus, *The Modern Preacher and the Ancient Text: Interpreting and Preaching Biblical Literature* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988).

⁸⁰ Haddon Robinson, *Biblical Preaching: The Development and Delivery of Expository Message* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001), 97.

⁸¹ Robinson, *Biblical Preaching*, 107-113.

⁸² Bryan Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching: Redeeming the Expository Sermon* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1994), 129-135.

flow of the sermon.⁸³ To assist this point, Chapell suggests important sermonic principles such as “harmony, unity, and brevity”⁸⁴ in order that preachers properly organize “a well-planned sermon.”⁸⁵ Chapell’s perspectives and principles provide this thesis’ sermon practice with a central theoretical basis.

⁸³Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching*, 149-151.

⁸⁴Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching*, 136.

⁸⁵Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching*, 133.

CHAPTER 2

THE MEANING OF YAHWEH MALAK

THE DIVINE NAME OF YAHWEH

Yahweh is commonly used as the Divine Name for God in the Old Testament.

Yahweh's name is composed of "four Hebrew consonants, יהוה, and the letters are called the Tetragrammaton."¹ The name occurs "more than six thousand times in the Old Testament."² The Tetragrammaton cannot be pronounced exactly because the pronunciation was lost from "Jewish tradition sometime during the Middle Ages."³ Masoretes lead people to be able to pronounce the letters as "Adonai"⁴ so that they do not blaspheme against the holiness of the original Divine Name.⁵

In the process, the Divine Name of Yahweh has been formed as the result of "the combination of the Tetragrammaton and the vowels of the word, 'Adonai'."⁶

¹ Henry O. Thompson, "Yahweh," in *The Anchor Bible Dictionary* vol. 6. (ed. David Noel Freedman; New York: Doubleday, 1992), 1011.

² *Ibid.*, 1011. In reference, Thompson explains that "Variation in the Masoretic mss makes it difficult to establish the number of occurrences exactly." See 1011.

³ D. N. Freedman, "יהוה YHWH," *Theological Dictionary of The Old Testament* vol. 5 (trans. David E. Green; ed. G. Johannes Botterweck and Helmer Ringgren; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), 500.

⁴ In general, this word was translated to "lord" in English. See Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs, *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon* (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1906), 10-11.

⁵ For the detailed explanations, refer to D. N. Freedman, "יהוה YHWH," 500-511.

⁶ Thompson, "Yahweh," 1011.

The meaning of the Divine Name is equivocal. Only in Exodus 3:14, the Name can be theologically inferred. Thompson adequately explains this point as follows:

Arguments favoring particular meanings have been for the most part grammatical. The name has been thought to be a form of the verb *haway*, an older form of the Hebrew verb *hayah*, “to be.” The reconstructed form Yahweh is parsed as either a third-person Qal imperfect of this verb or as the corresponding form of the causative stem. This analysis is encouraged by theological notions of God as One who is, or who exists, or who causes existence.⁷

Yahweh, “I am, who I am” led Israelites from Egypt passing through the Red Sea. After the Exodus, Yahweh covenanted with the Israelites at the mountain, Sinai. Yahweh proclaimed, “Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant...you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.”⁸ Yahweh’s proclamation means the entrance of the new relationship between Him and the Israelites.

In other words, Yahweh becomes the Israelites’ God, and they are His people.⁹ This is not only “one of the central themes”¹⁰ in the Old Testament but also “the central figure of the Old Testament.”¹¹

For example, once the Israelites who are His people obey His words, Yahweh who is the God of Israel will unceasingly provide them with “Manna and Quail.”¹² Once the Israelites are confronted with perilous enemies, Yahweh will fight against them as the Divine Warrior¹³ instead of His people.

⁷ Ibid., 1011.

⁸ Exodus 19:5-6. NASB.

⁹ Leviticus 26:12; Jeremiah 31:33; Ezekiel 36:28.

¹⁰ Thompson, “Yahweh,” 1012.

¹¹ Freedman, “יְהוָה, YHWH,” 517-521.

¹² Exodus 16.

¹³ Exodus 14-15, 17:8-16; Judges 4-5.

Therefore, these various figures of Yahweh, like the Provider and Protector, are covered with the Old Testament¹⁴ and are consistent with the central theme. That is, the divine name of Yahweh theologically connotes that Yahweh is the God of Israel.

THE POLEMICAL IMPLICATION FROM YAHWEH MALAK

Yahweh reigns (*Malak*) over Israel. For the Israelites who are His people, Yahweh moves the universe, governs other nations around Israel, and provides all life necessities for them. That is, Yahweh is the Lord and King of Israel. “The Kingship of Yahweh”¹⁵ naturally influences the Ancient Near East.

The people who lived in the Ancient Near East, particularly in Canaanite background, were possessed in their gods. They believed that the gods are their providers and protectors and even reign (*Malak*) over the universe and all the nations.

In Egypt, Amun-Re is “king of gods and king of heavens.”¹⁶ Marduk is called the Babylonian supreme god.¹⁷ In Syria, El is called god or “king.”¹⁸ Furthermore, kings in the Ancient Near East were regarded as gods, sons of gods, and agents of gods. To elaborate, the king in Egypt is a “god and son of god”¹⁹ and plays an important role in his

¹⁴ Freedman, “יְהוָה YHWH,” 517-521.

¹⁵ Philip J. Nel defines “the Kingship of God in the Old Testament is a central theological theme....” See Philip J. Nel, “מֶלֶךְ,” *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis* vol. 2 (ed. Willem A. VanGemeren; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997), 960-963.

¹⁶ Ibid., 960.

¹⁷ Ibid., 960.

¹⁸ Ibid., 960.

¹⁹ Helmer Ringgren, “אֱלֹהִים,” *Theological Dictionary of The Old Testament* vol. 8. (trans. Douglas W. Stott; ed. G. Johannes Botterweck, Helmer Ringgren, and Heinz-Josef Fabray; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 349.

nation as god. The Egyptians serve their king as god the creator because “the king’s task is to ‘make the land flourish again as it did in primeval time by the plan of Maat.’”²⁰

They believe that the king fights against their enemies and becomes a shepherd for them as flocks.²¹ After all, the prosperity and flourish of the Egyptian society are actualized by the reign (*Malak*) of the king as god.²²

In Mesopotamia, the king also plays a role in that area as god. The king not only “fights against the enemies in order to protect the people but also maintains justice and righteousness, preserves the life of the land, and insure welfare of the land.”²³ Likewise, the king’s reign (*Malak*) visualizes his people as Mesopotamia’s prosperity.

More importantly, the Kingship of Yahweh is proclaimed that Yahweh, the One true God, is greatly superior to the above gods (kings) in the Ancient Near East. The proclamation theologically evokes “the polemical meaning.” In particular, the polemical proclamation is conspicuous in the six Psalms which represent that “the Lord reigns (*Malak*).”²⁴

For instance, the poet in Psalm 93 praises that “the world is firmly established, is ordered, and His testimonies are fully confirmed”²⁵ because the Lord reigns. The fact that

²⁰ Ibid., 349.

²¹ Ibid., 349.

²² Ibid., 349.

²³ Ibid., 351.

²⁴ The cases that “Yahweh is the subject of *malak* are occurred thirteen times in the Bible.” See Heinz-Josef Fabray, “מַלְאֵךְ,” *Theological Dictionary of The Old Testament* vol. 8 (trans. Douglas W. Stott; ed. G. Johannes Botterweck, Helmer Ringgren, and Heinz-Josef Fabray; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 365.

²⁵ Psalm 93:1-5, NASB.

“creation, cosmic order, and revelation is firmly established only by the Lord’s reign is the polemical fundamental character of the formulation of Yahweh *malak*.”²⁶

In Psalm 96, the poet calls all the earth to praise Yahweh through the new song. “For great is the Lord and greatly to be praised; He is to be feared above all gods. For all the gods of the people are idols, But the Lord made the heaven.”²⁷

Yahweh is the only true God. The other pagan gods are idols. For example, the Canaanite representative deity, Baal is vanquished by Yahweh. Nel insightfully explains this point: “...Yahweh as King in the Yahweh-King-Psalms has a typical Israelite content and does not merely mean that Baal of the Canaanite cult is replaced by the name Yahweh. In critical opposition to Canaanite myth, Yahweh became King of the world and the gods.”²⁸

In this respect, the poet boldly claims the theologically polemical meaning that Yahweh is the greatest God in the Ancient Near East, even in the whole world. Additionally, Yahweh cares for His people and reigns over the world in virtue of His just and righteousness.

In Psalm 97:10-12, Yahweh saves His people from the wicked. Yahweh is compassionate for the affliction and suffering of His people.²⁹ The justice and righteousness of Yahweh are His prominent attributions³⁰ which make the universe, world, nation, and people to be firmly ordered.

²⁶Heinz-Josef Fabray, “מַלְאָךְ,” 372.

²⁷ Psalm 96:4-5, NASB.

²⁸ Nel, “בַּלְדָּה,” 962.

²⁹ Psalm 146:6-10.

³⁰ Psalm 96:10; 97:1-2; 98:9; 99:4-5.

Other than the pagan gods, the heaven, earth, and even sea will rejoice³¹ and sing a new song because the Lord's reign is great and just. In particular, the poets in Yahweh *Malak*-Psalms intentionally invite the universe, the whole world and people, and even all the nations including the Ancient Near East in order to obey and participate in the Lord's reign.

In this sense, the poet appropriately proclaims that the Lord's reign is more superior than the pagan gods in terms of the polemical perspective. To theologically demonstrate the polemical meaning, this thesis will exegete Psalm 29.

THE EXEGESIS OF PSLAM 29

Introduction

The discovery of the Ugaritic tablets in 1929 led H. L. Ginsberg³² to assert in 1935 that Psalm 29 originated from a Phoenician hymn. After Ginsberg's initial hypothesis, T. H. Gaster argues that "Psalm 29 is of the same order and that it is really the typical 'hymn of laudation' detached from its mythic context, Yahwized and preserved as an independent liturgical composition."³³ Gaster adopted Ginsberg's hypothesis in terms of the Canaanite background. Subsequently, F. M. Cross accepted Ginsberg's hypothesis. That is, Cross recognized that "H. L. Ginsberg in 1936 drew up

³¹ Psalm 96:10-12; 97:1; 99:5

³² See H. L. Ginsberg, "Phoenician Hymn in the Psalter," *XIX Congresso Internazionale degli Orientalisti* (Rome, 1935): 472-476.

³³ T. H. Gaster, "Psalm 29," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 37 (1946): 57.

conclusive evidence that Psalm 29 is an ancient Baal hymn.”³⁴ Moreover, Brueggemann accepts the hypothesis that “...this is an older Canaanite Psalm, taken over by Israel, wherein only the name of the deity has been changed. Thus it reflects Canaanite mythology and rhetorical structures.”³⁵

On the other hand, B. Margulis and Craigie question this hypothesis. Margulis does not recognize the fact that Psalm 29 is a Yahwized poem. On the basis of the reference of the wilderness (Ps. 29:8) and the flood (Ps. 29:10), Margulis asserts “the original subject of the poem was Yahweh, not Baal, and that its author was accordingly a Yahwist.”³⁶

Craigie also argues against the hypothesis of Ginsberg and Gaster. Gaster compares the poetic language of Psalm 29 with the Babylonian poem *Enuma elis* and the *Poem of Baal* recovered at *Ras Shamra*. With regard to Gaster’s suggestion, even though Craigie agrees that Psalm 29 was influenced by Canaanite language and imagery, he argues two important points, which mean that Psalm 29 stands in the Hebrew poetic tradition as follows: “(1) the continuity between the Song of the Sea and Ps 29, and (2) the role of the storm in old Hebrew war poetry.”³⁷ On the basis of this perspective,

³⁴ F. M. Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973), 151-152.

³⁵ Brueggemann, *The Message of the Psalms*, 142. Carola Kloos agrees with Brueggemann’s perspective stating “my conclusion is, that Ps. XXIX depicts Yhwh as Baal from beginning to end.” Cf. Carola Kloos, *Yhwh’s Combat with the Sea* (Amsterdam: Leiden, 1986), 93. Kloos means that Yahweh is Israelite’s Baal only changed by the name. With respect to the form of Psalm 29, Hans-Joachim Kraus agrees that there is some “probability that a Canaanite Baal hymn with its description of a theophany was handed down without radical revision on the part of the OT tradents in Israel.” Cf. Hans-Joachim Kraus, *Psalms 1-59* (trans. Hilton C. Oswald; A Continental Commentary; Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1988), 346.

³⁶ B. Margulis, “The Canaanite Origin of Psalm 29 Reconsidered,” *Biblica* 51 (1970): 346.

³⁷ Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 245.

Craigie regards Psalm 29 as a genuine Hebrew poem. He argues that “the poet, in Ps 29, has developed the general storm imagery of war poetry and highlighted the ‘voice’ of God...thus, the poet has deliberately utilized Canaanite-type language and imagery in order to emphasize the Lord’s strength and victory.”³⁸

We are of the conviction that Craigie’s formulation of the influence of Canaanite hymns and poetic structure on Psalm 29 is the key for understanding the message of this psalm. Therefore, in this chapter we will show that Psalm 29 is a Hebrew poem that employed Canaanite language and imagery to deliver a polemical message against the Canaanite deity Baal.

To demonstrate, this thesis will exegete Psalm 29. Next it will compare the language and poetic techniques employed in the poem with key parallel Ugaritic texts. Then it will show how the poet’s use of Canaanite language and poetic techniques shaped the message of Psalm 29.

The Controversy Between Ginsburg-Gaster and Margulis-Craigie

In this section, we will examine scholarly controversy concerning the hypothesis that originally Psalm 29 was not a Hebrew poem. First, we will scrutinize the hypothesis of Ginsberg and Gaster. Next this paper will review the objections of Margulis and Craigie against that of Ginsberg and Gaster.

³⁸ Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 246.

Ginsberg's Hypothesis and Gaster's Viewpoint

The controversy between scholars that Psalm 29 was influenced by Canaanite hymns was started by Ginsberg in 1935. Ginsberg says: "that the Twenty-Ninth Psalm is an adaptation of a Phoenician hymn is the conclusion upon which several clear lines of evidence converge."³⁹ To demonstrate this, Ginsberg gives four evidences.

First, Ginsberg proposes that there are "pagan notions"⁴⁰ in Psalm 29. They are illustrated by five examples:

1. In an Egyptian text of the age of Ramesses III we read: His (the King's) roar is like unto Baal in Heaven;
2. In another text the King's roar is compared to that of Set (equated with Baal);
3. Abimilki of Tyre writes to the Pharaoh "who utters (lit. 'gives') his voice in the heavens like Baal"
4. The Ugaritic epic text B, Col. 4-5 I. 70 says of Baal...and he will utter (lit. 'gives') his voice amid the clouds;
5. ...Baal will utter his voice, Baal Zaphon will declare....⁴¹

According to Ginsberg, the king or Pharaoh's roar in the Egyptian text is represented by Baal's voice. In addition, in the Ugaritic epic text, Baal's voice is depicted as a powerful one. On the basis of this fact, Ginsberg regards the voice of Yahweh in Psalm 29 as that of "the Syrian storm-god Baal, or Hadad."⁴²

Secondly, Ginsberg proposes "Phoenician topography and toponymy."⁴³ Three localities appear in Psalm 29. These are Lebanon (vv. 5-6), Sirion (v 6) and the wilderness of Kadesh (v 8). With respect to these localities, Ginsberg argues that "it used

³⁹ Ginsberg, "Phoenician Hymn in the Psalter," 472.

⁴⁰ Ginsberg, "Phoenician Hymn in the Psalter," 472.

⁴¹ Ginsberg, "Phoenician Hymn in the Psalter," 473.

⁴² Ginsberg, "Phoenician Hymn in the Psalter," 473.

⁴³ Ginsberg, "Phoenician Hymn in the Psalter," 473.

to be taken for granted that it was the wilderness about Kadesh Barnea, but that is nowhere else designated otherwise than as Paran or Zin.”⁴⁴ Ginsberg seeks the solution of the problem in the Ugaritic epic text.⁴⁵ Eventually, Ginsberg concludes that the wilderness of Kadesh in verse 8 is a Canaanite topography.

Additionally, Ginsberg also regards Sirion as a Canaanite locality. That is, he claims that “Sirion is not only a Syrian locality, but a specifically Syrian name...and characteristically... also occurs in Ugaritic poetry...”⁴⁶

Thirdly, Ginsberg proposes “a linguistic feature of north Canaanite.”⁴⁷ Especially, in verse 6, Ginsberg finds the linguistic evidence. In this verb, **נִרְקִי־דָם**, is parsed as third person masculine singular *Hiphil* WAYYIQTOL verb with a third person masculine plural suffix. However, in the verb, Ginsberg explains the final *mem* as an enclitic *mem*. That is, Ginsberg argues that “I prefer... as the emphatic enclitic *-ma* : the latter is a very characteristic feature of Ugaritic.”⁴⁸

Fourthly, Ginsberg claims that in verse 10b, **וַיֵּשֶׁב יְהוָה מִלְךְ לְעוֹלָם**: [“Yahweh sits as King forever”⁴⁹] is a “formula of Baal’s triumph.”⁵⁰ Ginsberg links Yahweh’s enthronement to Baal’s triumph. Ginsberg argues that “...every time Baal scores a

⁴⁴ Ginsberg, “Phoenician Hymn in the Psalter,” 473.

⁴⁵ Ginsberg asserts that “thanks to the Ugaritic epic text C, 1. 65, we now know for certain that *mabr qds* is situated in Syria.” See Ginsberg, “Phoenician Hymn in the Psalter,” 473.

⁴⁶ Ginsberg, “Phoenician Hymn in the Psalter,” 473-474.

⁴⁷ Ginsberg, “Phoenician Hymn in the Psalter,” 474.

⁴⁸ Ginsberg, “Phoenician Hymn in the Psalter,” 474.

⁴⁹ Psalm 29:10, NASB.

⁵⁰ Ginsberg, “Phoenician Hymn in the Psalter,” 474.

victory over his foes it is specifically related that he seats himself upon the throne of his (eternal) dominion.”⁵¹ To prove the relationship, Ginsberg cites several Ugaritic texts. For example, in text A 6: 33-35, “Baal seateth himself upon the throne of his kingdom, Upon the seat of his dominion.”⁵² And in Syria XII, “Baal sitteth upon his throne, Ben Dagan upon his seat.”⁵³

Consequently, Ginsberg regards that the reference to Yahweh’s enthronement in verse 10 is derived from a “formula of Baal’s triumph.”⁵⁴ That is, this indicates that Psalm 29 was influenced by the Canaanite Baal hymn.

After Ginsberg proposed his hypothesis in 1935, Gaster augments the evidences in 1946 that Psalm 29 was based on a Canaanite background. The center of Gaster’s viewpoint is that the background of the psalm rests on the Canaanite myth and that of “Mesopotamian and Hittite counterparts.”⁵⁵ To support this view, Gaster points to two poems, the Babylonian poem *Enuma elis* and the *Poem of Baal* recovered at Ras Shamra.

With respect to *Enuma elis*, Gaster explains that “it is now commonly recognized that the Babylonian poem *Enuma elis*- the so-called ‘Epic of Creation’- is really the cult-myth of the New Year (Akitu) Festival. . . .”⁵⁶ Significantly, Gaster parallels *Enuma elis*

⁵¹ Ginsberg, “Phoenician Hymn in the Psalter,” 474.

⁵² Ginsberg, “Phoenician Hymn in the Psalter,” 474.

⁵³ Ginsberg, “Phoenician Hymn in the Psalter,” 475.

⁵⁴ Ginsberg, “Phoenician Hymn in the Psalter,” 474.

⁵⁵ Gaster, “Psalm 29,” 55-56.

⁵⁶ Gaster, “Psalm 29,” 55.

and the *Poem of Baal* as the Canaanite mythical background. Gaster points out that “The *Poem of Baal*...was in all probability the cult-myth of a seasonal festival....”⁵⁷

In light of this point, Gaster asserts that “Psalm 29 is really the typical ‘hymn of laudation’ detached from its mythic context, Yahwized and preserved as an independent liturgical composition.”⁵⁸ Gaster claims that there is “a complete correspondence in detail between the Hebrew psalm”⁵⁹ and *Enuma elis* and the *Poem of Baal*. Gaster’s viewpoint is that the interpretation of the Hebrew psalm can be obvious when compared with the Canaanite mythical texts.⁶⁰ To illustrate this point, Gaster provides a detailed comparison of Psalm 29 and *Enuma elis* and the *Poem of Baal*.⁶¹

For example, Gaster connects Psalm 29:11 to *Enuma elis* vi 113, “verily, Marduk is the strength of his land and of his people.”⁶² On behalf of this connection, Gaster argues that “this suggests that it was part of the original mythological hymn.”⁶³

Interestingly, Gaster compares the case of when General Booth of the Salvation Army utilized the popular music in his time because the devil should not possess all

⁵⁷ Gaster, “Psalm 29,” 56.

⁵⁸ Gaster, “Psalm 29,” 57.

⁵⁹ Gaster, “Psalm 29,” 57.

⁶⁰ Gaster, “Psalm 29,” 57.

⁶¹ For the detailed explanations, see Gaster, “Psalm 29,” 58-65.

⁶² Gaster, “Psalm 29,” 63.

⁶³ Gaster, “Psalm 29,” 63.

contemporary music to that of the composer of Psalm 29 adopting the Canaanite Baal myth to the psalm.⁶⁴

On the basis of this analogy, Gaster argues that Psalm 29 is not a genuine Hebrew poem for the victory of Yahweh but a poem which was influenced by the ancient Baal hymn based on the Canaanite mythical background.

Margulis and Craigie's Objections

Against the hypothesis of Ginsberg and Gaster, Margulis and Craigie argue that, even though Psalm 29 was influenced by the Canaanite Baal hymn, it is a genuine Hebrew poem. Margulis was the first to posit this claim; later Craigie defended it.

Margulis opposes Gaster's hypothesis. Margulis recognizes the Canaanite influences on the Psalm. He states that "the case has rested heavily on...the undeniable Baal-like imagery, canons and characteristics of Canaanite prosody, and especially...the references to Lebanon, Anti-Lebanon...*midbar Qades*...."⁶⁵ However, Margulis makes two important points against the interpretation of Psalm 29 as a Yahwized poem. The points are that the pivotal theme of the psalm is the enthronement of Yahweh's glory and "the composer and composition are Yahwistic."⁶⁶

Yahweh's glory appears in the wilderness (v 8) and when Yahweh is enthroned over the flood (v 10), the splendor-glory of Yahweh is culminated. This is Margulis' main point. In light of this main point, Margulis refutes the perspective that Psalm 29 was

⁶⁴ Gaster, "Psalm 29," 65. For more explanation, see this page, "...it is not unreasonable to suppose that the zealous propagandists of the latter may frequently have tried to 'fetch the public' by adopting and adapting the songs and airs current..."

⁶⁵ Margulis, "The Canaanite Origin of Psalm 29 Reconsidered," 346.

⁶⁶ Margulis, "The Canaanite Origin of Psalm 29 Reconsidered," 333.

“Yahwized” by the Canaanite Baal myth.⁶⁷ In other words, Margulis concludes that the central theme of Psalm 29 is the glory of Yahweh.⁶⁸

As a result, Margulis’ conclusion is supported in that the subject of the psalm is not the Canaanite deity Baal but Yahweh.⁶⁹ Based on this conclusion, Margulis affirms that “its author was accordingly a Yahwist.”⁷⁰ Therefore, Margulis opposes Gaster’s hypothesis in terms of the central theme of the Psalm and the author as a Yahwist.

Craigie’s perspective is important not only to propose the oppositions against the hypothesis of Ginsberg and Gaster but also to understand the message of the Psalm. For the purpose of these works, Craigie suggests two issues to comprehend the setting of the Psalm: “the significance of the Canaanite aspects of the psalm and the significance of the praise of God’s ‘voice’.”⁷¹

⁶⁷ Gaster, “Psalm 29,” 57. As already mentioned above, Gaster uses *Enuma elis* and the *Poem of Baal* to correspond to Psalm 29. However, their contents only show the narrative sequence to present the greatness of Marduk and the myth of Baal. Cf. William W. Hallo, *The context of Scripture* vol. 1 (New York: Brill, 1997), 390-402; 241-274. Songs to Marduk and Baal are rarely mentioned in *Enuma elis* and the *Poem of Baal*. And the songs can be hardly classified as a hymn. This fact is far from the hymnic theme of Psalm 29 that the poet strongly encourages people to praise Yahweh. More importantly, when the author read *Enuma elis* and the *Poem of Baal*, the author was more convinced of the above point. For example, in the *Poem of Baal*, several phrases compare to Psalm 29. These are “at the feet of Anatu bow and fall, do homage and honor her (p. 243)” and Psalm 29:1-2 and “to Lebanon and its trees, to Siryon (and) its choicest cedars... (p. 261)” and Psalm 29:6. These comparisons are not meaningful correspondences. With respect to this point, Craigie insightfully points out that “there are chronological, geographical, and genre problems in this comparative literary hypothesis.” Cf. Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 244.

⁶⁸ Margulis, “The Canaanite Origin of Psalm 29 Reconsidered,” 333.

⁶⁹ Margulis, “The Canaanite Origin of Psalm 29 Reconsidered,” 346.

