

**THE HISTORICAL SUPERSCRPTIONS OF DAVIDIC PSALMS:  
AN EXEGETICAL, INTERTEXTUAL, AND  
METHODOLOGICAL ANALYSIS**

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The significance of the historical superscriptions that refer to David's life (Pss 3, 7, 18, 34, 51, 52, 54, 56, 57, 59, 60, 63, 142) has been a matter of interest over the past century of psalm studies. While the historicity forms a large part of the discussion, at its core is the issue of meaning. The literary and theological aspects of the historical superscriptions and their psalms provide the clearest basis for discussions of meaning. The literary milieu of the Psalter provides a context in which comparisons can be made. Contrary to more recent suggestions, the historiographical interests of these psalms go well beyond an apology for David.

This dissertation engages the topic of the historical superscriptions in three ways: exegetically, intertextually, and methodologically. This study first analyzes the psalms individually to provide the foundational groundwork for a collective view of authorial indications and subsequent analysis. This is examined through the central themes that emerge from three interrelated features of poetic analysis: (1) structure, (2) imagery, and (3) parallelism. The recent gains in analysis of Hebrew poetry in the Hebrew Bible have enabled readers to see new foci, such as literary features and epistemic aspects that emerge from the text as part of the exegetical process.

This is followed by an analysis of the stylistic and intertextual aspects of the historical superscriptions found in the thirteen historical superscriptions. After determining the intertextual perspectives that emerge from the historical superscriptions, a consideration of how to understand the intertextual links within a larger structural view is examined. These intertextual links are determined by analyzing linguistic connections in light of the structural concerns of the books of 1 and 2 Samuel and 1 and 2 Chronicles. This analysis is prompted by the stylistic and linguistic features of the historical superscriptions. The patterns that emerge lead to a comparison of lexical and thematic parallels between adjacent psalms that form a widening focus on psalm groups and the historical books to the HB.

Following this is an examination of the structural uses of  $\text{ל}$  and how the features of the historical superscriptions point to Davidic authorship. The syntactical constructions of the historical superscriptions are surveyed to demonstrate the veracity and originality of Davidic authorship. Also, generic and structural analyses are made to substantiate these claims. The final chapter provides a methodological critique of views on the historical superscriptions and sets forth more fortuitous paths in developing a coherent method that is more comprehensive.

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