⁷⁰ Margulis, “The Canaanite Origin of Psalm 29 Reconsidered,” 346.

⁷¹ Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 243.

In regards to two issues, first, Craigie's viewpoint enables one to reject the hypothesis of Ginsberg and Gaster.⁷² Second, with respect to Yahweh's voice, Craigie tells us how the language and the poetic techniques of the Psalm shaped the message of Psalm 29.

Craigie rejects Ginsberg's hypothesis in terms of three viewpoints. First, two of them, "pagan notions" and a "formula of Baal's triumph" can be understood by the Canaanite mythic background. Ginsberg seeks the reason for the voice of Yahweh in the Canaanite Baal hymn and the Ugaritic epic text.⁷³ As such, Ginsberg claims that the enthronement of Yahweh in Psalm 29:10 is derived from a "formula of Baal's triumph."⁷⁴ To prove this, Ginsberg utilizes several Ugaritic texts⁷⁵.

Ginsberg mainly uses Ugaritic texts to establish his hypothesis. However, the relevant texts connote some problems. These are the insufficiency of the evidence to Phoenician and Ugaritic hymns. Craigie points this out as follows:

Though there is a limited knowledge of Phoenician poetry available to us from the ancient world, there are no unambiguous examples of Phoenician hymn...though there is fairly extensive knowledge of Ugaritic poetry, again it must be emphasized that there are no extant 'psalms' or 'hymns' in the Ugaritic literature. (though some of the literary texts have 'hymnic' portions).⁷⁶

⁷² This thesis posits that Margulis mainly contradicts Gaster's hypothesis (as we have already mentioned above) and even though Craigie comprehensively refutes Ginsberg and Gaster's hypothesis, the demonstration of Craigie will be largely assigned to that of Ginsberg.

⁷³ Ginsberg, "Phoenician Hymn in the Psalter," 472-473.

⁷⁴ Ginsberg, "Phoenician Hymn in the Psalter," 474-475.

⁷⁵ These texts are "text A 6, text D, and Syria XII." Cf. Ginsberg, "Phoenician Hymn in the Psalter," 474-475.

⁷⁶ Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 244.

In light of Craigie's counter-claim, Ginsberg's hypothesis of "pagan notions and formula of Baal's triumph" does not support the influence of the Canaanite and Ugaritic texts to Psalm 29.

Second, Ginsberg suggests the geographical issue. Ginsberg argues that Sirion (Ps. 29: 6) and wilderness of Kadesh (Ps. 29:8) are of Canaanite topography.⁷⁷ The reason is derived from the Ugaritic texts. Craigie rejects "this comparative literary hypothesis."⁷⁸ It is the fact that the localities of Psalm 29 and these of Ugaritic texts denote some relationship. However, the reason cannot be decided by a crucial clue which is recognized to demonstrate the same localities of Psalm 29 as the Canaanite localities. With regard to this reason, Craigie demonstrates that "the Ugaritic texts from North Syria are assumed to be representative of Canaanite literature, both geographically and chronologically. The literary similarities are general rather than specific."⁷⁹

Third, Psalm 29:6 begins with the verb, מַרְקִי־רַם. Ginsberg finds the emphatic enclitic – *ma*⁸⁰ in the verb. Ginsberg defines this as "a linguistic feature of north Canaanite." Craigie, however, denies the linguistic similarity between Psalm 29 and Phoenician or Ugaritic texts.⁸¹ That is, Craigie asserts the problems of the chronology and the genre in terms of the "comparative literary hypothesis."

With respect to the chronological problem, the linguistic characteristic which Ginsberg suggested entails a chronological gap. Because of this chronological gap, the

⁷⁷ Ginsberg, "Phoenician Hymn in the Psalter," 473-474.

⁷⁸ Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 244.

⁷⁹ Craigie, "The Poetry of Ugarit and Israel," *Tyndale Bulletin* 20 (1971): 18.

⁸⁰ Ginsberg, *Psalms 1-50*, 474.

⁸¹ Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 244.

linguistic characteristic from the relationship between the language of the Psalm and that of Phoenician or Ugaritic texts is not demonstrative. Craigie supports this point that “...the comparison is diachronic, but the extent of the chronological gap is difficult to determine, for Psalm 29 cannot be dated with any certainty. There is no *accumulation* of linguistic features to indicate...”⁸² Moreover, A. Malamat relates the Gilgamesh epic to Psalm 29:5-6 (“Lebanon and Sirion”) and mighty waters in Yahdun-Lim’s inscription to Psalm 29:3.⁸³ For this reason, Malamat argues for the background of the Psalm: “Psalm 29 is indeed replete with motifs of great antiquity...it is derived from traditions harking back beyond Late Bronze Age Ugarit, to Old Babylonian, or rather Amorite, times.”⁸⁴ However, Malamat’s hypothesis exhibits a large chronological gap between Psalm 29 and the Gilgamesh epic and Yahdun-Lim’s inscription. On account of this fact, “Psalm 29 cannot be dated with any certainty.”⁸⁵

In regard to the genre problem, Craigie’s claim is that Ugaritic literature does not have hymns or psalms.⁸⁶ Decisively, because of the difference of the genre between them, the hypothesis that Psalm 29 was a Canaanite Baal hymn cannot be established. Consequently, Craigie’s argument that “the evidence of content is piecemeal”⁸⁷ regarding the geographical, chronological, and genre issues reveals a sufficient reason.

⁸² Craigie, “The Poetry of Ugarit and Israel,” 17. Here Craigie asserts that “there is no sustained and precise parallels in wording between the psalm and Phoenician or Ugaritic texts.” See Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 244.

⁸³ A. Malamat, “The Amorite Background of Psalm 29,” *ZAW* 100 (1988): 158-159.

⁸⁴ Malamat, “The Amorite Background of Psalm 29,” 160.

⁸⁵ Craigie, “The Poetry of Ugarit and Israel,” 17.

⁸⁶ Craigie affirms the fact that “there is no definite extant evidence for the genre hymn in Ugaritic literature.” Cf. Craigie, “The Poetry of Ugarit and Israel,” 18.

⁸⁷ Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 244.

So far this paper has examined Craigie's objection to Canaanite aspects of Psalm 29. Now this study will examine the voice of Yahweh as the central factor of the Psalm in order to understand the message of the psalm based on Craigie's argument.

Craigie suggests that Psalm 29 was a "hymn of victory."⁸⁸ The crucial phrase of קול יהוה can prove that Psalm 29 is a hymn of victory. Ginsberg⁸⁹ and Gaster⁹⁰ regard the voice of Yahweh as identical with Baal's voice. For this reason, they regard Psalm 29 as a Canaanite Baal hymn.

Over against their perspective, Craigie argues that Psalm 29 was a genuine Hebrew "hymn of victory" in terms of two points. First, there is "the continuity between the Song of the Sea (Exod 15: 1-18) and Ps 29."⁹¹ Craigie suggests that "the use of ע in both texts (Exod 15:2, 3 and Ps 29:1, 11); the conjunction of ע and ו (Exod 15:2-3 and Ps 29:1-2); the reference to the divine assembly (Exod 15:11 and Ps 29:1), and the stress of kingship of God (Exod 15:18 and Ps 29:10)."⁹² On the basis of the continuity of Exodus 15 and Psalm 29, Craigie asserts that Psalm 29 is a hymn of victory, similar to the Song of the Sea.⁹³

Second, Craigie's argument is "an understanding of the role of the storm in old Hebrew war poetry."⁹⁴ The imagery of the storm was represented as the victory. This

⁸⁸ Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 245.

⁸⁹ Ginsberg, "Phoenician Hymn in the Psalter," 472-473.

⁹⁰ Gaster, "Psalm 29," 59-61. Especially note his example.

⁹¹ Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 245.

⁹² Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 245.

⁹³ Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 245.

⁹⁴ Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 245.

phenomenon is particularly conspicuous in the text of the Song of the sea and the text of the Song of Deborah.⁹⁵ Additionally, He refers to Judges 5:4-5 and 19-21 for the sake of proving his argument.

Craigie's explanation confirms that Psalm 29 was a Hebrew poem as "hymn of victory." In connection with this important point, Craigie also recognizes a "Canaanite stream" of the psalm in the Hebrew poetic tradition. In other words, it is possible that the content of the Psalm was represented as if a Canaanite storm god, Baal, was glorified by his powerful strength.

However, the poet contrasts Yahweh's powerful strength to that of Baal. The comparison is presented within the "Canaanite stream." Critically, the intention of the poet is that the power of Yahweh overwhelms Baal's strength. To reveal this theme, the poet had to represent the voice of Yahweh using the techniques of the ancient Baal hymn based on the Hebrew poetic tradition. Strikingly, Craigie clearly points out that "the poet has deliberately utilized Canaanite-type language and imagery in order to emphasize the Lord's strength and victory, in contrast to the weakness of the inimical Baal."⁹⁶

In agreement with Craigie's perspective, it is recognized that Psalm 29 is a Hebrew polemical poem against the Canaanite deity Baal derived from using the Canaanite poetic techniques. In the light of this point, this thesis will exegete the psalm in the next section so as to prove that Psalm 29 is a genuine Hebrew poem that stands in the Hebrew poetic tradition.

⁹⁵ Craigie gives two specific examples, such as Exod 15:8, 10 and Judg 5:4-5 and 19-21. Cf. Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 245.

⁹⁶ Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 246.

The Poetic Analysis of Psalm 29

In this section, we will demonstrate that Psalm 29 is a genuine Hebrew poem which uses Canaanite language and imagery. To prove this, it will first analyze “the compositional structure of a literary unit and to discern the configuration of its component parts.”⁹⁷ For this work, this section will analyze the delimitation of the clauses and the interclausal flow chart.⁹⁸ Then, it will look over the genre and the poetic devices including the phonetic and stylistic analysis and figures of speech.

Figure 1. Delimitation of Clauses of Psalm 29

PGN	Thematic Stem	Predicate	Clauses	Vs.
Superscription			מְזֹמֵר לְדָוִד	1a
2 mp	Qal	Imperative	הָבֹו לִיהוָה בְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים	b
2 mp	Qal	Imperative	הָבֹו לִיהוָה כְּבוֹד וְעֹז:	c
2 mp	Qal	Imperative	הָבֹו לִיהוָה כְּבוֹד שְׁמוֹ	2a
2 mp	Hishtaphel	Imperative	הִשְׁתַּחֲוֹ לִיהוָה בְּהַרְרַת־קִדְשׁ:	b
		Non-Verbal	קוֹל יְהוָה עַל־הַמַּיִם	3a
3 ms	Hiphil	QTL	אֱלֹהֵי־כְבוֹד הַרְעִים	b
3 ms		Non-Verbal	יְהוָה עַל־מַיִם רַבִּים:	c
3 ms		Non-Verbal	קוֹל־יְהוָה בַּפֶּחַח	4a
3 ms		Non-Verbal	קוֹל יְהוָה בְּהַרְרַת־:	b
3 ms	Qal	Participle	קוֹל יְהוָה שֹׁבֵר אַרְצִים	5a
3 ms	Piel	WAYYIQTOL	וַיִּשְׁבֵּר יְהוָה אֶת־אַרְצֵי הַלְּבָנוֹן:	b
3ms+suf.3mp	Hiphil	WAYYIQTOL	וַיִּרְקֹדֵם כְּמוֹ־עֵגֶל לְבָנוֹן	6a
3 ms		Ellipsis or N-V	[...וַיִּשְׁרִיץ כְּמוֹ בֹּן־רַאמִים:	b
3 ms	Qal	Participle	קוֹל־יְהוָה חֹצֵב לַחֲבוֹת אֵשׁ:	7a
3 ms	Hiphil	YQTL	קוֹל יְהוָה יַחֲלֵל מְדַבֵּר	8a
3 ms	Hiphil	YQTL	יַחֲלֵל יְהוָה מְדַבֵּר קִדְשׁ:	b
3 ms	Polel	YQTL	קוֹל יְהוָה יַחֲלֵל אֵילוֹת	9a

⁹⁷ Carl J. Bosma, “Creation in Jeopardy,” *Calvin Theological Journal* 34 (1999): 71.

⁹⁸ Bosma, “Creation in Jeopardy,” 71.

3 ms	Qal	WAYYIQTOL	וַיַּחֲשֶׁף יַעֲרֹת	b
3 ms	Qal	Participle	וּבְהִיכְלוֹ כָּלֹּא אָמַר	c
		Non-Verbal	כְּבוֹד:	d
3 ms	Qal	QTL	יְהוָה לְמַבּוּל יֹשֵׁב	10a
3 ms	Qal	WAYYIQTOL	וַיֵּשֶׁב יְהוָה מִלֶּךְ לְעוֹלָם:	b
3 ms	Qal	YQTL	יְהוָה עָז לְעַמּוֹ יִתֵּן	11a
3 ms	Piel	YQTL	יְהוָה יְבָרֵךְ אֶת־עַמּוֹ בְּשָׁלוֹם:	b

The delimitation of the clauses is important work for the purpose of exegesis of Psalm 29. This step is the foundation for analyzing the interclausal flow chart.⁹⁹ In this delimitation of the clauses, we can grasp the characteristics of the subjects, the thematic stems, and the predicates indicating the change of the mood through the delimitation of clauses. What is more, this analysis can provide us with “the discovery of important compositional features of a text.”¹⁰⁰

An analysis of the PGN¹⁰¹ column shows that 3 MSs (third person masculine singular) are predominant. They indicate “Yahweh and the voice of Yahweh” and are repeated eleven times. Particularly, they are more conspicuous in verses 3-9 and verses 10-11. This phenomenon shows the importance of 3 MSs.¹⁰²

In verses 3-9, the voice of Yahweh is repeated seven times. The voice of Yahweh is emphasized to glorify the power of Yahweh. Arthur Weiser agrees with this emphasis: “the thoughts of the main portion of the psalm move in the same direction...being a

⁹⁹ Bosma, “Creation in Jeopardy,” 72.

¹⁰⁰ Bosma, “Creation in Jeopardy,” 72.

¹⁰¹ PGN means “person, gender, and number.”

¹⁰² Cf. Craigie, Psalms 1-50, 247-249.

hymn glorifying God's power and majesty as he is manifested...¹⁰³ Therefore, the repetition of the voice of Yahweh is the proof that Psalm 29 was a hymn to Yahweh's glory.

In verses 10-11, Yahweh sits enthroned over the flood. Yahweh is enthroned as King forever and gives His people the strength and the blessing with peace. At this point, the subject of Yahweh is repeated four times. The continuous repetition in this concluding section indicates the glorious enthronement and the reign for His people of Yahweh. It is important that the repetition is utilized in the conclusion. Craigie reveals this point as follows:

Nevertheless, the enthronement of the Lord, expressed in the powerful imagery of v 10, conveys clearly the concept of the Lord as victorious, not only over chaotic forces in general, but over Baal, the conqueror of chaos, in particular; God's power is greater than the greatest power known to the Canaanite foes.¹⁰⁴

Consequently, the repetition of Yahweh as a subject in verses 10-11 proves that Psalm 29 was a hymn to Yahweh's victory and glory that Yahweh overwhelms over the Canaanite deity Baal.

In the predicate column we need to pay attention to two QTL verbs. The QTL verbs occur in verses 3b and 10a. In verse 3a, the verb **הִרְעִים** is parsed as third person masculine singular Hiphil QTL. Most versions translate the verb as present tense.¹⁰⁵ A QTL verb commonly expresses completed action in the past.¹⁰⁶ However, QTL verb can

¹⁰³ Arthur Weiser, *The Psalms* (trans. Herbert Hartwell; A Commentary; London: SCM Press, 1962), 262.

¹⁰⁴ Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 249.

¹⁰⁵ *NIV*, *NRSV*, and *JPS* translate that "the God of glory thunders."

¹⁰⁶ Thomas O. Lambdin explains regarding the tense of QTL verb: "with all verbs, regardless of their meanings, the Hebrew perfect may be translated as the English simple past or the present perfect." See Thomas O. Lambdin, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1973), 38-39.

have present tense. This tense appears in the following case: “to express facts which have formerly taken place, and are still of constant recurrence...”¹⁰⁷ In connection with this point, the depiction that the God of glory thunders is still applied to the current context. This also coincides with the theme of the glory and reign of Yahweh. Consequently, the aspectual nuance of the QTL verb becomes a reason why the versions translate as present tense.

In verse 10a, the QTL verb, **וַיִּשָׁבַח**, is translated as past tense. The verb is related to the flood in the sentence. With respect to the flood, Franz Delitzsch observes that “the verb...occurs exclusively in Gen. vi-xi as the name of the great Flood.”¹⁰⁸ The flood was a past event. For this reason, the verb is translated as past tense.¹⁰⁹

Particularly, the verb, **וַיִּשָׁבַח** in verse 10b is *waw* consecutive (WAYYIQTOL). And the verb has the past tense like the previous verb (10a).¹¹⁰ However, most versions translate the verb as present tense.¹¹¹ As seen above, this translation implies that Yahweh sits enthroned from the past to the present. And the WAYYIQTOL verb is translated as

¹⁰⁷ Wilhelm Gesenius, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar* (trans. A. E. Cowley; ed. E. Kautzsch; Mineola: Dover Publications, 2006), 312.

¹⁰⁸ Franz Delitzsch, *The Psalms* vol.1 (trans. Francis Bolton; Biblical Commentary; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1955), 373.

¹⁰⁹ In regard to the past translation of QTL verb, refer to Ronald J. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax An Outline* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976), 29-30. Additionally, the QTL in verse 10a is followed by a WAYYIQTOL in verse 10b. This is the regular past narrative sequence.

¹¹⁰ Cf. Lambdin, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew*, 107-109.

¹¹¹ *NIV*, *NRSV*, and *JPS* translate the sentence: “Yahweh is enthroned as King forever,” “Yahweh sits enthroned as King forever,” and “Yahweh sits enthroned, King forever.” Charles Augustus Briggs and Emilie Grace Briggs prefer the translation of the future tense than that of the past tense because the word, **וַיִּשָׁבַח** does not fit to the past tense. See Charles and Emilie Briggs, *The Book of Psalms* vol. 1, 255. More exactly, the reason why the verb is translated by the future tense is that the *waw* of the verb is a simple *waw*. (Cf. Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 243) However, the morphology of the verb is *waw* consecutive. Therefore, the future translation of the verb is inadequate.

present tense.¹¹² What is more, this point is appropriately coincided with the theme of the glory and the reign of Yahweh.

Consequently, in verse 3a the QTL verb and in verse 10ab, the sequence of QTL + WAYYIQTOL becomes a reason why this Psalm was a hymn to the glory of Yahweh.

In addition, we need to note the non-verbal clauses. The non-verbal clause is used six times. These non-verbal clauses are associated with the reign of Yahweh in the Psalm. In regard to this, the non-verbal clauses in verses 3a, 3c, 4ab, and 6b are depicted as the majestic power of Yahweh governing everything. This meaning is culminated in verse 9d. In His temple, all people cry out “Glory!” This quoted speech is the response for the reign of Yahweh. The non-verbal clause is not only the particular clause in the whole clauses but also the core clause representing the glory of Yahweh.¹¹³

Significantly, the word, כְּבוֹד, forms an inclusion in the main section of the psalm (vv. 3-9). Mays adequately explains this inclusion: “First...the strength and power, holy splendor and majesty of the Lord are His glory. Second, glory is a term for the manifestation, the display of the Lord’s divine royalty in the world.”¹¹⁴

In view of the above observations, the non-verbal clauses play a role in presenting the glory and the reign of Yahweh. Moreover, this point provides us a reason why Psalm 29 was a hymn to Yahweh’s glory.

¹¹² Wilhelm Gesenius, *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar*, 312.

¹¹³ Kraus recognizes the non-verbal clause as the key clause in the psalm. Cf. Kraus, *Psalms 1-59*, 350.

¹¹⁴ Mays, *Psalms*, 136.

Figure 2. Interclausal Flow Chart of Psalm 29:1-11

¹¹⁵ Syn/ Asyn	¹¹⁶ V/ N-V	¹¹⁷ Conj/ Disj	¹¹⁸ I/ D	¹¹⁹ M/ C/ S	Syntactical Function	Clauses	Vs.
Superscription						מְזֹמֵר לַדָּוִד	1a
Asyn	V		I	M	Command	הִבֹּן לִיהוָה בְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים	b
Asyn	V		I	C	Command	הִבֹּן לִיהוָה כְּבוֹד וְעֹז:	c
Asyn	V		I	C	Command	הִבֹּן לִיהוָה כְּבוֹד שְׁמוֹ	2a
Asyn	V		I	C	Command	לִיהוָה בְּהַדְרַת־קֹדֶשׁ: הַשְּׁתַחֲוֹי	b
Asyn	N-V		I	M	Declarative	קוֹל יְהוָה עַל־הַמַּיִם	3a
Asyn	V		I	M	Declarative	אֶל־הַכְּבוֹד הַרְעִים	b
Asyn	N-V		I	M	Declarative	יְהוָה עַל־מַיִם רַבִּים:	c
Asyn	N-V		I	M	Declarative	קוֹל־יְהוָה בַּפֶּחַ	4a
Asyn	N-V		I	C	Declarative	קוֹל יְהוָה בְּהַדְרָ:	b
Asyn	N-V		I	C	Declarative	קוֹל יְהוָה שֹׁבֵר אֲרָזִים	5a
Syn	V	Conj	I	M	Declarative	יְהוָה אֲחִירָאֲרֹזֵי הַלְּבָנוֹן: וַיִּשְׁבֵּר	b
Syn	V	Conj	I	C	Declarative	וַיִּרְקִדֵם כְּמוֹ־עֵגֶל לְבָנוֹן	6a
Syn	N-V	Disj	I	C	Declarative	וְ[...שְׂרִינ כְּמוֹ בְּנֵי־רֵאמִים:	b
Asyn	N-V		I	M	Declarative	יְהוָה חֹצֵב לַהֲבוֹת אֵשׁ: קוֹל	7a
Asyn	V		I	C	Declarative	קוֹל יְהוָה יַחִיל מִדְּבַר	8a
Asyn	V		I	M	Declarative	יַחִיל יְהוָה מִדְּבַר קֹדֶשׁ:	b
Asyn	V		I	M	Declarative	קוֹל יְהוָה יַחֲלֵל אֵילֹת	9a
Syn	V	Conj	I	C	Declarative	וַיַּחֲשֵׁף יַעֲרוֹת	b
Syn	N-V	Disj	I	M	Declarative	וּבְהִיכְלֹו כְּלוֹ אִמֵּר	c
Asyn	N-V		I	C	Declarative (quoted speech)	כְּבוֹד:	d
Asyn	V		I	M	Declarative	יְהוָה לְמִבּוֹל יֹשֵׁב	10a
Syn	V	Conj	I	C	Declarative	וַיֵּשֶׁב יְהוָה מִלֶּךְ לְעוֹלָם:	b

¹¹⁵This means that the clause is syndetic or asyndetic.

¹¹⁶This means that the clause has verbs or not. If it has, the clause is "Verbal clause." If not, the clause is "Non-Verbal clause."

¹¹⁷This means we discern that the clause is conjunctive clause or disjunctive clause.

¹¹⁸This means that the clause is independent clause or dependent clause.

¹¹⁹This means we discern that the clause is main clause or coordinate clause or subordinate clause.

Asyn	V		I	C	Declarative	יְהוָה עֵץ לְעֵמּוֹ יִתֵּן	11a
Asyn	V		I	C	Declarative	יְבָרֵךְ אֶת־עַמּוֹ בְּשָׁלוֹם: יְהוָה	b

The next step after the delimitation of the clauses is to analyze the clausal flow chart of the psalm. In this step, we will observe the causal flow chart that is analyzed by the syntactical functions of the delimited clauses including the verbal forms and the conjunctions.¹²⁰

The disjunctive clause of verse 9c is an important part of the psalm. In general, this disjunctive clause consists of “*waw* + non-verb.”¹²¹ This disjunctive has various functions in the sentence. The functions are “contrastive, circumstantial, explanatory or parenthetical and terminative or initial.”¹²²

As mentioned above, the central section of the Psalm is verses 3-9.¹²³ The disjunctive, וּבְהִיכָלוֹ, is used within this section. In other words, this is placed in the conclusion of the section. And this disjunctive can be regarded as “terminate or initial.”¹²⁴ “Terminate or initial” means “either the completion of one episode or the beginning of another.”¹²⁵ In this respect, the disjunctive denotes that the body section¹²⁶ is finished in verses 9cd.

¹²⁰ Bosma, “Creation in Jeopardy,” 76.

¹²¹ Lambdin, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew*, 162.

¹²² For more explanation, See Lambdin, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew*, 163-165.

¹²³ Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 247-248.

¹²⁴ Lambdin, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew*, 164-165.

¹²⁵ Lambdin, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew*, 164.

¹²⁶ See the genre analysis.

The disjunctive is closely associated with verse 9d composed of only one word. The word, **כְּבוֹד**, forms not only an inclusion with verses 1c and 2a but also an inclusion with verse 3b. These inclusions connote the importance of the word, **כְּבוֹד** within the Psalm. That is, the importance is affiliated with the glory of the reign of Yahweh.¹²⁷

The **כְּבוֹד** of Yahweh attains to the climax in verse 9d. The poet dramatically represents the climax by using only one word. Moreover, the climax comes immediately after the disjunctive. Strikingly, the configuration of verses 9cd implies the culminating poetic effect in order to reveal the glory and the reign of Yahweh.¹²⁸ Therefore, the disjunctive and verse 9d function as the components coincided with the theme of the psalm in the clausal flow chart.

The Genre of Psalm 29

So far we observed the delimitation of the clauses and the interclausal flow chart. Now the exegete needs to discern the literary genre of the psalm because the decision of the Psalm's genre is necessary for the sake of the precise interpretation.¹²⁹ Thus, this thesis will examine the genre of Psalm 29.

¹²⁷ Mays, *Psalms*, 136.

¹²⁸ Cf. Kraus, *Psalms 1-59*, 350.

¹²⁹ Gerhard Von Rad suggests that "Exegesis has therefore to be particularly careful here, because a great deal depends on correct determination of 'form,' and in particular on the correct delimitation of the beginning and end of the unit under discussion. To add a verse from the unit which follows, or to omit one which properly belongs to the close of an oracle, can alter the whole meaning." See Gerhard Von Rad, *Old Testament Theology* vol. II. (trans. D. M. G. Stalker; Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1965), 38-39.

The genre of Psalm 29 is a hymn.¹³⁰ Hymns in the Psalter usually begin with “call to praise of Yahweh.”¹³¹ The main part of the hymn is largely divided into two types.¹³² One of them is enumerative hymn that represents “God’s lasting qualities and glorious deed...”¹³³ Another one is descriptive hymn that represents “one particular feature of divine activity, a single fundamental act of salvation...”¹³⁴ On the basis of the above considerations, the compositional structure of Psalm 29 can be outlined as follows:

Figure 3. The Compositional Structure of Psalm 29

Subdivision		Text	Vs.
Superscription		מִזְמוֹר לַדָּוִד	1a
Call to Praise of Yahweh		הִבּוּ לַיהוָה בְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים	b
		הִבּוּ לַיהוָה כְּבוֹד וְעֹז:	c
		הִבּוּ לַיהוָה כְּבוֹד שְׁמוֹ	2a
		הִשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ לַיהוָה בְּהַרְרַת־קָדְשׁ:	b
B O D Y	The praise of the voice of Yahweh and the supernatural power of Yahweh	קוֹל יְהוָה עַל־הַמַּיִם	3a
		אֶל־הַכְּבוֹד הַרְעִים	b
		יְהוָה עַל־מַיִם רַבִּים:	c
		קוֹל־יְהוָה בַּכַּף	4a
		קוֹל יְהוָה בְּהַרְרִ:	b
		קוֹל יְהוָה שֹׁבֵר אַרְזִים	5a
		וַיִּשְׁבֵּר יְהוָה אֶת־אַרְזֵי הַלְּבָנוֹן:	b
		וַיִּרְקִידֵם כְּמוֹ־עֵגֶל לְבָנוֹן	6a
		וְ[...] שְׂרִיף כְּמוֹ בְּנֵי־רֵאמִים:	b

¹³⁰Gunkel and Begrich, *Introduction to Psalms*, 22. Mowinckel and Westermann agree with Gunkel’s genre classification. Cf. Mowinckel, *The Psalms in Israel’s Worship*, 81; Claus Westermann, *The Psalms* (trans. Ralph D. Gehrke; Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1980), 81.

¹³¹ Mowinckel, *The Psalms in Israel’s Worship*, 81-82.

¹³² Mowinckel, *The Psalms in Israel’s Worship*, 85. Cf. Westermann, *The Psalms*, 89-91.

¹³³ Mowinckel, *The Psalms in Israel’s Worship*, 85.

¹³⁴ Mowinckel, *The Psalms in Israel’s Worship*, 85.

		קוֹל־יְהוָה חָצַב לַהֲבוֹת אֵשׁ:	7a
		קוֹל יְהוָה יַחִיל מִדְּבַר	8a
		יַחִיל יְהוָה מִדְּבַר קֹדֶשׁ:	b
		קוֹל יְהוָה יַחֲלֵל אֵילֹת	9a
		וַיַּחֲשֵׁף יַעֲרוֹת	b
	Glory! to Yahweh	וּבְהִיכְלוֹ כָּלֹּא אָמַר	c
		כְּבוֹד:	d
Concluding Praise	The enthronement of Yahweh	יְהוָה לְמַבּוֹל יֹשֵׁב	10a
		וַיֵּשֶׁב יְהוָה מֶלֶךְ לְעוֹלָם:	b
	The protection and blessing of Yahweh	יְהוָה עֵז לְעַמּוֹ יִתֵּן	11a
		יְהוָה יְבָרֵךְ אֶת־עַמּוֹ בְּשָׁלוֹם:	b

The genre of Psalm 29 shows a typical shape of hymns in the Psalter. The main part is enumerative because it is represented by the conspicuous power and the glory of Yahweh.¹³⁵ The conclusion is an independent unit distinguished from its context¹³⁶ which is depicted as the enthronement of Yahweh as the King and the protection for His people and the blessing of Yahweh. In light of the above, it concludes that Psalm 29 is a hymn within the Psalter as a genuine Hebrew poem.

Phonetic Analysis

In the following sections, we will examine the noticeable poetic devices including phonetic and stylistic analysis and figures of speech. This thesis will show how the poet of the Psalm uses the poetic devices so as to deliver the polemical meaning against Baal through the analyses.

¹³⁵ Mowinckel, *The Psalms in Israel's Worship*, 85.

¹³⁶ Westermann, *The Psalms*, 91.

Figure 4. The Type of Parallelism and Phonetic Devices

Type of Parallelism	Phonetic Devices	Clauses	Vs.
Superscription		מְזִמֹּר לְדָוִד	1a
Staircase Parallelism (vv. 1-2)	Assonance ¹³⁷ הָבֹו לַיהוָה	הָבֹו לַיהוָה בְּנֵי אֱלֹים	b
		הָבֹו לַיהוָה כְּבוֹד וְעֹז:	c
Staircase Parallelism (vv. 1-2)	Assonance הָבֹו לַיהוָה (word repetition)	הָבֹו לַיהוָה כְּבוֹד שְׁמוֹ	2a
		הִשְׁתַּחֲוֹו לַיהוָה בְּהַרְרֵת־קָרְשׁ:	b
	Assonance עַל־הַמַּיִם (word repetition) Onomatopoeia (-m sound)	קוֹל יְהוָה עַל־הַמַּיִם	3a
		אֶל־הַכְּבוֹד הַרְעִים	b
		יְהוָה עַל־מַיִם רַבִּים:	c
Staircase Parallelism (vv. 4-5)	Assonance הָבֹו לַיהוָה (word repetition)	קוֹל־יְהוָה בְּכַף	4a
		קוֹל יְהוָה בְּהַרְרֵי:	b
Staircase Parallelism (vv. 4-5)	Assonance שֶׁבֶר - וַיִּשְׁבֵּר (word repetition)	קוֹל יְהוָה שֶׁבֶר אַרְצִים	5a
		וַיִּשְׁבֵּר יְהוָה אֶת־אֲרָצוֹ הַלְּבָנוֹן:	b
	Assonance כָּמוֹ (word repetition)	וַיִּרְקִידֵם כְּמוֹ־עֵגֶל לְבָנוֹן	6a
		וְ[...]. שְׁרִין כָּמוֹ בֶן־רֵאמִים:	b
Staircase Parallelism (vv. 7-8)		קוֹל־יְהוָה חֲצֹב לְהַבֹּת אֵשׁ:	7a ¹³⁸
Staircase Parallelism (vv. 7-8)	Assonance יְחִיל מְדַבֵּר (word repetition)	קוֹל יְהוָה יְחִיל מְדַבֵּר	8a
		יְחִיל יְהוָה מְדַבֵּר קָרְשׁ:	b
		קוֹל יְהוָה יְחִילֵל אֵילֹת	9a
		וַיִּחַשְׁף יַעֲרוֹת	b
		וּבְהִיכְלוֹ כָּלוּ אִמֹר	c
	Assonance ו	כְּבוֹד:	d
	Assonance יֵשֶׁב	יְהוָה לְמַבּוֹל יֵשֶׁב	10a

¹³⁷ Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry*, 224-225.

¹³⁸ Verse 7 is controversial among scholars. Kraus claims the connection of verse 3b and verse 7. That is, קוֹל־יְהוָה חֲצֹב לְהַבֹּת אֵשׁ אֶל־הַכְּבוֹד הַרְעִים. See Kraus, *Psalms 1-59*, 344-345. However, Craigie disagrees with it. For a detailed discussion, See Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 243.

	(word repetition)	וַיֵּשֶׁב יְהוָה מֶלֶךְ לְעוֹלָם:	b
	Assonance	יְהוָה עִזָּ לְעַמּוֹ יִתֵּן	11a
	עַמּוֹ (word repetition)	יְהוָה יְבָרֵךְ אֶת־עַמּוֹ בְּשָׁלוֹם:	b

To begin with, in the phonetic analysis, the most conspicuous effects are assonance and onomatopoeia. The assonances of the Psalm are appeared nine times (vv. 1bc and 2a, 3ac, 4ab, 5ab, 6ab, 8ab, 9cd, 10ab, and 11ab). These assonances are associated with “emphasis.”¹³⁹ Significantly, the eight assonances of them are word repetitions. The emphatic assonances and word repetitions indicate that the poet intended to emphasize the praise of the glory and the enthronement of Yahweh (vv.1-2 and 10-11) and the supernatural power of Yahweh (3ac, 4ab, 5ab, 6ab, 8ab, 10ab, and 11ab) overwhelming the Canaanite deity Baal.¹⁴⁰

In verse 3, we need to note the words ended by the consonant, ׁ. These words are עַל־הַמַּיִם (two times), הַרְעִים, and רַבִּים. These words are even repeated four times in only one verse. The effect of the onomatopoeia is that the audience can hear of the sound of water over which Yahweh reigns.¹⁴¹ In other words, the poet tended to represent that Yahweh vanquishes against Baal who conquered the god of sea, “Yam” through the onomatopoeia. Craigie appropriately upholds this point: “In Ps 29:3, the Lord is

¹³⁹ Wilfred G. E. Watson claims that “assonance can be used for emphasis.” See Wilfred G. E. Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry* (New York: T & T Clark, 2006), 224-225.

¹⁴⁰ Craigie clearly explains this important point: “the poet has deliberately utilized Canaanite-type language and imagery in order to emphasize the Lord’s strength and victory, in contrast to the weakness of the inimical Baal.” See Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 246.

¹⁴¹ Cf. Norman K. Gottwald, “Poetry, Hebrew,” *The Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible* vol. III. (ed. G. A. Buttrick; Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962), 835.

described not merely as a deity whose thunderous voice is heard, but as one victorious over the chaotic forces symbolized by the ‘mighty waters’.”¹⁴²

Stylistic and Figures of Speech

Figure 5. Stylistic Devices and Figures of Speech

Stylistic Devices	Figures of Speech	Clauses	Vs
Superscription		¹⁴³ מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד	1a
<i>Envelope figure</i> ¹⁴⁴ (inclusio)-1c & 11a עָזָא Inclusio verses 1c/2a & 9d; כְּבוֹד	<i>Metonymy</i> ¹⁴⁵	הָבֹו לַיהוָה בְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים	b
		הָבֹו לַיהוָה כְּבוֹד וְעֹז:	c
	<i>Synonymia</i> ¹⁴⁶ - “glory-strength- glory-beauty (splendor)” in vserse 1-2.	הָבֹו לַיהוָה כְּבוֹד שְׁמוֹ	2a
		לַיהוָה בְּהַרְרַת־קִדְשׁ: הַשְׁתַּחֲוִי	b
The repetition of <i>keywords</i> ¹⁴⁷ “The voice of Yahweh”-seven times; Especially, vv. 3, 5, 8	<i>Anthropopatheia</i> ¹⁵⁰	קוֹל יְהוָה עַל־הַמַּיִם	3a
		אֱלֹהֵי־הַכְּבוֹד הַרְעִים	b
		יְהוָה עַל־מַיִם רַבִּים:	c

¹⁴² Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 247.

¹⁴³ Watson suggests the chiasmus in the whole text of Psalm 29. He claims that “chiasmus is by no means confined to the couplet.” Cf. Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry*, 206-207.

¹⁴⁴ Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry*, 284.

¹⁴⁵ Bullinger, *Figures of Speech used in The Bible* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1968) 584.

¹⁴⁶ Bullinger, *Figures of Speech used in The Bible*, 327.

¹⁴⁷ Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry*, 287-288.

are expanded repetition. ¹⁴⁸ ABA pattern ¹⁴⁹ - (3abc)			
		קול־יהוה בִּפְחַ	4a
		קול יהוה בְּהִרְדֵּי:	b
Partial Chiasmus		קול יהוה שִׁבַּר אֲרָזִים	5a
		יְהוָה אֶת־אֲרָזֵי הַלְּבָנוֹן: וַיִּשְׁבַּר	b
Ellipsis & Double Duty יִרְקִידִם		וַיִּרְקִידִם כְּמו־עֵגֶל לְבָנוֹן	6a
		וְ[...]שָׂרִיזִן כְּמו־בְּנֵי־אֲמִים:	b
		קול־יהוה חֲצַב לְהַבֹּת אֵשׁ:	7a
Partial Chiasmus	Metonymy ¹⁵¹	קול יהוה יִחִיל מְדַבֵּר	8a
		יִחִיל יהוה מְדַבֵּר קָדָשׁ:	b
Ellipsis & Double Duty קול יהוה	Anthropopatheia ¹⁵²	קול יהוה יִחַלֵּל אֵילֹת	9a
		וְ[...]יִחַשֵּׁף יַעֲרֹת	b
Inclusio verse 3b & 9d; כְּבוֹד		וּבְהִיכְלוֹ כָּלוּ אִמֵּר	c
		כְּבוֹד:	d
Chiasmus Anadiplosis- וַיֵּשֶׁב - יֵשֶׁב	Anthropopatheia ¹⁵³	יְהוָה לְמַבּוֹל יֵשֶׁב	10a
		וַיֵּשֶׁב יְהוָה מִלֶּךְ לְעוֹלָם:	b
Inclusio verses 1-2 & 10-11		יְהוָה עֵז לְעַמּוֹ יִתֵּן	11a
		יִבְרַךְ אֶת־עַמּוֹ בְּשָׁלוֹם:	b

¹⁵⁰ Bullinger, *Figures of Speech used in The Bible*, 894.

¹⁴⁸ Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry*, 344-345.

¹⁴⁹ Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry*, 181-182.

¹⁵¹ Bullinger, *Figures of Speech used in The Bible*, 573.

¹⁵² Bullinger, *Figures of Speech used in The Bible*, 894.

¹⁵² Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry*, 132.

¹⁵³ Bullinger, *Figures of Speech used in The Bible*, 892.

		יְהוָה	
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As can be seen above, this thesis will look over the stylistic devices and figures of speech. First, we need to focus on the stylistic devices which are staircase (climatic) parallelism, inclusion, repetition (keyword), ABA pattern, and ellipsis. The characteristic of the devices is to emphasize¹⁵⁴ what the poet intended to represent. To understand the message of the Psalm, we have to pay attention to these emphases that are crucially applied to the stylistic devices of the Psalm. Obviously, the emphasis of the poet rests on the glory and the overwhelming power of Yahweh. The stylistic devices are as follows.

1. Staircase Parallelism

A. Verses 1-2

הָבֹו לַיהוָה בְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים
 הָבֹו לַיהוָה כְּבוֹד וְעֹז:
 הָבֹו לַיהוָה כְּבוֹד שְׁמוֹ
 הַשְׁתַּחֲוֹו לַיהוָה בְּהַרְרֵת-קָדְשׁ:

The poet encourages the heavenly beings to praise the glory of Yahweh through the repetitious phrase, הָבֹו לַיהוָה. This shows the emphasis of the praise of Yahweh and reveals the theme of the Psalm.

¹⁵⁴ Gottwald explains the staircase or climatic parallelism: “Stairlike parallelism is the repetition and advance of thought in successive stichs, often involving three or more stichs. It is a combination of synonymous and synthetic parallelism, in which the thought appears to climb or ascend by recapitulation and extension. Each stich starts from the same point but moves beyond the preceding.” See, Gottwald, “Poetry, Hebrew,” 833. With respect to the rest of the devices, refer to E. W. Bullinger, *Figures of Speech used in The Bible* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1968) and Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry*, 181-182. More significantly, Bullinger defines these devices as those of “the emphasis.”

B. Verses 4-5

קוֹל־יְהוָה בְּכַח
 קוֹל יְהוָה בְּהַדָּר
 קוֹל יְהוָה שֹׁבֵר אֲרָזִים
 וַיִּשְׁבֶּר יְהוָה אֶת־אֲרָזֵי הַלְּבָנוֹן:

The power and majesty of the voice of Yahweh is highlighted by the climatic repetition. The repetition also presents emphatic meaning.¹⁵⁵

C. Verses 7-8

קוֹל־יְהוָה חֲצֹב לְהַבֹּת אֲשׁ:
 קוֹל יְהוָה יִחַיל מִדְּבַר
 יִחַיל יְהוָה מִדְּבַר קִדְשׁ:

This staircase parallelism emphasizes the prominent power of Yahweh.

2. Inclusions

A. Verses 1c-11a

This inclusion is formed by the word, עֲזָ. This presents the implication of Yahweh's triumph.¹⁵⁶ The poet intentionally reveals the victory of Yahweh in the beginning verse and the ending verse.¹⁵⁷ Consequently, this inclusion shows that Psalm 29 is a hymn of Yahweh.

B. Verses 1c/2a-9d; 3b-9d

The word, כְּבוֹד, forms two inclusions. The theme of the Psalm is the praise of the glory of Yahweh. The important theme is represented by the word in verses 1c/2a-9d

¹⁵⁵See n. 156.

¹⁵⁶ Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 246, 249.

¹⁵⁷ With respect to the inclusion between verses 1-2 and 10-11, Cf. Delitzsch, *The Psalms* vol.1, 373.

and 3b-9d. The inclusion in verses 1c/2a-9d plays a role in encompassing the whole except for verses 10-11 and especially, the inclusion in verses 3d-9d functions as representing the glory of Yahweh in the central section of the Psalm.

3. Repetition (keyword)

The function of the repetition is to stress what the author intends.¹⁵⁸ There are a lot of repetitions in Psalm 29. Strikingly, that of the voice of Yahweh is conspicuous. This is even repeated seven times. In contrast to “the holy voice”¹⁵⁹ of Baal, the poet intended to emphasize that the voice of Yahweh overwhelms over Baal’s voice. What is more, this point is affiliated with the polemical function and meaning of the Psalm against the Canaanite deity Baal.

4. ABA pattern

A. ABA Pattern (verses 3abc)

A קוֹל יְהוָה עַל-הַמַּיִם
 B אֱלֹהֵי הַכְּבוֹד הִרְעִים
 A' יְהוָה עַל-מַיִם רַבִּים:

ABA pattern is a kind of chiasmus.¹⁶⁰ AA' is repeated by the reign of Yahweh (or the voice of Yahweh). Notably, the depiction that the God of glory thunders is emphasized with AA'. This implies the power and glory of Yahweh.

B. Partial chiasmus

¹⁵⁸ Bullinger, *Figures of Speech used in The Bible*, 263.

¹⁵⁹ Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 247.

¹⁶⁰ Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry*, 181.

Verses 5ab

קוֹל יְהוָה שָׁבַר אֲרָזִים
וַיִּשְׁבֶּר יְהוָה אֶת־אֲרָזֵי הַלְּבָנוֹן:

Verses 8ab

קוֹל יְהוָה יַחֲלִי מְדַבֵּר
יַחֲלִי יְהוָה מְדַבֵּר קָדָשׁ:

These verses form the partial chiasmus because the voice of Yahweh is partially coincided with Yahweh. The particular location appeared in two verses. In connection with this, the voice of Yahweh is depicted as the great power of Yahweh.

C. Chiasmus (verses 10ab)

יְהוָה לַמַּבּוּל יָשָׁב
וַיֵּשֶׁב יְהוָה מִלֶּךְ לְעוֹלָם:

These verses are crucial in the concluding section. The poet stresses the importance by the chiasmus. That is, through the chiasmus, the poet represents the polemical meaning of the Psalm that the One who enthrones over the flood is not Baal but Yahweh.¹⁶¹ Moreover, the words, **יָשָׁב** - **וַיֵּשֶׁב** are an anadiplosis.¹⁶² This anadiplosis' function is to intensify the polemical meaning of the Psalm against Baal.

5. Ellipsis

Verses 6ab

וַיִּרְקְדוּם כְּמוֹ־עֵגֶל לְבָנוֹן
וְ[...]. שְׂרִיף כְּמוֹ בֶן־רְאֵמִים:

*Verses 8ab*¹⁶³

קוֹל יְהוָה יַחֲלִי מְדַבֵּר
יַחֲלִי[...]. יְהוָה מְדַבֵּר קָדָשׁ:

Verses 9ab

קוֹל יְהוָה יַחֲלִי אֵילֹת
וְ[...]. יַחֲשֵׁף יַעֲרוֹת

¹⁶¹ Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 248-249.

¹⁶² More detailed, anadiplosis' function is that "the words so repeated are thus emphasized as being the most important words in the sentence, which we are to mark and consider in translation and exposition." See Bullinger, *Figures of Speech used in The Bible*, 251.

¹⁶³ Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry*, 155.

These verses are depicted as the powerful strength of Yahweh. The poet represents the emphasis for the supernatural strength of Yahweh through the poetic omissions.¹⁶⁴ Especially, in connection with Lebanon and Sirion, the poet reveals the polemical meaning of the Psalm for the sake of the power of Yahweh vanquishing the Canaanite strength utilized by the imagery of the Canaanite.¹⁶⁵

Second, figures of speech are as follows.

1. Metonymy

Verse 1c

Verse 8a

הָבוּ לַיהוָה כְּבוֹד וְעֹז:

קוֹל יְהוָה יַחֲלִי מִדְּבַר

In verse 1c, His people know that they cannot provide Yahweh the glory and strength. Rather, the poet encourages them to praise Yahweh through the glory and strength.¹⁶⁶ This is the purpose of the metonymy.

In verse 8a, the meaning that the voice of Yahweh shakes the wilderness is that “the people and animals or inhabitants of the wilderness”¹⁶⁷ are shaken by the voice of Yahweh. The meaning is apparent in verse 9.¹⁶⁸ Consequently, the power of Yahweh (the voice of Yahweh) is highlighted by the metonymy.

¹⁶⁴ Bullinger, *Figures of Speech used in The Bible*, 1.

¹⁶⁵ Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 247.

¹⁶⁶ Bullinger, *Figures of Speech used in The Bible*, 584.

¹⁶⁷ Bullinger, *Figures of Speech used in The Bible*, 573.

¹⁶⁸ Bullinger, *Figures of Speech used in The Bible*, 573.

2. Synonymia (vv. 1-2)

הָבֹוּ לַיהוָה בְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים
 הָבֹוּ לַיהוָה כְּבוֹד וְעֹז:
 הָבֹוּ לַיהוָה כְּבוֹד שְׁמוֹ
 הַשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ לַיהוָה בְּהַדְרַת־קֹדֶשׁ:

In verses 1-2, synonymia is used for stressing the glory of Yahweh.¹⁶⁹ The main words are “glory-strength and glory-beauty (splendor).”¹⁷⁰

3. Anthropopatheia (verses 3, 9, and 10)

In verses 3 and 9, Yahweh is “figured by an irrational creature, and thunder is called the voice of Yahweh.”¹⁷¹ The poet depicts the voice (power) of Yahweh as attaining to the human world through the anthropopatheia. Moreover, concerning this fact, the poet polemically evokes peoples who have known that Baal governs everything like thunder¹⁷² to ascribe the power and glory to Yahweh.

In verse 10, the representation that Yahweh enthrones over the flood as a king of men is that Yahweh triumphs against the Canaanite deity Baal. Craigie appropriately explains this point: “the enthronement of the Lord, expressed in the powerful imagery of v 10, conveys clearly the concept of the Lord as victorious...over Baal...”¹⁷³

¹⁶⁹ Bullinger, *Figures of Speech used in The Bible*, 324.

¹⁷⁰ Bullinger, *Figures of Speech used in The Bible*, 327.

¹⁷¹ Bullinger, *Figures of Speech used in The Bible*, 894.

¹⁷² Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 247.

¹⁷³ Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 249.

The Comparison to Ugaritic Text (Ras Shamra Parallels)

The parallels of Ugaritic and Hebrew in Psalm 29 were evoked by the discovery of the Ugaritic tablets at Ras Shamra in 1929. After the discovery, Mitchell Dahood claims that “the psalm can now be duplicated in older Canaanite texts and we find in this psalm the repetitious parallelism which characterizes the Ugaritic epics.”¹⁷⁴ More specifically, Dahood asserts the Canaanite origination of Psalm 29 on the basis of the fact that “in a psalm of eleven verses nine is an impressive number of parallel pairs.”¹⁷⁵

However, the reason of Dahood’s hypothesis is insufficient because the common parallels appear in Ancient Near Eastern language. In other words, it is certainly not affirmed that Psalm 29 was originated by the Canaanite Baal hymn. Craigie supports this point: “but the common parallel word pairs are not distinctive, having further parallels in Akkadian, Arabic, and Egyptian poetry, and they do not clearly support Dahood’s formulation of the hypothesis.”¹⁷⁶ To prove this, Craigie compares Hebrew in Psalm 29 to Ras Shamra Parallels.¹⁷⁷ These are as follows:

¹⁷⁴ Mitchell Dahood, *Psalms I* (AB; New York: Doubleday, 1966), 175.

¹⁷⁵ Mitchell Dahood, *Ras Shamra Parallels* vol. II (ed. Loren R. Fisher; Rome: Biblical Institute, 1975), 4.

¹⁷⁶ Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 244.

¹⁷⁷ See Peter C. Craigie, “Parallel Word Pairs in Ugaritic Poetry,” *UF* 11 (1979): 135-140. Hereafter Ras Shamra Parallels will be abbreviated by RSP I and II.

Figure 6. The Comparison of Ugaritic Texts and Hebrew Texts¹⁷⁸

Ugaritic Text	Hebrew Text ¹⁷⁹	Assessment
(1) <i>Hwy + kbd</i> = “to bow down” + ¹⁸⁰ “to honor” (RSP I, II 174)	כְּבוֹד “glory”... חוּה “to bow down” (Ps 29:1-2)	“The parallel has not been shown to exist in Ugaritic Poetry and does not occur in Psalm 29;... simply occur in both texts. (p.136).”
(2) <i>ql // ql</i> = “voice”// “voice” (RSP I, II 487)	קוֹל “voice” // קוֹל “voice” (Ps 29:4)	“... a basic parallel word pair... can carry no particular significance with respect to the literary inter-relationship... (p.137).”
(3) <i>lbnn...arz</i> = “Lebanon”... “cedar” (RSP I, II 326)	אַרְז “cedar” + לְבָנוֹן “Lebanon” (Ps 29:5)	“There is no distinct common ground here between Psalm 29 and Ugaritic poetry... no evidence... Canaanite or Ugaritic background to Psalm 29 (p.137)”
(4) <i>tbr // tbr</i> = “to break” // “to break” (RSP I, II 598)	שָׁבַר “to break” // שָׁבַר “to break” (Ps 29:5)	“The repetitive word pair is not distinctive, however, occurring also in Akkadian poetry (p.137).”
(5) <i>km // km</i> = “like” // “like” (RSP I, II 289)	כְּמוֹ “like” // כְּמוֹ “like” (Ps 29:6)	“...prepositional word pairs... do not have significance with respect to the background of Psalm 29 (p.138)”
(6) <i>lbnn // sryn</i> = “Lebanon” // “Sirion (Hermon)” (RSP I, II 328)	לְבָנוֹן “Lebanon” // שִׁרְיֹן “Sirion” (Ps 29:6)	“First, the pair occurs in Akkadian. Second... in Ugaritic texts, the reading “Sirion” is uncertain (p.138)”
(7) <i>rumm // aylt</i> = “buffaloes” // “hinds” (RSP II, I 55)	אַיִלָּה “buffaloes”... רְאִמִּים “hinds” (Ps 29:6+9)	“...distant parallelism...(29:6) and (29:9), particularly since the first term already belongs to a clear parallel word pair (p.138)”

¹⁷⁸With respect to the order (contents) of the Ugaritic text and the assessment, the author quoted from Craigie, “Parallel Word Pairs in Ugaritic Poetry,” 135-140.

¹⁷⁹ Hebrew texts are mainly quoted concerning Psalm 29 in *Ras Shamra Parallels* vol. I and II.

¹⁸⁰ “The symbol // stands for strict parallelism, + means juxtaposition...” Cf. Dahood, *Ras Shamra Parallels* vol. II, 4.

(8) <i>ytb</i> // <i>ytb</i> = “to sit” // “to sit” (RSP I, II 271)	ישב “to sit” // ישב “to sit” (Ps 29:10)	“a common word pair occurring in both Akkadian and Egyptian poetry...(p.138)”
(9) <i>l</i> // <i>l</i> = “from” // “from” (RSP I, II 313)	ל “from” // ל “from” (Ps 29:10)	“The same semantic word pair occurs in Arabic poetry (p.139)”
(10) <i>mlk</i> + ‘ <i>lm</i> = “kingship, king” + “eternity, universe” (RSP I, II 363)	מֶלֶךְ “king” + עוֹלָם “eternity” (Ps 29:10)	“there is no precise parallelism of these words in either the Ugaritic or the Hebrew texts (p.139)”
(11) <i>ytn...brk</i> = “to give”... “knee” (RSP II, I 22)	נתן “to give” // ברך “to bless” (Ps 29:11)	“three reasons...the words in question are not employed as a parallel word pair in Ugaritic...the meaning of <i>brk</i> , in Ugaritic context...different form...Hebrew context...in Ugaritic...a verb and noun...Hebrew...both verbs (p.139)”

Significantly, when it comes to the comparison with the Ugaritic and Hebrew text, we are convinced of the perspective of Craigie that the poet deliberately used the imagery and language of Canaanite background to represent the glory of Yahweh.

Inevitably, we recognize the Canaanite influence of Psalm 29 and the parallel between the Ugaritic and Hebrew text. However, as seen above, the comparison has three problems. First, the parallels are simple word pairs in the Ugaritic text and Hebrew text. Second, the parallel word pairs do not have significant meaning and are equivocal in order to demonstrate the Canaanite influence of Psalm 29. Third, the parallels exist in other languages such as Akkadian, Arabic, and Egyptian languages.¹⁸¹

¹⁸¹ Craigie, “Parallel Word Pairs in Ugaritic Poetry,” 139.

These problems are ignored by an important point in terms of the “Hebrew poetic tradition.”¹⁸² That is to say, they cannot explain the archaic use of Psalm 29.¹⁸³ The poet has the freedom of the poetic representation to praise the glory, power, and reign of Yahweh utilizing the Canaanite imagery and language.¹⁸⁴ As we have already examined, the poet phonetically used the assonances for the emphasis of the glory of Yahweh. Likewise, the poet stylistically used inclusions, word repetitions, chiasmus, and ellipsis and double duty in order to highlight the theme of the Psalm. Moreover, the poet employed a variety of figures of speech such as metonymy, synonymia and anthropopatheia for the purpose of proclaiming the polemical meaning that Yahweh is the greatest One and conquers against the Canaanite deity Baal. Watson insightfully upholds this crucial point: “Archaisms were also used *deliberately* in order to convey an antiquated flavour to poetry, making it seem more venerable and authentic and so more acceptable.”¹⁸⁵

As a result, when we compare the language and poetic techniques employed in the poem with key parallel Ugaritic texts, the parallels do not provide us with a solution to the fact that the poet deliberately utilized the Canaanite imagery and language in order to represent the glory, power, and reign for His people of Yahweh.

¹⁸² Craigie, “Psalm XXIX in the Hebrew Poetic Tradition,” *VT* 22 (1972):144.

¹⁸³ Watson points out this point: “In Hebrew, archaisms were preserved in traditional poetry, particularly folk-songs and proverbs, and in liturgical compositions such as the psalms.” See Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry*, 36.

¹⁸⁴ Watson appropriately supports that “poets were heavily dependent on traditional material in composing and improvising...For practical reasons, then, they incorporated old-fashioned elements of all kinds (word-pairs, expressions, grammatical usage, etc.) into their works.” See Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry*, 36.

The Polemical Meaning and Function of Psalm 29

Until now, we observed that the poet of Psalm 29 deliberately used the imageries and poetic techniques so as to praise the glory and reign of Yahweh. On the basis of this, the poet shaped the polemical message of Psalm 29.

The starting for the polemical message is revealed in verses 1-2. The words, **עַז, אֱלֹהִים**, and **שִׁמּוֹ** are associated with the indescribable power of Yahweh.¹⁸⁶ This indicates that at the beginning of the Psalm, the poet is evidently to proclaim that the One who is exalted by the praise of all people is not Baal but Yahweh.

In the central section (vv.3-9), the poet enumerates the powerful and complete¹⁸⁷ deeds of the voice of Yahweh. Yahweh is over the mighty water. Yahweh breaks in pieces the cedars of Lebanon. And Yahweh shakes the desert of Kadesh. The Canaanite people recognize that their deity, Baal governs the mighty water and the thunderstorm. However, the poet praises that Yahweh triumphed over Baal using the Canaanite imagery and language.¹⁸⁸ The poet polemically delivers the overwhelming power and glory of Yahweh against Baal to the audience and even the world. The climax is depicted in the conclusion of the central section, verse 9d: “And in His temple all cry, “Glory!”

The conclusion of the psalm consists of Yahweh’s enthronement and reign to His people. The poet firmly recapitulates that the One who is over the flood is not Baal but

¹⁸⁵ Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry*, 38.

¹⁸⁶ Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 246-247.

¹⁸⁷ In the central section the name of Yahweh is repeated ten times and the voice of Yahweh is repeated seven times. And in verses 10-11, the name of Yahweh is repeated four times. The number four, seven, and ten are related to “completeness in Old Testament number symbolism.” In regard to this, See John H. Stek, Notes on Psalms in *NIV Study Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 815.

¹⁸⁸ Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 246.

Yahweh.¹⁸⁹ Eventually, Yahweh, who triumphed against Baal, gives His people the strength (יָצַד: inclusion with verse 1) and blessing. Consequently, Psalm 29 represents the polemical meaning against the Canaanite deity Baal in the beginning, middle, and ending.¹⁹⁰

When it comes to the function, Psalm 29 functions as “the hinge psalm in the concentric arrangement of Psalm 25-33”¹⁹¹ in the Psalter. This means that Psalm 29 is “the praise of the King of creation as Psalm 19.”¹⁹² Widely speaking, the function of Psalm 29 is to connote that “Yahweh reigns”¹⁹³ in the whole world. The fact that Yahweh reigns polemically provokes “the Ancient Near Eastern context as well as today’s context.”¹⁹⁴ At this point, when gods and absolute powers in the world are incited, Psalm 29 proclaims them to praise Yahweh because Yahweh conquered not only the Canaanite deity Baal but also all gods, powers, and even the whole universe. The culmination of the glory of Yahweh is fulfilled when Yahweh enthroned and triumphed as the King of kings provides us the strength and blessing (vv. 10-11), all existences cry “Glory! (v 9).

This polemical function of Psalm 29 can be applied to the Korean context. Korea was originally one country. Nowadays, however, Korea has been split into two countries, South Korea and North Korea. North Korean people believe in their own communism and in Jeong-il Kim as an absolute god. In South Korea, even though many people trust

¹⁸⁹ Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 248-249.

¹⁹⁰ Cf. Delitzsch, *The Psalms* vol.1, 373.

¹⁹¹ Stek, Notes on Psalms in *NIV Study Bible*, 815. In reference, see p.784.

¹⁹² Stek, Notes on Psalms In *NIV Study Bible*, 784, 815.

¹⁹³ McCann, *The Book of Psalms*, 793.

¹⁹⁴ McCann, *The Book of Psalms*, 793.

in Jesus Christ, there are many people who believe in Buddhism, Confucianism, and various pagan gods.

In this Korean context, Psalm 29 polemically encourages them to praise Yahweh and by extension, to believe in Jesus Christ as their personal Savior. Yahweh, who established His only begotten Son as the Savior for the whole world and vanquished Baal, will triumph and reign over Jeong-il Kim, Buddhism, Confucianism, and various pagan gods.

As a result, the polemical meaning of Psalm 29 is to proclaim the glory and reign of Yahweh and the polemical function of Psalm 29 invites all people and nations in the world to praise and bow down in front of Yahweh.

Summary

Psalm 29 is a Polemical psalm so that all people and nations are called to praise Yahweh who conquered the Canaanite deity, Baal. However, on account of the Canaanite influence, many scholars asserted that Psalm 29 was originally the ancient Baal hymn. Moreover, the discovery of the tablets at Ras Shamra provided more support to the Canaanite and Ugaritic inclination of Psalm 29.

Even though we recognize the Canaanite influence of Psalm 29, the poetic structure and techniques stand at the “Hebrew poetic tradition”¹⁹⁵ and the archaic use of Hebrew traditional poetry.

In view of the above perspectives, the poet takes a decisive choice. The choice is to utilize the Canaanite imagery and language in order to praise that Yahweh vanquished against Baal and powerfully reigns over the whole world.

Paradoxically, the poet utilizes the Canaanite poetic techniques for the purpose of despising the Canaanite deity, Baal. In connection with this, what is more, the poet provokes all gods and peoples in the earth to praise not Baal but Yahweh.

In spite of the Canaanite influence, Psalm 29 can apply to every context inasmuch as the poet's daring choice. The closer the world gets to Jesus' Second Coming, the more people who do not believe in Yahweh try to serve pagan gods, absolute authorities, and powers which seem to gods. In this context, Psalm 29 eloquently proclaims the glory, power, reign, and victory of Yahweh and Psalm 29 polemically asks all gods and peoples to praise and serve the glorified and triumphed Yahweh.

¹⁹⁵ Craigie, "Psalm XXIX in the Hebrew Poetic Tradition," *VT* 22 (1972):144.

CHAPTER 3

THE EXEGESIS OF PSALM 96

In chapter two, we looked over the polemical meaning of the Lord's reign. This is a central background of the Lord's reign.¹ Based on this, we will scrutinize how the Lord's reign is unfolded by the language of the poet through the exegesis of Psalm 96.

TRANSLATION

1² Sing to Yahweh a new song;

Sing to Yahweh, all the earth³.

2 Sing to Yahweh; bless His name;

Proclaim⁴ His salvation from day to day.

¹For the significant meaning, see Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 243-246; Water Brueggemann, *Israel's Praise: Doxology against Idolatry and Ideology* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988), 33-34.

²Tate introduces that "LXX (Septuagint) has a title for this Psalm: 'When the house was built after the captivity; a song of David.'" See Tate, *Psalms 51-100*, 510.

³In reference, verses 1-2 are somewhat modified when compared to 1 Chronicles 16:23-24. Verses 1-2 are added by several words and sentences, "new song," the repetition of the sentence, "Sing to Yahweh," and the sentence, "bless His Name." In particular, the threefold repetition functions as an emphatic presentation to praise Yahweh. See Tate, *Psalms 51-100*, 512.

⁴Literally, the verb בָּשַׂר can be translated by "bear tidings." See Francis Brown, S.R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon* (Peabody: Hendrickson Publisher, 2004), 142. The reason why the verb is translated as "proclaim" is associated with Yahweh's saving power. Tate appropriately explains this point that "The verb בָּשַׂר carries the idea of 'bringing news/a message,' which involves 'good news' in the OT...Its use in the proclamation of Yahweh's saving acts is appropriate in Ps 96..." See Tate, *Psalms 51-100*, 512. VanGemeren agrees with the point stating "the occasion of praise is a new act of 'salvation'....The acts of the Lord are acts of deliverance whereby He assures His people of deliverance and victory...." See VanGemeren, *Psalms* (The Expositor's Bible Commentary V; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1991), 621. In connection to the usage of the verb, בָּשַׂר Brueggemann importantly explains the meaning of the verb in terms of two points in Psalm 96.

- 3 Declare His glory among the nations,
His wonderful deeds among all the peoples.
- 4 For great is Yahweh, greatly to be praised;
He is to be feared above all gods.
- 5 For all the gods of the peoples are idols⁵,
But Yahweh made the heavens!
- 6 Splendor and majesty are before Him,
Strength and beauty are in His sanctuary.
- 7 Ascribe to Yahweh, families of the peoples,
Ascribe Yahweh glory and strength.
- 8 Ascribe Yahweh the glory of His name,
Bring an offering and enter into His courts.
- 9 Bow down before Yahweh in (His) holy splendor⁶,

“(first)...the word *basar* refers to a message brought from the place of happening to a place of reception...refers to the substance of the message, the articulation of the message, or the messenger who brings the news. The word *basar* refers to speech which transfers the significance of an event from one place to another... (second) *basar* has now been claimed for theological purpose.” See Brueggemann, *Israel’s Praise*, 30-32. Based on two usages of the verb, Brueggemann states the crucially insightful explanations in order to understand the meaning of Yahweh’s reign in Psalm 96 in the following pages. See Brueggemann, *Israel’s Praise*, 32-38.

⁵In particular, the word אֱלֹהִים לֵאמֹר is translated as “worthless gods and idols” in the plural. Brown, Driver, and Charles, *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*, 47. Noticeably, the word implies a meaning of contempt compared to the only One God. Tate properly explains “The original meaning may have been ‘gods,’ used in MT as a term of contempt. LXX uses δαιμόνια, ‘demons,’ but the word can also mean ‘god.’” See Tate, *Psalms 51-100*, 510.

⁶This translation is debatable. The word הַדְרָה means “adornment and glory.” See Brown, Driver, and Charles, *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*, 214. Dahood translates the word as “theophany” that “...when the Holy One appears.” See Mitchell Dahood, *Psalms II* (AB 17; New York: Doubleday, 1968), 358. The reason why Dahood translates it as a divine appearance is that “Ugaritic word *hrt* is translated by ‘dream (or vision)’ in correspondence to the Hebrew word הַדְרָה.” However, the parallel of the Ugaritic word, *hrt* and the Hebrew word, הַדְרָה is insufficient for the evidence. Craigie argues this point that “Ugaritic *hrt* is a *hapax legomenon* in the Ugaritic texts...and offers only a slender basis for the interpretation of Hebrew הַדְרָה...it is quite possible that Ugaritic *hrt* is a scribal error for *d(h)rt*...” See Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 242-243. Tate suggests a possibility that “הַדְרָה refers to Yahweh

Tremble before Him, all the earth.

10 Say among the nations, “*Yahweh reigns!*”

the world is firmly established; it will be immovable;

He will judge the peoples with equity.”

11 *Let*⁷ the heaven rejoice and the earth be glad;

Let the sea and its fullness thunder.

12 *Let* the field exult, and all that is in it;

Then all the trees of the forest will sing for joy.

13 Before Yahweh, for *He is coming*⁸,

He is coming to judge the earth.

He will judge the world in righteousness,

and the peoples in His faithfulness.

rather than the worshipers....The ‘His courts’ at the end of verse 8 suggests that the corresponding element in 9a should refer to Yahweh rather than to the worshipers.” See Tate, *Psalms 51-100*, 511. Based on this, *בְּהִדְרֹתֶיךָ קָדֵשׁ* can be translated by “in (His) splendor.” The translation is chosen by several scholars. For instance, see Howard, *The Structure of Psalms 93-100*, 63.; VanGemeren, *Psalms*, 622.; Frank-Lothar Hossfeld and Erich Zenger, *Psalms 2 (A Commentary)*; trans. Linda M. Maloney; ed. Klaus Baltzer; Minneapolis: Fortress press, 2005), 463.

⁷ The verbs in verses 11a-12a is morphologically not jussives. However, the sentences can be translated by jussive in meaning (not a morphological form) if the poetic device is “personification.” In regard to this, refer to n. 73 below. Moreover, most scholars agree with the translation as jussive. For example, see Tate, *Psalms 51-100*, 510; Hossfeld and Zenger, *Psalms 2*, 463; Howard, *The Structure of Psalms 93-100*, 63; Stek, “Notes on Psalm 96,” in *NIV Study Bible*, 896; VanGemeren, *Psalms*, 622; Samuel Terrien, *The Psalms: Strophic Structure and Theological Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 674.

⁸The twofold verb, *בָּרָךְ* is parsed as “Qal, QTL(perfect), third person, masculine, singular.” However, Franz Delitzsch translates the verb as a participle. See Franz Delitzsch, *The Psalms* vol.5. (trans. James Martin; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), 93.; Howard, *The Structure of Psalms 93-100*, 64.; Tate, *Psalms 51-100*, 511-512. ; Hossfeld and Zenger, *Psalms 2*, 463. The participles denote “imminent action.” See Williams, *Hebrew Syntax An Outline*, 39. The translation enables an interpretation that the urgent coming of Yahweh is the indispensable fact which the world and His peoples desiring Yahweh’s reign should accept. In reference, the subjects of two *בָּרָךְ* clauses including twofold verbs (*בָּרָךְ*) are omitted.

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

This Psalm invites all the earth, all the nations, and all the peoples to praise the Lord who reigns over the whole world⁹. This shows that Psalm 96 has the theme of the proclamation that *Yahweh malak*.¹⁰

Psalm 96 emphatically proclaims that the Lord who made the heaven is the true God but the other gods are only idols. This point is particularly associated with the polemical meaning of Psalm 29¹¹. The proclamation that the Lord is the only true God is culminated in that “Say among the nations, ‘*Yahweh reigns!*’ the world is firmly established, it will be immovable; He will judge the peoples with equity.”¹² This polemic compared to the other gods’ governance theologically provokes that let the heaven, the earth, the sea, the field, and all the trees of the forest praise, “*Yahweh reigns!*”¹³ because “He will judge the world in righteousness and the peoples in His faithfulness.”¹⁴

Gesenius explains this point that “The *personal pronoun* which would be expected as the subject of a participial clause is frequently omitted.” See Gesenius, *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar*, 360.

⁹In relation to the invitation, Stek suggests an insightful possibility of “an OT anticipation of the world mission of the NT people of God (Matthew 28:16-20).” See Stek, “Notes on Psalm 96,” in *NIV Study Bible*, 896.

¹⁰Mays, *Psalms*, 307.

¹¹In fact, Psalm 96 is similar to Psalm 29 in terms of the genre, the theme of the enthronement, and contents including the Lord’s reign. About this, see Brueggemann, *The Message of the Psalms*, 144-146.

¹²See the above translation.

¹³Psalm 96:11-12.

¹⁴Psalm 96:13.

After all, “the polemics of Psalm 96”¹⁵ like Psalm 29 means that all the peoples and nations have to obey the Lord’s reign. Patrick D. Miller properly explains this important point as follows:

The hymns of Israel stand in service of the central theological claim of the Old Testament, that the Lord of Israel alone is God and requires the full devotion of all creation. The expression of praise was the glorification and enjoyment of God, the true measure of piety and the proper purpose of every creature. So for Israel the first and last word of faith was “Hallelujah!”¹⁶

Psalm 96 is related to 1 Chronicles 16:23-33¹⁷. The historical background of the text is when the ark gloriously came into Jerusalem, “David first assigned Asaph and his relatives to give thanks to the Lord.”¹⁸ This point opens a possibility of the liturgical use of Psalm 96 for an application¹⁹.

As already mentioned above, Psalm 96 is not only similar to Psalm 29 but also associated with Psalms 47, 93, 97, 98, and 99. In detail, the genre, motif, and theme of Psalm 96 are commonly represented in these Psalms²⁰. In this sense, the exegesis of Psalm 96 needs the related study²¹ in the corresponding Psalms. This thesis will deal with it in the next section.

¹⁵In reference, VanGemeren suggests a possibility of the relation between Psalm 96 and Isaiah 40-66 in terms of the polemical perspective to idols. See VanGemeren, *Psalms*, 620.

¹⁶Patrick D. Miller, *Interpreting the Psalms* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986), 78.

¹⁷Actually, Psalm 96 is partially changed from 1 Chronicles 16:23-33.

¹⁸1 Chronicles 16:7, NASB.

¹⁹For this, see Brueggemann, *The Message of the Psalms*, 144-146.

²⁰Brueggemann asserts that “The other explicit songs of enthronement (Psalms 47, 93, 97, 98, 99) can be dealt with in more summary fashion because they articulate the same themes we have seen in Psalm 96.” See *The Message of the Psalms*, 146.

²¹See VanGemeren, *Psalms*, 620; Tate, *Psalms 51-100*, 504-509; Howard, *The Structure of Psalms 93-100*, 98-104; 141-155.

GENRE

Gunkel classifies Psalms 47, 93, 96, 97, and 99 as the genre of hymns²².

Especially, Gunkel defines these Psalms as “songs about YHWH’s Enthronement.”²³

That is, Psalm 96 is “Yahweh’s enthronement Psalm.”²⁴

In agreement with Gunkel’s classification, Mowinckel defines the Psalms as “enthronement Psalms” as follows:

Characteristic of this group is that they salute Yahweh as the King, who has just ascended His royal throne to wield His royal power. The situation envisaged in the poet’s imagination, is Yahweh’s ascent to the throne and the acclamation of Yahweh as King; the psalm is meant as the song of praise which is to meet Yahweh on His ‘epiphany,’ His appearance as the new, victorious King. Hence the name: enthronement psalms.²⁵

Considerably, the work of Gunkel and Mowinckel has a weak point that it is restricted to a specific classification, “Yahweh’s enthronement Psalms.” In fact, the poets represent various contents by means of their languages²⁶ within the Psalms. The contents include not only Yahweh’s enthronement but also the marvelous deeds of Yahweh such as the creation, majesty, justice, and righteousness of Yahweh. If we restrict the Psalms as only “enthronement Psalms,” we could miss the contents of Yahweh’s mighty power. As it were, we cannot appreciate some freedoms of “enjoying, entering and living in the language world”²⁷ unfolded by the poets for the sake of the Lord’s reign. Gerald H.

²²Gunkel and Begrich, *Introduction to Psalms*, 22.

²³Ibid., 66.

²⁴Ibid., 66.

²⁵Mowinckel, *The Psalms in Israel’s Worship*, 106.

²⁶Mays, *The Lord Reigns*, 6-7.

²⁷Mays, *The Lord Reigns*, 6-7..

Wilson appropriately supports this point that “it is in fact the lack of extreme specificity about historical setting and its details that frees the psalms to continue to speak powerfully to a variety of settings and circumstances throughout history.”²⁸ With Wilson’s assistance, the excessively restricted specificity makes us to be inclined only to Yahweh’s enthronement itself.

To complement this, Westermann tries to categorize the Psalms as “descriptive psalm of praise”²⁹. First, Westermann insists that “enthronement Psalms” do not have the proper category³⁰. Based on this viewpoint, Westermann defines the Psalms’ category as follows:

In Pss. 47; 96; 98, a descriptive Psalm of praise is expanded and modified by the exclamation of kingship. In Pss. 97 and 99 this exclamation has become the chief motif of the Psalm, and yet even in these two the basic category of the descriptive Psalm of praise can be clearly recognized.³¹

Using Westermann’s definition, we can gain “the expanded and modified form of the descriptive Psalm of praise.”³² It means that the Psalms comprehend both Yahweh’s enthronement and Kingship. Tate properly explains this point that “I will designate Pss 93, 96-99 as ‘Kingship-of-Yahweh psalms’ ...the Psalms celebrate the conviction that

²⁸Gerald H. Wilson, *Psalms* vol. 1 (The NIV Application Commentary; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 62.

²⁹Westermann, *Praise and Lament in the Psalms*, 122-132

³⁰Westermann says that “...there is no proper category of the enthronement Psalms.” See Westermann, *Praise and Lament in the Psalms*, 150.

³¹Westermann, *Praise and Lament in the Psalms*, 150. In regard to Psalm 93, even though Westermann does not evidently classify Psalm 93 as a descriptive Psalm, Psalm 93 actually includes several elements of the descriptive Psalms’ structure. See Westermann, *Praise and Lament in the Psalms*, 122-132. Tate agrees with this point. See Tate, *Psalms 51-100*, 504-505.

³²Westermann, *Praise and Lament in the Psalms*, 150.

Yahweh is *enthroned as King* and *reigns as King* (as in Ps 29:10) quite apart from any ritual enactment.”³³

In Psalms 93, 96-99, Yahweh enthroned as the King³⁴ rules over the world.³⁵ Yahweh the Creator is the invincible God because His mighty power triumphs over the opposites such as “the great waters and the breakers of the sea.”³⁶ Yahweh is the true Creator, God who made the heavens but all the gods are idol because they cannot make the heavens.³⁷

Yahweh, who is controlling the universe made by Him, rules over the entire world, people, and even other gods by means of His righteousness and justice.³⁸ Yahweh will save the righteous from the wicked because “He is the Lord Most High over all the earth; He is exalted far above all gods.”³⁹

³³Tate, *Psalms 51-100*, 505. In fact, several scholars prefer to the definition of Yahweh’s Kingship. In this regard, Tate suggests some scholars’ perspective. His explanation provides us a useful help. For example, Erhard S. Gerstenberger defines the Psalms that “the YAHWEH-KINGSHIP PSALM, which celebrates the enthronement and government of Yahweh Himself, but apparently in conjunction with Davidic dynastic power (Psalms 47; 93; 96-99).” See Erhard S. Gerstenberger, *Psalms, Part 1, with an Introduction to Cultic Poetry* (FOTL XIV; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 19. For those of other scholars about Yahweh’s Kingship, see Tate, *Psalms 51-100*, 505.

³⁴Psalms 29:10-11.

³⁵Psalms 93:1.

³⁶Psalms 93:4. In reference, Stek explains about the opposites that “implicitly they symbolize all that opposes the coming of the Lord’s Kingdom (see Psalms 65:6-7; 74:13-14).” See Stek, “Notes on the Psalms 93” in *NIV Study Bible*, 893.

³⁷Psalms 96:5.

³⁸Psalms 97:1-2.

³⁹Psalms 97:9, NASB.

Yahweh is enthroned in Zion.⁴⁰ The fact that “Yahweh is enthroned above the cherubim”⁴¹ describes “the Kingship of Yahweh.”⁴² In particular, Yahweh enthroned above the cherubim represents the figure of the Divine Warrior⁴³ who causes “the peoples trembles and the earth shake.”⁴⁴

In light of the context, Yahweh becomes “our God”⁴⁵ for His people. Yahweh reigns over all the earth, people, and nations on behalf of His justice, equity, and righteousness.⁴⁶ Furthermore, Yahweh conquers and reigns over against other pagan gods.⁴⁷

Yahweh who is enthroned above Zion is the God of all the lords. Yahweh is the holy One.⁴⁸ Eventually, the poet instructs all the earth and people to respond that “Exalt the Lord our God and worship at His footstool... For holy is the Lord our God.”⁴⁹

As already considered above, Tate’s genre analysis of “Psalms 93, 96-99 as Kingship-of-Yahweh Psalms”⁵⁰ seems to be appropriate for the form of the Psalms.

⁴⁰Psalm 99:2. This demonstrates the Kingship of Yahweh. Mays explains that “The subject of the first section (vv. 1-3) is the Kingship of the Lord over Zion and all the peoples of earth.” See Mays, *Psalms*, 314-315.

⁴¹Psalm 99:1.

⁴²Mays states that “The symbol of the Lord’s Kingship is the ark of the Lord. The Psalm calls it the Lord’s cherubim-throne and footstool.” See Mays, *Psalms*, 315.

⁴³Mays assists the point that “The ark represented the Lord’s presence with Israel as the Divine Warrior at whose theophany earth shook and peoples tremble.” See Mays, *Psalms*, 315.

⁴⁴Psalm 99:1.

⁴⁵Mays, *Psalms*, 315. The term of “Our God” is occurred four times in verses 5, 8, and 9 (two times).

⁴⁶Psalm 99:4.

⁴⁷Psalm 97:7, 9.

⁴⁸The poet emphasizes the fact that “Holy is He” twice time in verses 5 and 9.

THEMATIC UNITY

Psalms 93, 96-99 form a thematic unity because they are commonly described by “the poet’s languages for representing Yahweh’s reign.”⁵¹ Stek clusters Psalms 90-100 within the special frame “You have been our dwelling place throughout all generations (90:1) and His faithfulness continues through all generations (100:5)—a series that begins with prayer and ends with praise.”⁵² In the frame, Stek classifies Psalms 93, 96-99 to be thematically related to the Lord’s reign.⁵³

More in detail, Howard tries to make various organic connections among the Psalms.⁵⁴ For example, he says that “Thematic connections between Psalms are of two types. First, many themes are elaborated via repeated words or lexemes.... A second type of thematic connection is broader than simple repetitions of words or lexemes... even though the vocabulary is not identical.”⁵⁵ Howard’s thematic relatedness⁵⁶ importantly gives us help in order to understand the organic and thematic unity of the Psalms.

⁴⁹Psalms 99:5, 9., NASB.

⁵⁰Tate, *Psalms 51-100*, 505. In agreement with Tate’s analysis, Brueggemann classifies Psalm 96 as “a new orientation” of Psalms. The classification means that Yahweh triumphed over all other gods and His people’s enemies and then was enthroned in the glory. The enthroned Yahweh reigns over the whole world with His justice, equity, and faithful. More importantly, Yahweh’s new kingship makes human visualize the new dimension of life. See Brueggemann, *The Message of the Psalms*, 19, 140, 144-146.

⁵¹Mays, “The Language of the Reign of God,” 117-118, 123-124.

⁵²Stek, “Notes on the Psalm 90” in *NIV Study Bible*, 890.

⁵³See Stek’s “significant arrangement of the Psalter,” “Notes on the Psalm” in *NIV Study Bible*, 786..

⁵⁴Howard’s study provides us with some useful helps to understand the thematic unity of the Psalms. See Howard, *The Structure of Psalms 93-100*, 98-102.

⁵⁵Howard, *The Structure of Psalms 93-100*, 100-101.

⁵⁶For the thematic relatedness, Howard analyzes the Psalms to be united in terms of “key-word links, thematic word links, thematic similarities, and structure/genre similarities.” See Howard, *The Structure of Psalms 93-100*, 98-102.

In fact, Psalms 93, 96-99⁵⁷ have several similarities because they commonly represent the theme of Yahweh *Malak*. The similarities in the Psalms reveal the thematic unity through the characteristic contents of Yahweh *Malak*. The similarities are tabled as follows.

Figure 7. Thematic Title: “*The Lord Reigns*”

The Characteristic Contents	Psalm 93	Psalm 96	Psalm 97	Psalm 99
Genre	Yahweh Kingship Psalm (Hymn)			
Enthronement ⁵⁸	Verses 1-2	Verses 6-9 Verses 10-13	Verses 1-2	Verses 1-2
Polemical Meaning ⁵⁹	Verses 3-5	Verses 4-9	Verses 3-9	Verses 1-2
Creation	Verses 1-2	Verse 5	Verses 1-7, 9	Verses 1-2, 5,

⁵⁷Recognizing the thematic relatedness of Psalm 93, Howard specifically suggests the strong unity (similarities) among Psalms 96-99. Howard explains that “Psalm 96 also has important ties with the psalm immediately following it. This is significant because it has fewer ties with the last psalm in the 96-99 group; since the group is arranged in an alternating A-B-A’-B’ pattern, the placement of each Psalm is important. Several important concatenations link Psalm 96 and 97; Psalm 96 and 98 are most strongly linked; Psalm 96 has fewest links with Psalm 99. However, Psalm 99 has stronger links with its adjacent psalm (98) and especially with its partner in the alternating pattern (97).” See Howard, *The Structure of Psalms 93-100*, 154. In agreement with Howard’s significant arrangement, Tate makes it clear that Psalms 96-99 are divided into two clusters, Psalms 96 and 97, and Psalms 98 and 99. Tate asserts that “The segment of psalm in Pss 96-99 seems to divide into two major divisions of twin-psalms: 96-97 and 98-99. In both cases the psalms are of approximately the same length...the coherence of Pss 96-99 as a unit and the cumulative evidence supports treating 96-97 and 98-99 as psalm-pairs....In brief, Pss 96-99 can be treated as a literary unit, divided into two psalm-pairs.” See Tate, *Psalms 51-100*, 508-509. In summary, the arrangement of Howard and Tate highlights the thematic unity of the Psalms. In light of this conception, the author will try to explain the thematic unity of the Psalms in terms of the characteristic contents of Yahweh *Malak*.

⁵⁸As already considered in chapter two, Yahweh’s enthronement is closely linked to Psalm 29 (verses 10-11). Refer to chapter two.

⁵⁹In chapter two, we have scrutinized the polemical meaning of *Yahweh Malak* through the exegesis of Psalm 29. More importantly, the polemical meaning becomes the important basis for the Lord’s reign with the Lord’s enthronement.

				7, 9
The Reign through the Righteousness, Equity, and Faithfulness	Verses 1-2	Verses 10-13	Verses 1-2	Verse 4
The Benefits of the People	Verse 5	Verse 2 Verses 10-13	Verse 8 Verses 10-12	Verses 6-8
The Response of the People ⁶⁰	Verses 3-5	Verses 1-3 Verses 7-9 Verses 11-12	Verses 1, 7-8, 12	Verses 3, 5, 9
Special Features ⁶¹	Verses 4-5	Verses 3, 6-8	Verses 6, 12	⁶² Verses 3, 5, 9

To sum up, the thematic unity by the similarities in the Psalms appropriately demonstrates the poet's intentions represented by the characteristic contents of Yahweh *Malak*. If ones "enter into the poet's language world,"⁶³ Yahweh's reign will be substantialized in their real life.

⁶⁰The responses are mainly represented by the motif of praise and worship. Refer to Howard, *The Structure of Psalms 93-100*, 142, 150, 155, 164.

⁶¹The special features are described as the glory and holiness of Yahweh.

⁶²Emphatically, the holiness of Yahweh is repeated three times. In particular, Yahweh's holiness is combined with the motif of praise and worship. It means that all the earth, people, and even other pagan gods have to praise and worship to the holy Yahweh who is reigning over the whole world.

STRUCTURE

When it comes to the structure of Psalm 96, scholars reach a common consensus on the matter.⁶⁴ The structure is as follows.

- I. The call to all the earth to sing a new song (vv. 1-3)
- II. The reason why all the earth praises the Lord (vv. 4-6)
- III. The call to all peoples to worship the Lord (vv. 7-9)
- IV. The call to all nations to proclaim the Lord's reign (vv. 10-13)

One of the characteristics in the structure is that the poet boldly invites all the earth, all peoples, and all nations to praise and proclaim the Lord's reign.⁶⁵ Particularly, in part I, the fact that "sing and proclaim to the Lord as a new song for His salvation, glory, and wonderful deeds" is profoundly associated with "the missionary theme in the Old Testament."⁶⁶ For this, part II shows that all the earth primarily has to know who the Lord is. The Lord made the heavens and is overwhelmingly above all other gods. Furthermore, the Lord is wrapped in "the splendor, majesty, strength, and beauty."⁶⁷

The glorified Lord reigns. The world is established by His equity. The heavens, earth, and people will sing a (new) song by virtue of the righteousness and faithfulness of

⁶³Mays, "The Language of the Reign of God," 119.

⁶⁴See Hans-Joachim Kraus, *Psalms 60-150* (trans. Hilton C. Oswald; A Continental Commentary; Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1989), 252-255; Howard, *The Structure of Psalms 93-100*, 64; Stek, "Notes on the Psalm 96" in *NIV Study Bible*, 896-897; VanGemeren, *Psalms*, 620. In this page, VanGemeren specifically suggests "a pattern of A (vv.1-3) B (vv. 4-6) A' (vv. 7-9) B' (vv. 10-13)."

⁶⁵Stek, "Notes on the Psalm 96" in *NIV Study Bible*, 896.

⁶⁶Stek recognizes this point as "an OT anticipation of the world mission of the NT people of God." See Stek, "Notes on the Psalm 96" in *NIV Study Bible*, 896.

⁶⁷Psalm 96:6.

the Lord's reign. The obligatory responsibility of all His creatures is to worship the Lord (part III) and to proclaim His glorious reign (part IV).

GRAMMATICAL AND SYNTACTICAL ANALYSIS⁶⁸

The Delimitation of the Individual Clauses

To look over the important features⁶⁹ of the subjects, thematic stems, and the predicates, it is necessary for us to table “the delimitation of the clauses”⁷⁰ of the text of Psalm 96. This is as follows.

Figure 8. Delimitation of Clauses of Psalm 96

PGN	Thematic Stem	Predicate	Clauses	Vs.
2 mp	Qal	Imperative	שִׁירוּ לַיהוָה שִׁיר חֲדָשׁ	1a
2 mp	Qal	Imperative	שִׁירוּ לַיהוָה ⁷¹ כָּל־הָאָרֶץ:	b
2 mp	Qal	Imperative	שִׁירוּ לַיהוָה	2a
2 mp	Piel	Imperative	בְּרַכּוּ שְׁמוֹ	b
2 mp	Piel	Imperative	בְּשִׂרוּ מִיּוֹם־לַיּוֹם יִשׁוּעָתוֹ:	c
2 mp	Piel	Imperative	סַפְּרוּ בַגּוֹיִם כְּבוֹדוֹ	3a
		Ellipsis	[...] בְּכָל־הָעַמִּים	b
fp cstr+suf. 3 ms	Niphal	Participle	נִפְלְאוֹתָיו:	c
3 ms		Non-Verbal	כִּי גָדוֹל יְהוָה	4a
ms	Pual	Participle	וּמִהַלֵּל מְאֹד	b

⁶⁸In this section, the analysis will focus on the delimitation of the clauses and the clausal flow chart.

⁶⁹Bosma, “Creation in Jeopardy,” 72.

⁷⁰In reference, see the exegesis of Psalm 29 in chapter two.

⁷¹According to Gesenius, “substantives can be used as collectives.” See Gesenius, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, 463. Therefore, all the earth means “all the peoples or all the inhabitants.” Refer to Psalms 33:8; 66:1.

ms	Niphal	Non-Verbal	נֹרָא הוּא עַל-כָּל-אֱלֹהִים:	c
3 ms		Non-Verbal	כִּי כָל-אֱלֹהֵי הָעַמִּים אֱלִילִים	5a
3 ms	Qal	QTL	וַיְהִיָּה שָׁמַיִם עֲשֵׂה:	b
		Non-Verbal	הוֹדִיָּה־רָר לִפְנֵי	6a
		Non-Verbal	עַז וְחַפְאֲרַת בְּמִקְדָּשׁוֹ:	b
2 mp	Qal	Imperative	הִבּוּ לִיהוָה מִשְׁפָּחוֹת עַמִּים	7a
2 mp	Qal	Imperative	הִבּוּ לִיהוָה כְּבוֹד וְעַז:	b
2 mp	Qal	Imperative	הִבּוּ לִיהוָה כְּבוֹד שְׁמוֹ	8a
2 mp	Qal	Imperative	שְׂאוּ-מִנְחָה	b
2 mp	Qal	Imperative	וּבֵאוּ לַחֲצֵרוֹתָיו:	c
2 mp	Hishtaphel	Imperative	הִשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ לִיהוָה בְּהַדְרַת־קֹדֶשׁ	9a
2 mp	Qal	Imperative	חִילוּ מִפְּנֵי ⁷² כָּל-הָאָרֶץ:	b
2 mp	Qal	Imperative	אִמְרוּ בְּגוֹיִם	c
3 ms	Qal	QTL	יְהוּה מֶלֶךְ	10a
3 fs	Niphal	YQTL	אֶת־תְּכוֹן תִּבֵּל	b
3 fs	Niphal	YQTL	בְּלִתְמוֹט	c
3 ms	Qal	YQTL	יִדְוֶן עַמִּים בְּמִישְׁרִים:	d
3 mp	Qal	YQTL	יִשְׁמַחוּ הַשָּׁמַיִם	11a
3 fs	Qal	WeYQTL	וַתִּגַּל הָאָרֶץ	b
3 ms	Qal	YQTL	יִרְעֵם הַיָּם וּמְלֹאוֹ: ⁷³	c
3 ms	Qal	YQTL	יַעֲלֹז שָׂדֵי	12a
		Non-Verbal	וְכָל-אֲשֶׁר-בּוֹ	b
3 mp	Piel	YQTL	אִז יִרְנְנוּ כָּל-עַצְיֵי־עַר: לִפְנֵי יְהוָה	c
3 ms	Qal	QTL	כִּי בָא	13a
3 ms	Qal	QTL	כִּי בָא	b
	Qal	Inf.Cstr.	לִשְׁפַט הָאָרֶץ	c
3 ms	Qal	YQTL	יִשְׁפֹּט־תִּבֵּל בְּצַדִּק	d
		Ellipsis	וְעַמִּים בְּאִמוֹנָתוֹ:	e

In the PGN column⁷⁴, 2 mp (second person masculine plural) and 3 ms (third person masculine singular) are dominant. Particularly, they form a pattern of A B A' B'.

⁷²See n. 71 above.

⁷³If the literary device of verse 11c is personification, it could be a jussive. Refer to Bruce K. Waltke and M O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 570 and n. 7 in the translation above.

⁷⁴The PGN is related to the subjects of the sentences.

In verses 1-3, the subjects of 2 mp are repetitious seven⁷⁵ times (A). In verses 4-6, the main subjects are 3 ms (B). Comparably, in verses 7-9, the subjects of 2 mp are repetitious eight times (A') and in verses 10-13, the main subjects are 3 ms (B').

The above pattern is closely related to the structure⁷⁶ of Psalm 96. The poet intensively calls on all the earth to sing to Yahweh as a new song. This is the reason why 2 mps are dominant in verses 1-3. In verses 4-6, the poet depicts that Yahweh is great, glorious, and majestic. Furthermore, the poet exalts Yahweh who is the true God other than all the gods like inutile idols. In relation to these contents, the subjects of verses 4-6 are 3mss. That is, the call on singing to Yahweh (A-structure I) and the reason why all the earth sings to Yahweh (B-structure II) are properly harmonious.

In verses 7-9⁷⁷, the poet again calls on all peoples to worship Yahweh. Just as the call is intensive, the subjects of 2 mp are repeated eight times. In verses 10-13, the main subject is Yahweh and the central sentence is Yahweh *malak*. The poet depicts that the world is firmly established and the heaven and earth will rejoice because Yahweh's reign is righteous and equitable. To represent this, the subjects of 3 ms are associated with the goodness and glory of Yahweh's reign. After all, the call on worshiping Yahweh (A'-structure III) and the praise and proclamation of Yahweh's reign (B'-structure IV) have an indispensable relationship.

In the thematic column, there are four Nifal verbs. A Nifal in verse 3c is **נִפְלְאוּתָיו**. Particularly, when **נִפְלְאוּת** is used with the verb **סִפַּר** in verses 3ab, it presents God's

⁷⁵The subject of the ellipsis in verse 3b is 2 mp.

⁷⁶See the structure in pages 77-78.

⁷⁷These verses are closely associated with Psalm 29:1-2. This shows that Psalm 29 is the background for Psalm 99. Refer to Brueggemann, *The Message of the Psalms*, 144-147.

miraculous acts.⁷⁸ The other Nifals as the passive meaning⁷⁹ in verses 4c and 10bc represent the Kingship⁸⁰ and reign of Yahweh. In short, the four Nifals show that they are appropriately represented by the enthroned Yahweh's reign.

In the predicate column, firstly, imperatives are conspicuous. The imperatives appear fourteen times. As seen in the structure, the poet calls on all the earth, peoples, and nations to praise and worship Yahweh. Eventually, the poet convincingly exhorts them to proclaim the righteous reign of Yahweh. The imperatives are closely associated with “the theme of proclamation”⁸¹ for Yahweh's reign.

Secondly, Psalm 96 has six Non-Verbal clauses. As in Psalm 29,⁸² the Non-Verbal clauses are related to the reign of Yahweh in Psalm 96. For example, the Non-Verbals in verses 4c-5a represent that Yahweh is above all other gods. And Yahweh is full of splendor and majesty (verses 6ab) and all creatures will exult Yahweh's faithful and just reign (verses 12ab). After all, the Non-Verbals function is to reveal the reign of Yahweh through the proper configurations which are placed in the beginning, middle, and end.

⁷⁸Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (trans. and ed. M.E.J. Richardson; Leiden: Brill, 2001), 927. In this page, the other usages with ספּר can be found in Psalms 9:2; 26:7; 75:2; 78:4.

⁷⁹With respect to the passive meaning of Nifal, refer to Waltke and O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 382-385 and Williams, *Hebrew Syntax An Outline*, 29.

⁸⁰In connection to Psalm 29, verse 4c theologially implies to Yahweh's polemical Kingship against other pagan gods.

⁸¹In regard to this, Kraus focuses on the theme of the proclamation. See Kraus, *Psalms 60-150*, 254-255. In peculiar, Stek connects the proclamation to “the world mission.” Refer to Stek, “Notes on the Psalm 96” in *NIV Study Bible*, 896.

⁸²See “the delimitation of clauses” in the exegesis of Psalm 29.

The Clausal Flow Chart of Psalm 96:1-13

In this section, we will analyze the syntactical functions of the clauses based on the delimitation of the individual clauses. The clausal flow chart is as follows.

Figure 9. Interclausal Flow Chart of Psalm 96:1-13

Syn/ Asyn	V/ N-V	Conj/ Disj	I/ D	M/ C/ S	Syntactical Function	Clauses	Vs.
Asyn	V		I	M	Command	שִׁירוּ לַיהוָה שִׁיר חֲדָשׁ	1a
Asyn	V		I	C	Command	שִׁירוּ לַיהוָה כָּל-הָאָרֶץ:	b
Asyn	V		I	C	Command	שִׁירוּ לַיהוָה	2a
Asyn	V		I	C	Command	בְּרָכוּ שְׁמוֹ	b
Asyn	V		I	C	Command	בְּשָׂרוֹ מִיּוֹם-לַיּוֹם יִשׁוּעָתוֹ:	c
Asyn	V		I	C	Command	סַפְּרוּ בַגּוֹיִם כְּבוֹדוֹ	3a
Asyn	N-V		I	C	Command (Ellipsis)	[...] בְּכָל-הָעַמִּים נִפְלְאוֹתָיו:	bc
Syn	N-V	Conj	D	S	Causal	כִּי גָדוֹל יְהוָה	4a
Syn	N-V	Disj	D	S	Causal	וּמַהֲלָל מְאֹד	b
Asyn	N-V		D	S	Causal	נוֹרָא הוּא עַל-כָּל-אֱלֹהִים:	c
Syn	N-V	Conj	D	S	Causal	כִּי כָל-אֱלֹהֵי הָעַמִּים אֱלִילִים	5a
Syn	V	Disj	D	S	Causal	וַיְהוֶה שָׁמַיִם עֲשָׂה:	b
Asyn	N-V		D	S	Causal	הוֹדִיָּה־הָרַר לְפָנָיו	6a
Asyn	N-V		D	S	Causal	עַז וְתַפְאֶרֶת בְּמִקְדָּשׁוֹ:	b
Asyn	V		I	M	Command	הִבּוּ לַיהוָה מִשְׁפָּחוֹת עַמִּים	7a
Asyn	V		I	C	Command	הִבּוּ לַיהוָה כְּבוֹד וְעֹז:	b
Asyn	V		I	C	Command	הִבּוּ לַיהוָה כְּבוֹד שְׁמוֹ	8a
Asyn	V		I	C	Command	שְׂאוּ-מִנְחָה	b
Syn	V	Conj	I	C	Command	וּבֵאוּ לְחִצְרוֹתָיו:	c
Asyn	V		I	C	Command	הִשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ לַיהוָה בְּהַרְרֵת-קִדְשׁ	9a
Asyn	V		I	C	Command	חִילוּ מִפְּנֵיו כָּל-הָאָרֶץ:	b
Asyn	V		I	C	Command	אָמְרוּ בַגּוֹיִם	c
Asyn	V		I	M	Quoted Speech	יְהוָה מֶלֶךְ	10a
Asyn	V		I	C	Quoted Speech	אֶרֶץ-תְּבוּן תָּבֵל	b

Asyn	V		I	C	Quoted Speech	בַּלְתְּמוּט	c
Asyn	V		I	C	Quoted Speech	יִדִין עַמִּים בְּמִישְׁרִים:	d
Asyn	V		I	M	Declarative	יִשְׂמְחוּ הַשָּׁמַיִם	11a
Syn	V	Conj	I	C	Declarative	וְתִגַּל הָאָרֶץ	b
Asyn	V		I	C	Declarative	וְרַעַם הַיָּם וּמִלְאוֹ:	c
Asyn	V		I	C	Declarative	יַעֲלֶז שָׁרֵי	12a
Syn	N-V	Disj	I	C	Declarative	וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר־בּוֹ	b
Asyn	V		I	C	Declarative	אִז יִרְנְנוּ כָל־עַצְיֵי־יַעַר: לִפְנֵי יְהוָה	c
Syn	V	Conj	D	S	Causal	כִּי בָּא	13a
Syn	V	Conj	D	S	Causal	רַכִּי בָּא	b
Asyn	N-V		D	S	Purpose	לְשַׁפֵּט הָאָרֶץ	c
Asyn	V		I	M	Declarative	יִשְׁפֹּט־תִּבְל בְּצַדִּיק	d
Syn	N-V	Conj	I	C	Declarative (Ellipsis)	וְ[...]. עַמִּים בְּאִמוּנָתוֹ:	e

In the clausal flow chart, three main syntactical functions can be found. First are the causal clauses in verses 4a-6b. They are governed by two כִּי clauses.⁸³ The first conjunction, כִּי (4a) influences verse 4c. The second conjunction, כִּי (5a) influences 6b. The seven causal clauses are defined as “dependent and subordinate clauses.” That is, the clauses belong to verses 1-3. This means that the syntactical function, as the causal clauses in verses 4a-6b, implies why all the earth sings a new song to Yahweh.⁸⁴

Second is the quoted speech in verses 10a-10d. The sentence speaking of “Yahweh *malak*” in verse 10a functions in an importantly independent role within verse 10 because it is the main clause. On the other hand, three sentences in verses 10b-10d are “independent and coordinate clauses.” Because the sentences present the characteristics

⁸³In regard to various functions of conjunction, כִּי refer to Williams, *Hebrew Syntax An Outline*, 72-73.

⁸⁴See the structure (I, II) of Psalm 96.

of “Yahweh *malak*,” the coordinate clauses eventually assist the main sentence, “Yahweh *malak*.”

As seen in the clausal flow chart above, the quoted speeches are indented. This means that the sentences are emphasized. Consequently, this properly shows that verse 10 is “the key assertion⁸⁵ of this Psalm.”⁸⁶

Third are other causal clauses in verses 13a-13c. One of the causal clauses is subordinated to verses 11-12. The other causal clause is subordinated to verses 13c⁸⁷de because the infinitive, **לְשַׁפֵּט** is associated with the verb, **שָׁפַט** in verses 13de.⁸⁸

Two causal clauses connected to verses 11-13 imply an emphatic function. This shows that Yahweh currently reigns over the world.⁸⁹ For His reign, the heavens, earth, sea, field, and everything in the world must gladly sing a new song because Yahweh is coming to the world in order to judge in virtue of His righteousness and faithfulness.

This is the indispensable impending fact that all the peoples desiring “Yahweh *malak*” should accept. The repetition of two **יָ** clauses in verses 13ab clauses properly strengthens the point.

⁸⁵This is that “Yahweh reigns.”

⁸⁶Brueggemann, *The Message of the Psalms*, 144.

⁸⁷Verse 13c belongs to verse 13 b as an infinitive (purpose).

⁸⁸The meaning of the verb (infinitive) is “to judge or govern.” See Brown, Driver, and Charles, *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*, 1047. Particularly, even though verse 13e is a Non-Verbal clause, the sentence is omitted by the verb, **שָׁפַט**. That is, this sentence has an Ellipsis.

THE NOTICEABLE POETIC DEVICES

In this section, we will look over the poetic devices of Psalm 96. The analytic purpose is to reveal the poet's language usages in order to praise and proclaim the Lord's reign. As mentioned in chapter two, they are composed of the phonetic and stylistic devices and figures of speech.

The Phonetic Devices

1. The Repetitions of ו and לִיהוָה Sounds

A. Verses 1a-3b

שִׁירוּ לַיהוָה שִׁיר חָדָשׁ	1a
שִׁירוּ לַיהוָה כָּל־הָאָרֶץ:	b
שִׁירוּ לַיהוָה	2a

B. Verses 7a-8a

הִבְּרוּ לַיהוָה מִשְׁפְּחוֹת עַמִּים	7a
הִבְּרוּ לַיהוָה כְּבוֹד וְעֹז:	b
הִבְּרוּ לַיהוָה כְּבוֹד שְׁמוֹ	8a

In a and b above, the repetitions of the ו sound and לִיהוָה create an emphatic implication. In verses 1a-2a, the poet intensively calls on all the earth to sing to Yahweh as a new song. And in verses 7a-8a, the poet strongly exhorts all nations to ascribe to

⁸⁹The fact that Yahweh reigns is imminent. In this respect, see n. 8 above (translation). In reference, Krause insists an eschatological meaning in verse 13. See Kraus, *Psalms 60-150*, 254.

Yahweh glory and strength. The combining with ה sounds and לִיהוָה sounds further highlight these emphatic meanings.⁹⁰

2. End-Rhyme in Verses 2b-3a

בְּרַכּוּ שְׁמוֹ	2b
בְּשִׁירוֹ מִיּוֹם לַיּוֹם יִשׁוּעָתוֹ:	c
סִפְרוּ בְּגוֹיִם כְּבוֹדוֹ	3a

The pronominal suffix ה forms an end-rhyme in verses 2b-3a. Such end-rhyme serves two main functions. Watson explains them that “rhyme helps to link together components of a poem...serve to produce a particular effect.”⁹¹ According to these, verses 2b-3a are importantly linked in terms of the semantic perspective. That is, the all verses semantically contain the proclamatory⁹² meaning. The end-rhyme (*His name, His salvation, His glory*) appropriately shows this point.

⁹⁰In regard to the emphatic meaning in verses 1a-2a and 7a-8a, refer to Tate, *Psalms 51-100*, 512-513 and John Goldingay, *Psalms* vol. 3 (Baker Commentary on the Old Testament; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008), 105.

⁹¹Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry*, 233.

⁹²Particularly note the verbs, כָּרַן, קָשַׁר, and סָפַר.

3. Paronomasia in Verse 5a

כִּי כָל־אֱלֹהֵי הָעַמִּים אֱלִילִים	5a
--------------------------------------	----

In verse 5a, כָּל־אֱלֹהֵי (all the gods) and אֱלִילִים (idols) form paronomasia⁹³. The central function of paronomasia is emphasis through words which have similar sound. Bullinger points out that "...our attention is called to this emphasis by the similarity of sound...the eye or the ear is at once attracted by the similarity of sound or appearance, and our attention is thus drawn to a solemn or important statement...."⁹⁴

In this sense, verse 5a emphasizes verses 4abc. The greatest Yahweh deserves to be greatly praised and to be feared above all gods "*because (כִּי) all the gods of the peoples are idols.*"⁹⁵ The poet emphasizes (proclaims) that Yahweh is the only true God who made the world and stands in contrast to the gods, which are merely idols. As already mentioned above, this point is importantly associated with the polemical meaning of Psalm 96 in relation to that of Psalm 29.⁹⁶ Consequently, the above paronomasia properly strengthens the polemical meaning.

⁹³Paronomasia is defined as "the repetition of words similar in sound, but not necessarily in sense." See Bullinger, *Figures of Speech used in The Bible*, 307.

⁹⁴Bullinger, *Figures of Speech used in The Bible*, 307.

⁹⁵Psalm 96:5, NASB.

⁹⁶Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 243-249. Particularly, the fact that Psalm 96 is related with Psalm 29 in terms of the polemical meaning is proved in Psalm 96:7-9 (4-6). "The verses are reminiscent of Psalm 29:1-2." See Brueggemann, *The Message of the Psalms*, 144.

The Stylistic Devices and Figures of Speech

1. Envelope Figure

שִׁירוּ לַיהוָה שִׁיר חֲדָשׁ	1a
שִׁירוּ לַיהוָה כָּל־הָאָרֶץ:	b

כִּי בָא	13a
כִּי בָא	b
לִשְׁפֹט הָאָרֶץ	c
יִשְׁפֹט־חֶבֶל בְּצַדִּיק	d
וְעַמִּים בְּאִמּוֹנָתוֹ:	e

The word, הָאָרֶץ (the earth) in verses 1 and 13 form an “envelope figure.”⁹⁷ The envelope figure “affects a complete stanza or a whole poem.”⁹⁸

One of the characteristics in Psalm 96 is that the poet boldly calls on “*the earth*” as an addressee to sing and proclaim the Lord’s reign. This implies that the Lord’s reign influences not only Israel but also the whole universe.⁹⁹ The above envelope figure properly shows this point.

⁹⁷Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry*, 284.

⁹⁸Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry*, 284.

⁹⁹John Calvin, *The Book of Psalms* vol. IV (trans. James Anderson; Calvin’s Commentaries; Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1979), 47-49.

2. Staircase Parallelism (Anaphora)

A. Verses 1a-2a

שִׁירוּ לַיהוָה שִׁיר חֲדָשׁ	1a
שִׁירוּ לַיהוָה כָּל-הָאָרֶץ:	b
שִׁירוּ לַיהוָה	2a

B. Verses 7a-8a

הָבוּ לַיהוָה מִשְׁפָּחוֹת עֲמִים	7a
הָבוּ לַיהוָה כְּבוֹד וְעֹז:	b
הָבוּ לַיהוָה כְּבוֹד שְׁמוֹ	8a

Parallelism plays an important role in Hebrew poetry. Parallelism has various types.¹⁰⁰ Of them, A and B above are staircase parallelism¹⁰¹ which is one of the central poetic devices in the Psalm. We need to note the meaning of the parallelism because repetition through parallelism is not a simple repetition. Adele Berlin makes a worthwhile point about parallelism “The poetic function—the ‘focus on the message for its own sake’—is achieved through parallelism....Through the relationships which parallelism creates we are shown the poem’s meaning.”¹⁰²

¹⁰⁰Refer to David L. Petersen and Kent Harold Richards, *Interpreting Hebrew Poetry* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), 21- 35.

¹⁰¹Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry*, 150-152.

¹⁰²Adele Berlin, *The Dynamics of Biblical Parallelism* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1992), 17. Miller has the same perspective as Berlin. Miller says that “One of the primary characteristics of biblical poetry, as indeed of poetry generally, is a sense of balance between or among the elements that make up the poetry....In biblical poetry this balance is traditionally understood to be manifest in three ways: rhythm, length, and meaning.” See Miller, *Interpreting the Psalms*, 30.

In this regard, the staircase parallelism connotes the function of attracting the listener's attention as a sort of emphasis.¹⁰³ This is particularly associated with a poetic device, anaphora¹⁰⁴ which makes something emphatic.¹⁰⁵ Based on this, the poet bestows the above staircase parallelism or anaphora the important meaning.¹⁰⁶ This is the emphasis of all the earth's praise to Yahweh (three repetitions) and of ascribing to the enthroned Creator,¹⁰⁷ Yahweh His glory, strength, and name (three repetitions). Accordingly, the poetic devices appropriately represent this point.

3. Ellipsis

A. Verses 3abc

סִפְרוּ בְּגוֹיִם כְּבוֹדוֹ	3a
[...] בְּכָל־הָעַמִּים נִפְלְאוֹתָיו:	bc

B. Verses 13de

יִשְׁפֹּט־תִּבְלַ בְּצַדִּיק	d
וְ[...]-עַמִּים בְּאִמּוֹנָתוֹ:	e

¹⁰³Watson explains this point that “In general this accords with the effect of the pattern which is to *increase tension* in the listener. Once his attention and curiosity have been aroused by the incomplete nature of the first line, the listener feels compelled to learn the outcome.” See Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry*, 153-154.

¹⁰⁴שִׁירָה in verses 1a-2a and הָבוּ in verses 7a-8a are anaphora. This device is defined that “the repetition of the same word at the beginning of successive sentences.” See Bullinger, *Figures of Speech used in The Bible*, 199.

¹⁰⁵Bullinger, *Figures of Speech used in The Bible*, 199.

¹⁰⁶Robert Alter agrees with this point. He is convinced that “I draw attention to the importance of incremental repetition and of ways of advancing meaning that may ultimately be derived from incremental repetition... If we are rigorous about the way poems articulate meanings, we will have to conclude that the repeated word or phrase in anaphora never means exactly the same thing twice, that in each occurrence it takes on a certain coloration from the surrounding semantic material and from its position in the series.” See Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Poetry* (New York: Basic Books, 1985), 64.

¹⁰⁷Psalms 96:5, 6-9, 10-13. See the thematic unity section.

סִפֵּר in verse 3b and נִשְׁפֹּט in verse 13e are omitted. Ellipsis has the function of drawing attention to the poet's intentional omission and causing interest in the emphasis.¹⁰⁸ Relating verses 1-2 the poet intensively calls on the nations and all the peoples to declare Yahweh's glory and wonderful deeds. In this context, the ellipsis in verses 3bc reveals the intention that the poet tries to emphasize the declaration.

Second, the ellipse in verses 13de shows that the poet intends to emphasize Yahweh's judgment which is righteous and faithful compared to all gods.

4. Hendiadys

הָבֹו לַיהוָה כְּבוֹד וְעֹז:	7b
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In verse 7b, the figure of speech of כְּבוֹד וְעֹז is Hendiadys which is defined that “One of the two words expresses the thing, and the other... intensifies it by being changed (if a noun) into an adjective of the superlative degree, which is, by this means, made especially emphatic.”¹⁰⁹ In this sense, verse 7b can be translated as Ascribe to Yahweh “glory, yes—and *great* glory too.”¹¹⁰ This appropriately shows the poet's strong exhortation that all the nations have to ascribe Yahweh *great* glory.

¹⁰⁸Bullinger, *Figures of Speech used in The Bible*, 1-2.

¹⁰⁹Bullinger, *Figures of Speech used in The Bible*, 657.

5. Personification

ישמחו השמים	11a
ותגל הארץ	b
ירעם הים ומלאו:	c
יעלז שדי	12a
וכל אשר בו	b
אז ירננו כל עצי יער: לפני יהוה	c

The figure of speech of verses 11-12 is personification defined as “things represented as persons.”¹¹¹ In verse 10, the poet proclaims that “the world is firmly established and equity; it will be immovable”¹¹² because “Yahweh reigns.” There is no gods¹¹³ who can give the firmness and equity compared to Yahweh. Therefore, all creatures will rejoice the righteousness of Yahweh’s reign. Emphasizing that this is the universal event, the poet boldly exhorts that let the heavens, earth, sea, field, and all that is in it rejoice and glad. The above personification properly explains this point.

6. Anadiplosis

אז ירננו כל עצי יער: לפני יהוה	12c
כי בא	13a
כי בא	b
לשפט הארץ	c
ישפט תבל בצדק	d
ו[...]. עמים באמונתו:	e

¹¹⁰Bullinger, *Figures of Speech used in The Bible*, 660.

¹¹¹Bullinger, *Figures of Speech used in The Bible*, 861.

¹¹²See the translation above.

¹¹³With regard to the polemical meaning, refer to chapter two and the exegesis of Psalm 96 in chapter three.

Verses 13ab are anadiplosis which is defined as “the repetition of the same word or words at the end of one sentence and at the beginning of another.”¹¹⁴ As seen above, **לְפָנַי יְהוָה** is placed in verse 13a in MT. In verses 13a and 12c, two points are noted. First, **כִּי בָּא** is delimited in verse 13a. Second, **יְהוָה לְפָנַי יְהוָה** is delimited in verse 12c. The reason for the delimitations is that two **כִּי בָּא** as anadiplosis in verses 13ab have to be emphasized for the translation and expository perspective.¹¹⁵

In the translation side, **כִּי בָּא** is regarded as a participle (**בָּא**) which denotes “imminent action.”¹¹⁶ This importantly means that all the earth and the peoples who desire Yahweh’s reign should accept the urgent coming Yahweh and the reign of Yahweh in the present.¹¹⁷

In the expository side, **כִּי בָּא** can be considered as the eschatological¹¹⁸ perspective. Yahweh not only reigns the past and present but also will reign the future and forever over all the earth. Particularly, Yahweh’s reign is great and greatly glorious because He everlastingly will reign over all the earth and the peoples with His

¹¹⁴Bullinger, *Figures of Speech used in The Bible*, 251. In addition, verses 13ab is regarded as “duplication” as another figure of speech which emphasizes the coming of Yahweh. Refer to Bullinger, *Figures of Speech used in The Bible*, 189, 193.

¹¹⁵More importantly, Bullinger insightfully explains this point that “the words so repeated are thus emphasized as being the most important words in the sentence, which we are to mark and consider in translation and exposition.” See Bullinger, *Figures of Speech used in The Bible*, 251. With respect to Bullinger’s explanation and the delimitation, Watson assists that “Cohesive function (of anadiplosis); As with repetition in general, the terrace pattern (Watson alternatively defines the terrace pattern as anadiplosis) serves to link up components within a poem.” See Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry*, 209.

¹¹⁶Williams, *Hebrew Syntax An Outline*, 39.

¹¹⁷Refer to n. 8 in the translation section.

¹¹⁸Kraus, *Psalms 60-150*, 254.

righteousness (צִדְקָה) and faithfulness (אֱמוּנָה).¹¹⁹ Accordingly, anadiplosis above properly implies for these points.

7. Sorites

כִּי בָא	13a
כִּי בָא	b
לְשֵׁפֶט הָאָרֶץ	c
יִשְׁפֹּט תְּבֵל בְּצֶדֶק	d
וְ[...]. עַמִּים בְּאֱמוּנָתוֹ:	e

Sorites is defined that the meaning in the sentence gradually proceeds (step by step) to the climactic conclusion.¹²⁰ In verses 13a-13e, the meaning of Yahweh's reign is gradually developed. The righteous and faithful reign of Yahweh becomes climactic as from the earth to the world and even to the peoples. After all, Yahweh's reign encompasses all His creatures. In this respect, the above sorites appropriately play a role in the conclusion of Yahweh's reign in the Psalm.

SUMMARY

Psalm 96 begins with the intensive invitation that the poet boldly calls on all the earth. The characteristics of the invitation are specialized as the four verbs, בָּרַךְ, שִׁיר, בְּשִׁיר, and סִפֵּר. The meanings of the verbs can be condensed into two commandments that

¹¹⁹Refer to VanGemeren, *Psalms*, 623; Hossfeld and Zenger, *Psalm 2*, 466; Tate, *Psalms 51-100*, 515.

¹²⁰Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry*, 212-213.

all the earth praises and proclaims to Yahweh.¹²¹ Recognizing to praise Yahweh as a new song, we need to pay attention to the verb, בָּשַׁר. This verb that semantically means “proclaim” is closely associated with Yahweh’s salvation. All the earth has to proclaim the salvation with His glory and wonderful deed among the nations. In particular, this point implies that the proclamation is evangelical.¹²² Brueggemann insightfully applies this perspective to the Psalm on behalf of the verb, בָּשַׁר. That is, Brueggemann explains the evangelical proclamation in accordance with the polemical meaning in verses 4-5. He asserts as follows:

The gospel of Yahweh, which is to be sung and recounted among the nations, is that Yahweh is to be feared above all the gods. In Yahweh’s presence the other gods are deabsolutized and delegitimated... ‘the gods are idols’...empty of power and incapable of doing anything... Yahweh is the maker of the heavens...Yahweh can do something visible and decisive and is to be acknowledged to be a serious power in the world, from which the other gods derive whatever they claim of life.¹²³

Yahweh is the greatest One. Yahweh is overwhelmingly superior to the other gods because “they are idol.”¹²⁴ In relation to Psalm 29¹²⁵, Yahweh conquered against Canaanite deity Baal.¹²⁶ Baal is only an idol. Baal cannot control all the earth. Baal cannot do anything to all the peoples. On the contrary, Yahweh is the true God. Yahweh

¹²¹Stek, “Notes on Psalm 96,” in *NIV Study Bible*, 896.

¹²²As already mentioned above, Stek regards the evangelical point as “an OT anticipation of the world mission of the NT people of God (Matthew 28:16-20).” See Stek, “Notes on Psalm 96,” in *NIV Study Bible*, 896.

¹²³Brueggemann, *Israel’s Praise*, 33.

¹²⁴To emphasize the polemical meaning in the Psalm, the poet uses paronomasia. See the section of the phonetic devices above.

¹²⁵As looked over in chapter 2, in the polemical respect, Psalm 96 is closely associated with Psalm 29.

¹²⁶Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 249.

alone controls all the earth and all the people because He is the Creator¹²⁷. This important polemical perspective creates “the gospel of Yahweh.”¹²⁸ Thus the poet wholeheartedly exhorts all the earth to proclaim Yahweh’s gospel among the nations.

Furthermore, the poet again calls on all the peoples to ascribe Yahweh who is the subject of the proclamation “glory and strength.”¹²⁹ As verse 1-2, the verb, *כָּבֵד* in verses 7-8 is repeated three times as imperative. The imperatives are more intensive than that of verses 1-2.¹³⁰ This implies how the poet desires all the peoples to ascribe Yahweh “great glory.”¹³¹ His intention evidently denotes the fact that all the peoples enter into Yahweh’s court bringing an offering and worship Yahweh. Even the poet says, “tremble before Him, all the earth.”¹³²

At this point, Yahweh’s proclamation is attained to the culmination. All nations say, “Yahweh reigns!” Because Yahweh reigns the world is firmly established and all the peoples are judged by His equity. This crucial point means that when Yahweh’s reign is proclaimed, the effectiveness is influenced to right there.¹³³ In other words, when we

¹²⁷Psalm 96:5. Yahweh’s creation in connection with the polemical meaning is a common theme in Psalm 93, 96-99. See the thematic unity section above.

¹²⁸Brueggemann, *Israel’s Praise*, 33.

¹²⁹These words are hendiadys which emphasizes Yahweh’s great glory. See figures of speech section. Particularly, this point shows the poet’s strong intention for ascribing Yahweh glory.

¹³⁰Brueggemann, *Israel’s Praise*, 33.

¹³¹See figures of speech section.

¹³²Psalm 96:9, NASB.

¹³³Brueggemann clearly explains this point that “...It happened elsewhere, but its effectiveness is in the moment of its retelling. It is the moment of retelling that is the moment of dramatic actualization. When known, the victory of Yahweh over the other gods is received, affirmed, celebrated, acted upon....The reality of Yahweh’s new rule is effected in this moment when the news is asserted.” See Brueggemann, *Israel’s Praise*, 35-36.

proclaim Yahweh's reign elsewhere, at that moment, His reign will wonderfully actualize in our real life.¹³⁴

At that moment, the people come into the new world reigned by Yahweh.¹³⁵ More crucially, the people who receive the proclamation of Yahweh's reign will enjoy its blessings.¹³⁶ The poet grandly represents the heavenly enjoyment in virtue of "the personification."¹³⁷ What is more, the poet praises that the whole universe including the heavens, earth, sea, field, and trees of the forest will sing for joy on account of Yahweh's reign.

Now, the poet emphatically concludes that Yahweh is urgently coming and reigns over the world in the present.¹³⁸ Yahweh's reign will last in the future. Yahweh's righteous and faithful reign will be everlastingly.¹³⁹

If the truth is continuously evangelized (proclaimed) to the world, His people who believe in it will actually experience the blessings of Yahweh's reign.¹⁴⁰ Brueggemann concur with stating that "The pivotal point in Israel's liturgical life is the continued reassertion of the astonishing claim that the gods are defeated, Yahweh rules, and therefore the world can act out its true character as God's creation."¹⁴¹

¹³⁴Brueggemann, *Israel's Praise*, 36.

¹³⁵Brueggemann, *Israel's Praise*, 37.

¹³⁶Brueggemann, *Israel's Praise*, 37-38.

¹³⁷In connection with the personification, note the translation as jussive. See n. 7 and n. 73 above.

¹³⁸See n. 8 and the explanation of the anadiplosis above.

¹³⁹In regard to the eschatological perspective, see Kraus, *Psalms 60-150*, 254.

¹⁴⁰As mentioned above, this is associated with "a new orientation" based on Brueggemann's classification of Psalm 96. See Brueggemann, *The Message of the Psalms*, 19, 140, 144-146.

¹⁴¹Brueggemann, *Israel's Praise*, 38.

CHAPTER 4

THE SERMONIC APPLICATION FOR THE LORD'S REIGN

NOTES FOR APPLICATION

As examined in the previous chapters, all the peoples as well as all creatures live under the Lord's reign. Notably, the Psalms of the Lord's reign appropriately represent this point.¹ In light of the theological perspective for the Lord's reign, people's lives are profoundly associated with the liturgical and devotional sides.² In other words, the responses of people to the Lord's reign have the liturgical³ and devotional sides.

People's lives are the repetition of liturgy and devotion. For example, when a person wakes up in the morning, he begins with a prayer to God (devotion). He goes to his daily work place such as school, church, and company. At that place he meets with many people and participates in some meetings and events (liturgy). Sometimes he is invited to a birthday party, wedding and funeral ceremony (liturgy). At church, he attends the dawn prayer meeting, Wednesday service, the Lord's Day service, the Easter day service, and Christmas service (liturgy). In addition, he studies the Bible and prays for his neighbor, church, and the Kingdom of God (devotion). The liturgy and devotion fill his

¹With respect to this, Stek defines the whole theme of the Psalter as "instruction in the godly life under the reign of God" in his "significant arrangement of the Psalter." See Stek, "Notes on Introduction," in *NIV Study Bible*, 784. Stek's definition provides an insight for recognizing the importance of the Lord's reign in the Psalms as well as the whole Psalter.

²Mays, "The Language of the Reign of God," 124 and Mays, *The Lord Reigns*, ix.

³In this thesis, "liturgy" includes worship as well as all broaden liturgical sides in the people's life.

yearly calendar. Accordingly, it is not an exaggerative thought that people's lives can be defined as the continuity of the liturgical and devotional sides under the theological side.

As seen above, liturgy and devotion cannot be separated from each other. More importantly, these are inseparably linked to the theological life. That is, the Lord's reign as the theological side deeply influences to people's liturgical and devotional life. If a person accepts the Lord's reign, he can apply it to his liturgical life and also reflect it to his personal devotion. In a word, the theological, liturgical, and devotional sides are combined within the life reflecting the Lord's reign.

In this chapter, the author will suggest the main ideas based on the above viewpoint. The way will be that if a theological main idea is defined from the text of the Psalm, the liturgical and devotional ideas are simultaneously defined in accordance with the theological main idea.⁴ That is, the liturgical and devotional ideas are subordinate to the theological ones. This means that the theological meaning for the Lord's reign directly applies to people's real life liturgically and devotionally. One example is as follows.

⁴See introduction and n. 15 in chapter one.

Figure 10. The Main Ideas from the Text of Psalm 96



In the next section, this thesis will first select the main ideas⁵ of Psalm 96 based on its exegesis dealt in chapter three. Then, it will suggest “the practice of the sermon” for Psalm 96. The practice of the sermon will include several elements such as “the title of the sermon, the theme of the sermon, the thematic verse (clause) of the sermon, the purpose of the sermon, introduction, the theological main ideas and the liturgical and devotional ideas, and conclusion.”⁶

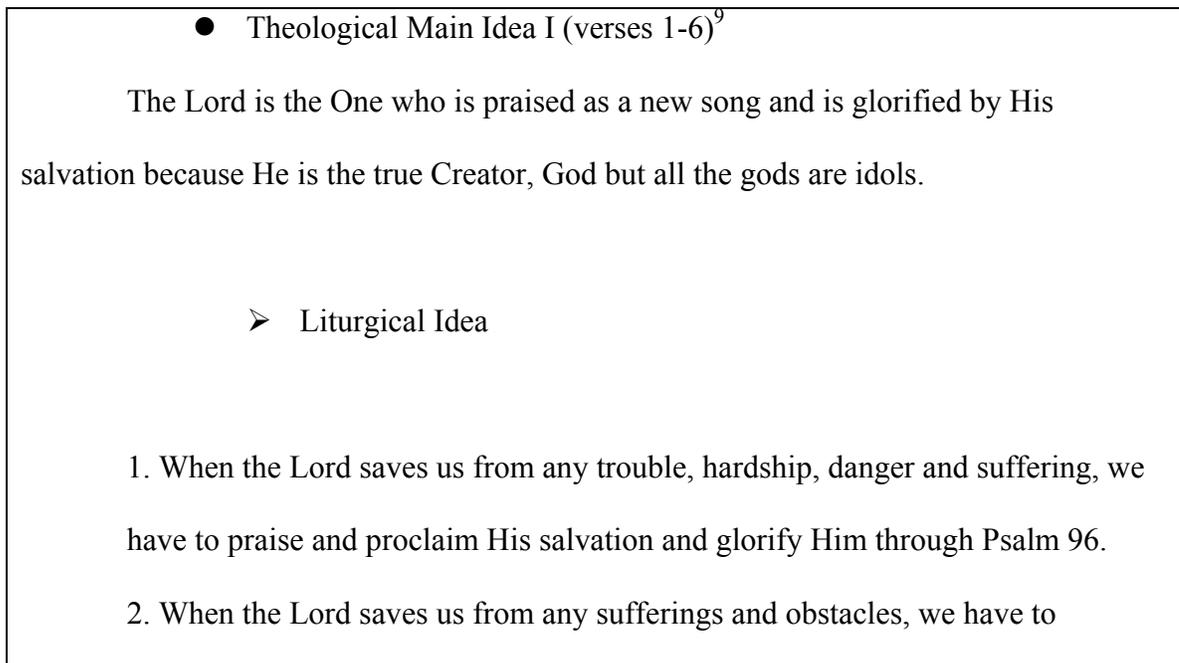
⁵Haddon W. Robinson and my professor, David Chung upholds the necessity of the main idea based on the text preached. Robinson says “...You have identified your text. Through your exegesis, you have determined the main idea of the passage and researched its characters and setting.” See Haddon W. Robinson and Torrey W. Robinson, *It's All in How You Tell it* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2003), 49. In agreement with Robbins’ perspective, Chung selects the main ideas underlying the exegesis of Philippians 1:3-11. Then, Chung applies the main ideas to the sermon through “the homiletical outline.” See David Chung, “Paul’s Pastoral Prayer in Philippians 1:9-11: An Application to Today’s Ministry” (D.Min. diss., Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary, 2001).

⁶The detail will be provided in the following sections.

Considerably, pastors and preachers can apply the Psalms to the way based on the exegesis and the practice of the sermon from Psalm 96. We have already seen the reason in the previous chapters.⁷ This perspective widely opens a significant possibility that the Psalms of the Lord's reign can be preached in terms of the theological, liturgical, and devotional sides reflected by our real life contexts.

THE THEOLOGICAL MAIN IDEA I OF PSALM 96
(THE LITURGICAL AND DEVOTIONAL IDEA I)⁸

Figure 11. The Main Ideas I



⁷For the reminder, refer to Bruggemann's summary that "The other explicit songs of enthronement (Psalms 47, 93, 97, 98, 99) can be dealt with in more summary fashion because they articulate the same themes we have seen in Psalm 96." See Bruggemann, *The Message of the Psalms*, 146.

⁸As mentioned above, the theological main idea I includes the liturgical and devotional ideas. That is, the theological, liturgical, and devotional main ideas are one set.

⁹With regard to this division, refer to the structure and clausal flow chart of Psalm 96 in chapter three. In detail, verses 4-6 are the reason why all the earth praises the Lord. These verses are subordinated to verses 1-3.

particularly proclaim the true fact that the Lord can only do this salvation compared to all other gods to in our family worship, public service and social meeting.

➤ Devotional Idea

1. We have to enumeratively remember the Lord's salvation and praise the salvation as a new song every day in our Quiet Time and life.
2. We have to deeply-experientially believe in the Lord who is the true Creator, God but all other gods are idols and prove and proclaim this fact in our real life context.

Theologically, the poet calls on an addressee in order to deliver the profound meaning of the Lord's reign. The addressee is "all the earth" as appeared in verses 1, 9, 11, and 13. All the earth means not only all Israelites but also the whole world. The reason why all the earth means the whole world is that the Lord's reign will cover the cosmic world.¹⁰ Presumably, the poet seems to call on current Christians who wholeheartedly do not believe in the Lord or tends to incline to futile idols or who are struggling with any hardship, trouble, and affliction. To illustrate, the poet calls on them exhorting "Gather yourselves and come; Draw near together, you fugitives of the nations; they have no knowledge, who carry about their wooden idol and pray to a god who

¹⁰McCann, *The Book of Psalms*, 1065.

cannot save.”¹¹ And the poet rousingly calls on them, “Thus says the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel and its Holy One, to the despised one, to the one abhorred by the nations, to the servants of rulers...Because of the Lord who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel who has chosen you.”¹²

In the contextual background, the poet intensely invites all the earth to sing to the Lord a new song. Strikingly, the poet repeats the sentence that sings to the Lord a new song¹³ three times. Even the six imperatives in verses 1-3 show the emphasis of the invitation.¹⁴

The poet’s intention is that all Christians arise from the sinful world and instead sing, bless, proclaim, and declare His name, salvation, and glory every single day. In particular, we do not miss the verb, “proclaim (בְּשֵׁר).” As בְּשֵׁר connotes “evangelical sense,”¹⁵ this verb is closely associated with the Lord’s salvation and wonderful deeds mentioned in verses 2-3. The Lord’s salvation not only “reminds exodus as the salvation of Israel”¹⁶ but also is reminiscent of His wonderful saving deeds for Israel as His people in Psalm 78.¹⁷ The psalmist recites the Lord’s wonderful saving works as follows:

¹¹Isaiah 45:20, NASB. In reference, VanGemeren suggests a probability that the polemical meaning against idols in the context of Psalm 96 is similar to the polemical context in Isaiah 45:20. See VanGemeren, *Psalms*, 620.

¹²Isaiah 49:7, NASB.

¹³McCann insightfully relates “the new song” to “the song that Moses, Miriam, and the people sang after deliverance from Egypt (Exodus 15:1-21).” This shows that the new song in verses 1-2 is deeply associated with the Lord’s salvation and wonderful deeds for Israel’s deliverance. See McCann, *The Book of Psalms*, 1065.

¹⁴Refer to Tate, *Psalms 51-100*, 512.

¹⁵Mays, *Psalms*, 308.

¹⁶McCann, *The Book of Psalms*, 1065.

¹⁷VanGemeren, *Psalms*, 620.

He wrought wonders before their fathers in the land of Egypt, in the field of Zoan. He divided the sea and caused them to pass through, and He made the waters stand up like a heap. Then He led them with the cloud by day and all the night with a light of fire. He split the rocks in the wilderness and gave them abundant drink like the ocean depths. He brought forth streams also from the rock and caused waters to run down like rivers... When He rained meat upon them like the dust, even winged fowl like the sand of the seas, Then He let them fall in the midst of their camp, round about their dwellings. So they ate and were well filled....¹⁸

Truly, the Lord's saving works are supernatural and incredible. Because of what the Lord wrought for His own people, His people have a holy responsibility to proclaim the salvation "from day to day"¹⁹.

As a result, the poet strongly exhorts His people to sing to the Lord a new song proclaiming His wonderful saving works from here to there, from east to west, and from south to north. At this point, the Lord will be glorified by the praise and salvation.

The poet obviously demonstrates why the Lord is praised as a new song and glorified by His wonderful salvation in the following verses 4-6.²⁰ More importantly, these verses state the "polemical meaning."²¹ The poet boldly casts a question of who really is the true God who reigns over all creatures on behalf of righteousness and equity in the world.²² On account of the poet's polemical question, the world is stirred up theologically.

¹⁸Psalm 78:12-29, NASB.

¹⁹Psalm 96:2.

²⁰VanGemeren, *Psalms*, 621.

²¹Psalm 29 is the theological background for the polemical meaning in Psalm 96. See chapter two and three.

²²Keel illustrates iconographies to help for understanding the polemical meaning of the verses based on the background of Ancient Near East. Keel explains that "the polemic against the service of idols was probably instrumental in wholly depotentizing heathen gods and in declaring them 'things of nought'." See Keel, *The Symbolism of the Biblical World*, 236. In addition, refer to Keel, *The Symbolism of the Biblical World*, 310.

For this purpose, the poet highlights why Yahweh is the only true God who deserves to receive the praise and glorification through the verses emphasized by two **וְ** conjunctions.²³ That is, the poet exhorts that all the earth has to praise the Lord as a new song *because* (**וְ**) “great is the Lord and greatly to be praised, He is to be feared above all gods.”²⁴ The poet polemically proclaims that all the earth has to declare the Lord’s wonderful salvation *because* (**וְ**) “all the gods of the peoples are idols but the Lord made the heavens”²⁵. Splendor and majesty are before Him, Strength and beauty are in His sanctuary.”²⁶

Consequently, in verses 1-6, the poet theologically testifies Yahweh is the true Creator God who is praised and glorified by a new song and His salvation compared to all other gods.

All Christians can experience the Lord’s wonderful saving works. In fact, they are experiencing the Lord’s salvation in their real life. When the Lord saves them from any trouble, hardship, danger, suffering, and problems, they have to praise and proclaim His salvation through Psalm 96.

To illustrate, the author knows a person who has experienced the Lord’s wonderful salvation. He is an international student in America. When he was preparing to study in America, he was praying for help from God because he did not have the sufficient money for an airplane ticket, repayment for his debt, settlement costs, getting a

²³See the clausal flow chart in chapter three.

²⁴Psalm 96:4, NASB.

²⁵With respect to the poet’s emphasis for the polemical meaning, see the number of C of “the noticeable poetic devices” in chapter three.

²⁶Psalm 96:5-6, NASB.

car, deposit for his apartment, and tuition. However, a wonderful thing happened. His elder sister was a public employee. She saved a part of her salary in a savings account for two and half years. In South Korea, the salary of public employee is not at a high level. In this sense, her saving account, which she had earnestly saved, was similar to Mary's expensive perfume²⁷ to him.

When he was seriously concerned about the money, she willingly canceled the savings account. In the general bank policy in South Korea, if a person cancels his or her savings account before the contracted day in which he or she is supposed to receive the money from the bank, he or she will meet with a big loss of the expected high interest. It is a rare occurrence for a person to cancel the saving account before the contract day in South Korea.

Even though his elder sister knew this fact, she canceled her precious treasure for her own brother. Through her sacrifice, he could get to America with his wife and two sons in order to study.

A couple of years after, he testified to the Lord's wonderful saving work during a Sunday worship service in a Korean church located in McLean, Virginia. In particular, he testified with the saving gratitude on behalf of the text of Psalm 96.

Liturgically, his testimony connotes important meanings. First, his testimony in the worship opens a possibility of using Psalm 96 as a liturgical purpose to proclaim the Lord's wonderful saving work.²⁸ Second, when he testified in the Sunday worship service

²⁷John 12:1-8.

²⁸Hosffeld and Zenger regard 1 Chronicles 16:23-33 as an obvious example for the liturgical use of Psalm 96. See Hosffeld and Zenger, *Psalm 2*, 467. This means when believers experience the Lord's saving works, they can use Psalm 96 as a liturgical reason just as David thanked God for placing the ark of God in Jerusalem through Psalm 96 written in 1 Chronicles 16:23-33. In terms of the preaching side, Thomas G. Long assists the liturgical use of Psalms. He says that "there is no good reason, though, why the

that only the Lord can do the wonderful saving work compared to other gods who cannot do this, not only the testimony glorifies the Lord's name²⁹ in terms of the polemical perspective³⁰ but also if the congregation accepts his testimony, they participate in the wonderful saving gratitude. Brueggemann insightfully points out this point as follows:

The liturgy is the work of the liberated people, articulating and receiving a new world for those nearly destroyed by the old world. The liturgy is for the ones who for so long seem to have lost, but hope and care and wait. Now 'their time has come.' Their joy is beyond bounds, needing words, but beyond words. Their joy is full and it must be brought to celebrative speech.³¹

The poet particularly emphasizes that people have to receive the Lord's wonderful saving works which people have already experienced and proclaimed³² so that they can enter into the Lord's saving power and reign. This point is closely associated with the Lord's reign in verse 10.

As he testified, it is worthwhile for us to prove and proclaim the Lord's wonderful works. The worthy works have to be proclaimed at every moment that the Lord does His incredible saving power for us. When the salvation is proclaimed through our mouth, the Lord's saving power actualizes at the moment and at that place.³³

psalms cannot be sung and preached...the rich theological texture of the psalms justifies their liturgical use as sermon texts as well as musical texts. To do so enables singing and preaching to become mutually reinforcing activities in worship." See Thomas G. Long, *Preaching and the Literary Forms of the Bible* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1989), 43-44. In this sense, the fact that he used the text of Psalm 96 in his testimony, it seems to be appropriate for the liturgical purpose.

²⁹Psalm 96:2.

³⁰See chapter two and Psalm 96:4-6.

³¹Brueggemann, *Israel's Praise*, 37-38.

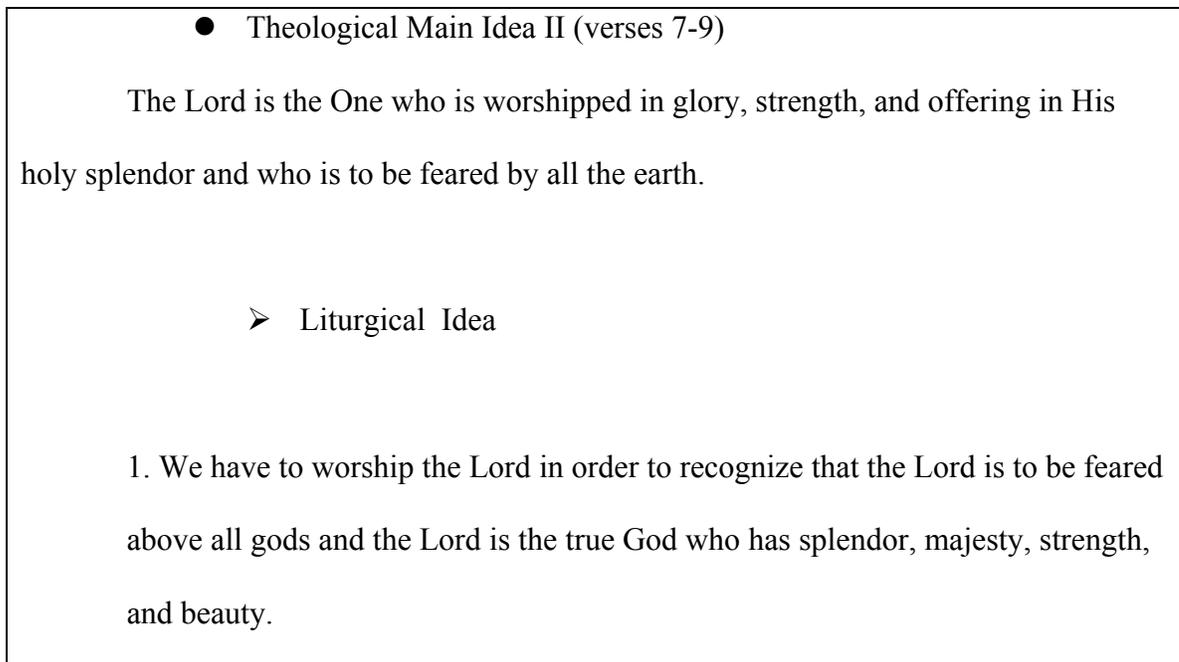
³²Psalm 96:1-3.

³³In regard to this point, Brueggemann says that "it happened elsewhere, but its effectiveness is in the moment of its retelling. It is the moment of retelling that is the moment of dramatic actualization." See Brueggemann, *Israel's Praise*, 35.

Devotionally, the proclamation is our holy mission as if the poet intensely commands it in verses 1-3. Every day we are to remember the Lord's wonderful saving works and praise Him as a new song in the context of our Quiet Time and life. Furthermore, we boldly-polemically proclaim that only the Lord can do this but other gods cannot do this. The more we devotionally praise and proclaim the Lord's saving power, the more we will deeply experience that our Lord is the true Creator, God, and that other gods are only idols.³⁴ If we devotionally apply this point to our life every day, we can obtain a great spiritual benefit³⁵ from the text of Psalm 96.

THE THEOLOGICAL MAIN IDEA II OF PSALM 96
(THE LITURGICAL AND DEVOTIONAL IDEA II)

Figure 12. The Main Ideas II



³⁴Childs, *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture*, 523.

³⁵Childs, *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture*, 523.

2. We have to particularly worship and ascribe to the Lord glory in our special ceremonies such as birthday, wedding, funeral service, special wedding anniversary, and the 60th anniversary of one's birth³⁶.

➤ Devotional Idea

1. We have to devotionally discipline our devotional life of ourselves so that we always worship and ascribe to the Lord His glory and strength and our sacrifice.
2. We have to be devotionally disciplined ourselves to keep the spiritual competency so that we are able to worship and ascribe to the Lord glory at the important times of our life.

Theologically, verses 7-9 reflect Psalm 29: 1-2.³⁷ The poet of Psalm 29 polemically proves that the Lord conquered the Canaanite deity Baal and is enthroned as the King of kings.³⁸ The Lord controls and provides storm and rain to all the earth³⁹ but Baal cannot do this.⁴⁰ And the poet of Psalm 96 praises that the Lord is the One who created the heaven in Psalm 96:5. The Lord is “the Lord of History because He makes

³⁶In South Korea, the special anniversary birth day is a personal big ceremony. In general, many people invited are gathered to celebrate his or her 60th birth day to the peculiar appointed place.

³⁷See McCann, *The Book of Psalms*, 1066-1067; Brueggemann, *The Message of the Psalms*, 144.

³⁸Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 248-249. Refer to Psalm 29:10-11.

³⁹Psalm 96:1, 9, 11, 13.

⁴⁰For this, Craigie defines that “Yahweh is the Lord of Nature.” See *Psalms 1-50*, 249.

Baal and any chaotic forces⁴¹ inanimate.”⁴² And the poet praises that “For great is Yahweh and greatly to be praised; He is to be feared above all gods. For all the gods of the peoples are idols.”⁴³

The enthroned and glorified Lord’s strength is enough to overcome all gods like Baal. His invincible power penalizes the wicked and disobedient ones. The Lord’s strength is wonderfully powerful and deserves to be glorified. And all creatures cry out in His temple, “Glory!”⁴⁴

“Glory!...Glory!...The Lord’s Glory!...” At the culminating moment, the poet convincingly commands all creatures to ascribe the Lord the glory and strength just as “Ascribe to the Lord, O families of the people, Ascribe to the Lord glory and strength. Ascribe to the Lord the glory of His name.”⁴⁵

Furthermore, the poet exhorts all the people to worship the Lord. All the people come into His temple (courts) and have to worship the Lord by bringing their offerings.⁴⁶ Importantly, they have to bow down to the Lord because of His majestic glory and

⁴¹In regard to “the chaotic forces” in relation to Psalm 29:10, Craigie polemically defines that “It is the Lord, not Baal, who is enthroned victoriously ‘over the flood,’ which symbolizes the subjugation of chaotic forces.” Based on this, Craigie explains why Yahweh is the Lord of History that “...then we perceive that the genius of the poet goes beyond his depiction of God as the Lord of Nature. The ultimate praise of God is praise for his gift of victory, a gift given by virtue of his strength as Lord of History. God was sovereign in the realms both of history and of nature, and the two realms could not be easily separated.” See Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 248-249.

⁴²Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 248-249.

⁴³Psalm 96:4-5, NASB.

⁴⁴Psalm 29:9.

⁴⁵Psalm 96:7-8, NASB.

⁴⁶With respect to this, Keel explains through the iconographies that Yahweh is the King and is enthroned in His temple as the holy One. See Keel, *The Symbolism of the Biblical World*, 174, 303. To help the understanding, see Keel’s iconography in page 174.

incredible strength. After all, the poet envisions that all the earth⁴⁷ over all the peoples is tremble and worships the Lord in His holy splendor.⁴⁸

Liturgically, we usually have several special ceremonies in our life. We should particularly worship and ascribe the Lord glory at those times. For example, one of the most important ceremonies in South Korea is the 60th anniversary of one's birth. When a man has his 60th birthday, many people gather to celebrate his special birthday ceremony. He prepares various Korean traditional foods and they give him their special gifts congratulating him that he has been healthy for sixty years.

According to Korean custom, the culminating time of the ceremony is that he briefly introduces his life and then he and his family and the invited guests enjoy the food and share the conversations. After that, they greet one another and are dismissed. In a believers' case, it is not largely different from the traditional custom.

However, believers who trust in the Lord particularly have to worship the Lord at the ceremony. Believers should testify that the Lord has faithfully led them for sixty years in virtue of His wonderful glory and strength.⁴⁹

Regardless of whether the invited guests are believers or not, they boldly praise the Lord's glory and strength with Psalm 96 in front of them as if "all peoples who are gathered in this place ascribe the Lord glory and strength and let us worship the Lord because He is the true God but all other gods are idols."⁵⁰

⁴⁷All the earth is importantly associated with "all the earth" in verse 1 in terms of the poet's addressee.

⁴⁸Psalm 96:9.

⁴⁹Psalm 96:7-9.

⁵⁰Psalm 96:4-5, 7-9.

In fact, the 60th anniversary of one's birth has been influenced by Chinese culture which is totally different from Christian culture. In other words, it is a challengeable chance for believers to be able to testify that the Lord is true God but other gods are idols to the people. In more detail, believers can polemically⁵¹ prove that only the Lord can lead them in His glory and strength compared to other gods. At this point, the Lord's salvation and strength are proclaimed⁵² and the Lord is glorified before all the invited people and his family.

As in an example, we have to devotionally discipline our real life so as to worship and ascribe the Lord His glory. As mentioned above, our life is the continuity of devotion and liturgy. In this life context, we have to keep our spiritual competency so that we may glorify the Lord through worship and ascribing Him His strength and our sacrifice at the important time of our life.

In particular, we do not have to forget our holy responsibility for praising, worshipping, and testifying the Lord's glory and strength through the Psalter like Psalms 29 and 96. This is the very reason why Psalm 96 is given to us. Childs appropriately points out this point as follows:

It was not only a record of the past, but a living voice speaking to the present human suffering. By taking seriously the canonical shape the reader is given an invaluable resource for the care of souls, as the synagogue and church have always understood the Psalter to be.⁵³

⁵¹Psalm 29:1-2; Psalm 96:4-9.

⁵²Psalm 96:1-3.

⁵³Childs, *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture*, 523.

THE THEOLOGICAL MAIN IDEA III OF PSALM 96
(THE LITURGICAL AND DEVOTIONAL IDEA III)

Figure 13. The Main Ideas III

● Theological Main Idea III (verses 10-13)

The Lord is the One who reigns over the world and all creatures.

1. Because the Lord reigns the world is established and the people are judged with equity.
2. Because the Lord reigns all creatures will rejoice and sing for joy.
3. Because the Lord comes to reign the earth the world and the people are judged in His righteousness and faithfulness.

➤ Liturgical Idea III

1. We have to testify and proclaim the Lord's reign in the contexts of family, church, social and national dimensions.
2. We have to particularly testify and proclaim the Lord's reign at the important liturgies such as the Lent, Palm Sunday and Resurrection day, Christmas, and Korean-Independence day.

➤ Devotional Idea III

1. We have to devotionally discipline our spirituality through experiencing the

Lord's reign over us with His equity, righteousness, and faithfulness.

2. We have to devotionally discipline that our mouth always testifies and proclaims the Lord's reign in any situation.

All the earth praises the Lord as a new song and proclaims His wonderful salvation and glory. The glorified Lord is the greatest One compared to all other gods. The Lord is the true Creator, God who made the heaven and earth. The Lord alone can control all creatures but all other gods are only idols because they cannot make and control the heaven and earth. All the earth praises the Lord based on this fact.

In particular, all the people ascribe the glorious and true God, Yahweh His majestic glory, powerful strength, and their offerings. At this moment, the glory is connected to the worship to the Lord. In other words, all the earth fearfully worships the Lord who has already conquered all other gods like Baal⁵⁴ and is holy and glorified.

When the Lord is praised, worshipped, and glorified, all the nations say, "The Lord reigns!"⁵⁵ The wonderful proclamation is not only "the theological center of the Psalter"⁵⁶ but also the main theme of Psalm 96.⁵⁷

The result of the Lord's reign is that "the world is firmly established and it will not be moved"⁵⁸ and all the people will be judged with His equity. Because the Lord's

⁵⁴Psalm 29:1-2, 10-11; Psalm 96:7-9. See Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 248-249.

⁵⁵In this regard, Kraus insightfully explains that "...the formula יהוה ימלך ("Yahweh reigns") has a polemical and confessional ring, so that the sentence should be translated with the emphasis on Yahweh." See Hans-Joachim Kraus, *Theology of the Psalms* (trans. Keith Crim; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), 87. Kraus' polemical and confessional perspective appropriately reflects the theological meaning of verses 1-9.

⁵⁶Mays, *The Lord Reigns*, 22.

⁵⁷See Stek, "Notes on the Psalm 96" in *NIV Study Bible*, 896.

reign is “righteousness and equity”⁵⁹ all creatures such as the heaven, earth, sea, field, and all the trees of the forest will not only anticipate the heavenly hope⁶⁰ passing through the world, which gradually becomes wicked but also will rejoice and sing for joy.

The Lord comes to reign the earth urgently⁶¹ and eschatologically⁶². The Lord urgently comes to reign any areas where the Lord’s reign is proclaimed by our believing mouth. The Lord’s reign will be continuous until the end of the day. Because characteristics of His reign are righteous, equitable, and faithful all the earth and peoples will be blessed. The eschatological affirmation for the eternity of the Lord’s reign is revealed in the personality of Jesus Christ. Jesus was slain as the Lamb on the cross and rose again after three days. On account of the glorious triumph, Jesus was enthroned on the heavenly throne. The enthroned Jesus is praised by all creatures as a new song.⁶³

The new song echoes the glorious proclamation that “Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns! Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him.”⁶⁴ As the reflection of Psalm 96:11-12, all creatures will be blessed because of Jesus’ righteous

⁵⁸Psalm 96:10, NASB.

⁵⁹Keel properly illustrates an iconography of Yahweh’s righteousness (justice). Keel says that “He is the ‘judge of the earth’ (Ps 94:2), whose function it is to establish justice for all the nations of the earth (Ps 82:8; 96:13; 98:9).” With the iconography, see Keel, *The Symbolism of the Biblical World*, 208.

⁶⁰Brueggemann, *The Message of the Psalms*, 145.

⁶¹See n. 8 in chapter three.

⁶²McCann, *The Book of Psalms*, 1066-1067; Kraus, *Psalms 60-150*, 254.

⁶³Revelation 5:8-10. In relation to see Psalm 96:1-3.

⁶⁴Revelation 19:6-7, NASB.

and faithful reign.⁶⁵ No other gods polemically compare to Jesus' reign⁶⁶ and His reign is forever and ever.⁶⁷

Liturgically, we will always meet with various problems and confusions from the secular world in our life contexts. In this environment, the proclamation that the Lord reigns over us is the living life news like the gospel⁶⁸. If we accept the poet's invitation, we enter into the world that the Lord reigns.⁶⁹ One of the results for the Lord's reign is that injustice, unfairness, and wickedness that we have undergone in our lives will be transformed because the Lord's reign is righteous, equitable, and faithful.⁷⁰

Many of the results like above example can be created in our real life once we testify and proclaim "the poet's precious language legacy"⁷¹ that "the Lord reigns!" In this sense, Brueggemann's assertion provides us with a good understanding for the liturgical use of the Psalm. He states "Such a Psalm is always an act of profound hope, for such a realm has clearly not been established simply by the use of Psalm. But liturgical use of the Psalm is more than hope."⁷²

⁶⁵Psalm 96:13; Mays, *Psalms*, 310.

⁶⁶Ibid., 310; Psalm 96:4-6.

⁶⁷Revelation 11:15.

⁶⁸Mays, *Psalms*, 310; McCann, *The Book of Psalms*, 1065; Brueggemann, *Israel's Praise*, 33.

⁶⁹McCann, *The Book of Psalms*, 1067.

⁷⁰McCann, *The Book of Psalms*, 1067.

⁷¹Mays, "The Language of the Reign of God," 117-118; 123-124.

⁷²Brueggemann, *The Message of the Psalms*, 145.

If we believe “the Lord reigns,” the Lord’s strength will defeat any enemies.⁷³ If we testify “the Lord reigns,” the Lord will save His people from the wicked.⁷⁴ If we boldly proclaim “the Lord reigns,” the Lord will answer His people’s plead and do His just and equitable will for them.⁷⁵ As such when the Psalm is liturgically used by us in our liturgical life contexts, our hope will attain to the dimension of that “more than hope.”⁷⁶

For example, one of the most important Korean memorial days is “the Glorious Restoration Day.”⁷⁷ Since Japan violently joined Korea to its own nation in 1910, they severely oppressed Korean people. For example, they burnt Korean history, suppressed Korean language and traditional culture. They forcefully recruited younger teen agers for their war and wickedly entrained Korean good women, called “comfort women,” for their military men. They even put Korean people into “experimental rooms” to test their biochemical weapons on them.

Moreover, they aggressively persecuted Korean churches and Christians. The main reason why they persecuted them was because they restricted worship at “Japanese Shrines.” They tortured Korean churches and Christians with terrible instruments of torture and even burned the churches of Jesus Christ. All Christians and churches prayed and pleaded for the salvation of Korea and Jesus’ churches to the Lord. However, the Japanese government planned to kill and remove all Korean Christians and Jesus’ church.

⁷³Psalm 93:3-4.

⁷⁴Psalm 97:10-12.

⁷⁵Psalm 99:4-9.

⁷⁶Brueggemann, *The Message of the Psalms*, 145.

⁷⁷Annually, all Koreans celebrate for the day on August 15th.

In the midst of the urgent national crisis, the Lord answered our petition and subdued Japan by having them surrender to a national ally. More importantly, the Lord saved His churches and people from the Japan's persecutions and oppressions.

Accordingly, in "Glorious Independence Day," the Korean churches and Christians have to testify and proclaim the historical fact that Korea is able to be independent from Japan because the Lord reigned! In particular, they have to proclaim the glorious testimony through the text of Psalm 96 as if "Sing to the Lord a new song...proclaim His wonderful saving deeds for us...all the gods of the people are idols but the Lord who is the true God saved our country and churches...Ascribe to the Lord His glory and strength...worship to the glorified Lord...the Lord reigns over all the earth with His righteousness and equity."⁷⁸

The wonderful proclamation and praise by our believing mouth will lead us to look upon the heavenly hope which means "more than hope."⁷⁹ Crucially, the heavenly hope is from the testimony and proclamation of the Lord's reign. This is the very reason why we use the Psalm in our real life contexts in terms of the liturgical purpose.

For another example, Psalm 96 can be used for church liturgies such as the Lent, Palm Sunday and Resurrection day, and Christmas⁸⁰. In fact, the Korean church rarely uses Psalm 96 for the important liturgies.

⁷⁸Psalm 96:1-13, NASB.

⁷⁹Brueggemann, *The Message of the Psalms*, 145.

⁸⁰With respect to the liturgical use of Psalm 96, McCann says that "Psalm 96 is also traditionally used on Christmas Day." McCann, *The Book of Psalms*, 1067. To better understand, the liturgical use of Psalms in church history, William L. Holladay explains how Psalms liturgically use in Christian worship such as the Lent, Easter, and Christmas. See William L. Holladay, *The Psalms through Three Thousand Years: Prayer Book of a Cloud of Witness* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), 165-168. In addition, refer to Mays, *Psalms*, 309-310; Brueggemann, *The Message of the Psalms*, 144-145.

For instance, during the Christmas season, most of the people, stores, and even churches enjoyably sing Christmas carols. However, they scarcely sing Psalms like Psalm 96. At Christmas, His churches sing that all the earth and peoples have to celebrate Jesus Christ who comes as the King of king and Savior. Likewise, the poet commands that all the earth, nations, and peoples be glad, rejoice, and sing for joy because the Lord reigns.⁸¹

This liturgical use of the Psalm will make to efficiently deliver the gospel that Jesus comes to the earth as the only Savior and reigns over the whole universe. This point also opens a possibility that Psalms can be used for other important church liturgies such as Lent, Palm Sunday and Easter Day.⁸²

In this sense, we devotionally have to accept and believe in “the Lord’s reign” in our daily life. We have to testify and proclaim the Lord’s reign in any situations. Specifically, we have to proclaim the Lord’s reign in our liturgical contexts through our believing mouth. For this purpose, we ought to discipline our spirituality whenever we convincingly testify and proclaim in our family, church, working place, social and national context.

The poet’s conviction is that when we proclaim the Lord’s reign through our mouths, we will be spiritually matured in virtue of experiencing that the Lord reigns over us with His equity, righteousness, and faithfulness.⁸³

Consequently, the poet motivates us to devotionally discipline our belief so that we will always live under the Lord’s reign and be blessed by His righteous and faithful

⁸¹Brueggemann, *The Message of the Psalms*, 145.

⁸²Holladay, *The Psalms through Three Thousand Years*, 165-168.

⁸³Childs, *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture*, 523.

reign. It is evident that this becomes our holy responsibility over the poet's commandment.

THE PRACTICE OF THE SERMON FOR PSALM 96

Until now, we have looked over the theological, liturgical, and devotional main ideas based on the exegesis of Psalm 96. In this section, this thesis will suggest the practice of the sermon for Psalm 96.

Figure 14. The Practice of the Sermon for Psalm 96

⁸⁴***The Title of the Sermon:*** The Lord reigns!

The Theme of the Sermon⁸⁵: We have to proclaim that the Lord reigns over the world and peoples with His righteousness, equity, and faithfulness.

The Thematic Verses (Clause) of the Sermon⁸⁶: "Say among the nations, 'The Lord reigns....(verses 10-13)'"

The Purpose of the Sermon⁸⁷: In our real life areas, we need to realize that when we proclaim and testify the Lord's reign in terms of the theological, liturgical, and devotional dimension, we are blessed by experiencing the Lord's reign.

⁸⁴To understand the form of this sermon practice for Psalm 96, consult Ramesh Richard's sermon structure. This is composed of "title of sermon, Bible text, introduction, body (main sections and sub-sections), and conclusion." See Ramesh Richard, *Preaching Expository Sermons: A Seven-Step Method for Biblical Preaching* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1995), 96-98.

⁸⁵Griedanus defines it that "the theme of the sermon is a summary statement of the unifying thought of the sermon...the sermon's theme is not a subject or topic but an assertion; it seeks to articulate the message of the sermon in one short sentence." See Greidanus, *The Modern Preacher and the Ancient Text*, 136. In regard to the perspective that the theme of the sermon has to be related to both the text and the audience, Robinson's assertion is insightful. Robinson defines it as "homiletical idea-the statement of a biblical concept in such a way that it accurately reflects the Bible and meaningfully relates to the congregation." See Robinson, *Biblical Preaching*, 97.

⁸⁶This reflects the important verse (or clause) associated with the theme of the sermon. Refer to Walter C. Kaiser Jr. *Preaching and Teaching from the Old Testament: A Guide for the Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 55.

⁸⁷As we have already seen in chapter one, Greidanus focuses on the interpretation and sermon of the text. Based on this, the meaning of the purpose of the sermon is why the text is preached in the context

Introduction

⁸⁸The Theological Main Idea I of Psalm 96 (The Liturgical and Devotional Idea I)⁸⁹

- Theological Main Idea I (verses 1-6)

⁹⁰***The Lord is the One who is*** praised as a new song and is glorified by His salvation

- Liturgical Idea

1. ⁹¹***When the Lord saves us from*** any trouble, hardship, danger and suffering, ***we have to praise*** and proclaim His salvation and glorify Him through Psalm 96.
2. ***When the Lord saves us from*** any sufferings and obstacles, ***we have to particularly proclaim*** the true fact that the Lord can only do this salvation compared to all other gods to in our family worship, public service and social meeting.

- Devotional Idea

1. ***We have to enumeratively remember*** the Lord's salvation and praise the salvation as a new song every day in our Quiet Time and life.

2. ***We have to deep-experientially believe*** in the Lord who is the

of today. See Greidanus, *The Modern Preacher and the Ancient Text*, 120. Robinson agrees with this point See Robinson, *Biblical Preaching*, 107-113.

⁸⁸Chapell provides us with a useful explanation for the outline of the sermon. For example, Chapell asserts that “a well-planned sermon begins with a good outline—a logical path for the mind.” See Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching*, 129-135.

⁸⁹As seen above, the liturgical and devotional ideas are subordinated to the theological ideas. In this regard, they are homiletically harmonized. Consult Chapell's explanation that “*Harmony*-Main points should echo one another, and the subpoints supporting a single main point should harmonize with one another.” See Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching*, 136.

⁹⁰The italicized phrases in the theological idea I, II, and III, show “well-consistent form” in the outline of the sermon. The principle of the consistency is important for the outline, structure, and flow of the sermon. See Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching*, 149-151.

⁹¹The italicized phrases in the liturgical and devotional ideas reflect “unity.” In addition, the sentences in the theological main ideas and the liturgical and devotional ideas pursue “brevity.” Consult Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching*, 136.

true Creator, God but all other gods are idols and prove and proclaim this fact in our real life context.

***The Theological Main Idea II of Psalm 96
(The Liturgical and Devotional Idea II)***

- Theological Main Idea II (verses 7-9)

The Lord is the One who is worshipped in glory, strength, and offering in His holy splendor and who is to be feared by all the earth.

➤ Liturgical Idea

1. ⁹²***We have to worship*** the Lord in order to recognize that the Lord is to be feared above all gods and the Lord is the true God who has splendor, majesty, strength, and beauty.
2. ***We have to particularly worship*** and ascribe to the Lord glory in our special ceremonies such as birth day, wedding, funeral service, special wedding anniversary, and the 60th anniversary of one's birth

➤ Devotional Idea

1. ***We have to devotionally discipline*** our devotional life of ourselves so that we always worship and ascribe to the Lord His glory and strength and our sacrifice.
2. ***We have to be devotionally disciplined*** ourselves to keep the spiritual competency so that we are able to worship and ascribe to the Lord glory at the important times of our life.

***The Theological Main Idea III of Psalm 96
(The Liturgical and Devotional Idea III)***

- Theological Main Idea III (verses 10-13)

The Lord is the One who reigns over the world and all creatures.

1. ⁹³***Because the Lord reigns*** the world is established and the people

⁹²See n. 91.

are judged with equity.

2. ***Because the Lord reigns*** all creatures will rejoice and sing for joy.

3. ***Because the Lord comes to reign*** the earth the world and the people are judged in His righteousness and faithfulness.

➤ Liturgical Idea

1. ⁹⁴***We have to testify and proclaim*** the Lord's reign in the contexts of family, church, social and national dimensions.

2. ***We have to particularly testify and proclaim*** the Lord's reign at the important liturgies such as the Lent, Palm Sunday and Resurrection day, Christmas, and Korean-Independence day.

➤ Devotional Idea

1. ***We have to devotionally discipline*** our spirituality through experiencing the Lord's reign over us with His equity, righteousness, and faithfulness.

2. ***We have to devotionally discipline*** that our mouth always testifies and proclaims the Lord's reign in any situation.

Conclusion

As already mentioned, the practice of the sermon for Psalm 96 can be applied to the Psalms 93, 97, and 99 in terms of the theological, liturgical, and devotional perspectives. The sermonic application for the Lord's reign based on the texts of the Psalms provides believers with the valuable spiritual benefit and privilege in their real life contexts.

⁹³See n. 90.

⁹⁴See n. 91.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

“יְהוָה מֶלֶךְ” connotes the profound theological meaning in the Psalter. The poet desires that the belief legacy is inherited to the current Christian community. The poet’s conviction is that once we believe and live in the Lord’s reign that the texts of the Psalms represent, the Lord rightly reigns over us. This is the Lord’s blessing and the believer’s privilege. In this sense, it is the holy responsibility for us to exegete the Psalms and to sermonically apply the Psalms to our real life.

The Lord is Israel’s God and they are His people.¹ The Lord continuously provides Israel’s needs and saves them from the enemies. As such, the Lord reigns over Israel. For Israel as His people, the Lord also reigns over other nations around Israel and even the universe. “The Kingship of the Lord”² directly influences the society of the Ancient Near East.

The people who lived in the Ancient Near East believed in their gods. They believed that their gods were their provider and protector. They even regarded their gods as gods of the universe.

In this context of the Ancient Near East, the proclamation that the Lord reigns theologially provokes “the polemical meaning.” Who is the true God who reigns over

¹See Thompson, “Yahweh,” 1012 and Freedman and O’Connor, “יְהוָה ’ YHWH,” 517-521.

²Nel, “מֶלֶךְ,” 960-963.

the universe, all the earth, and all the nations? And, who reigns over all the creatures with the righteousness and equity?

Nowadays, the polemical questions are continuously cast into the world. Some people believe in Islam. Some people believe in Buddhism and Confucianism. And other people trust in heresy. If the fact that the Lord reigns is proclaimed to them, they will polemically respond that the true God is not the Lord but their gods.

However, the poet of Psalm 29 eloquently proclaims that the Lord is the only true God compared to other gods like the Canaanite representative deity, Baal. The poet evokes that the One who is exalted by the praises of all people is not Baal but the Lord.³

Crucially, the Lord conquered against Baal. In the background of the Ancient Near East, the Canaanite people believed that Baal only controls and provides waters and thunderstorms as their fundamental resources. The poet does not recognize this fact. Rather, the poet demonstrates the Lord's glorious strength.⁴ The Lord is over the mighty water. The Lord breaks in pieces the cedars of Lebanon. And the Lord shakes the desert of Kadesh.

After all, the Lord who triumphed against Baal enthroned over the flood and sat enthroned as the King of kings forever.⁵ His people are blessed by the triumphant King's reign with His glorious strength and peace.⁶

In particular, the poet depicts that Baal is only an idol and cannot do anything, but the Lord is the only true God and reigns over the whole world with His unlimited strength

³Psalm 29:1-2.

⁴Psalm 29:1-9.

⁵Psalm 29:10.

⁶Psalm 29:11.

through the Canaanite imagery and language.⁷ The poet boldly chooses the Canaanite imagery and language in order to intentionally despise the Canaanite deity, Baal. The poet's polemical proclamation echoes to the current world and invites all the creatures, including all other gods, to obey the Lord's reign. More importantly, the polemical meaning becomes the background of the Psalms of the Lord's reign. Based on this, we need to note Psalm 96.⁸

In Psalm 96, the poet intensively commands all the earth to proclaim the Lord's salvation praising Him as a new song. His salvation is wonderful and glorious. No other gods can accomplish this salvation. Only the Lord has the wonderful saving strength. To evidently reveal His salvation to the world, the poet theologically demonstrates the polemical proclamation that "all the gods of the peoples are idols, but the Lord made the heaven."⁹ Because the Lord is the Creator, other gods are only His creatures. Different from all the gods, the Lord is wrapped by splendor, majesty, strength, and beauty in His holy temple.

Consequently, all the peoples and all the gods have to ascribe the Lord the glory and strength. Furthermore, they should bow down to the Lord bringing the offerings.

In light of the polemical background, the crucial statement is proclaimed at the culmination moment. "The Lord reigns!"

The rule of all other gods cannot establish the world. Their rule is unrighteous, unjust, and inequitable. They cannot control the heaven, earth, sea, and forest. However,

⁷Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 246.

⁸See Brueggemann, *Israel's Praise*, n. 10, 34.

⁹Psalm 96:5, NASB.

the Lord's reign makes the world firm. All the peoples are judged by His equity. On account of His righteous and equitable reign, all creatures are blessed that they are able to rejoice and loudly sing for joy. The Lord's reign has been unceasingly faithful for His people from the past to the present and His reign will endure forever.

People who believe in the Lord's reign can live under His reign. Furthermore, people who proclaim the Lord's reign can directly experience His righteous, equitable, and faithful in their real life.¹⁰

This is the focal point of the sermonic application for the Psalms of the Lord's reign. The application is composed of three sides. They are the theological, liturgical, and devotional sides.

Theologically, the facts of who the Lord is polemically and how the Lord reigns over the world and peoples are primarily applied to the sermon. Based on the facts, the theological side is profoundly associated with the liturgical and devotional sides.¹¹ This means that not only the theological side deeply influences to the liturgical and devotional side, but also three sides are combined for the sake of the application of the Lord's reign.

Liturgically, our life is exposed to the world interwoven by various religions and cultures. In this context, the Lord's glorious salvation is frequently denied and diluted by other religions. Many people are intentionally unwilling to recognize the Lord who is the true Creator. Even when they demolish the creation order enacted by the Lord, they do not regard their deeds as sin. After all, they ascribe to their gods the glory. Inevitably, our liturgical life is closely related to the contexts.

¹⁰Brueggemann, *Israel's Praise*, 35-36.

¹¹Mays, "The Language of the Reign of God," 124., and Mays, *The Lord Reigns*, ix.

However, keeping our belief to the Lord, we boldly proclaim that the true God who reigns over the world is not other gods but the Lord. In the family and work place's important ceremonial day, we have to cry out the Lord's reign. In particular, we have to declare the Lord's reign in the important church liturgies. Moreover, in the national ceremonial days, we ought to proclaim the Lord's reign. At those moments, the Lord's righteous, equitable, and faithful reign is actualized to our whole liturgical areas.¹²

Devotionally, we believe that we are His people created by the Lord. Once we accept the truth, it is natural for us to be reigned by the Lord. In this respect, the center of our devotional life is that we faithfully respond to the Lord's reign for us.

One of the most important responses is that our mouth proclaims and testifies the Lord's reign in all situations. If we spiritually discipline for this purpose every single day, we will deeply experience that the Lord reigns over us with His righteousness and equity.

In light of the above perspective, the exegesis and sermonic application of the texts of the Psalms for the Lord's reign as the poet's great language legacy are our spiritual task assigned to the Christian community.

If preachers or pastors faithfully accomplish the spiritual task, the poet's praise and proclamation for the Lord's reign will be actualized in the near future. Furthermore, people who believe in the Lord's reign will eschatologically see the righteous, equitable, and faithful reign of Jesus Christ.

¹²Brueggemann, *Israel's Praise*, 35-36.

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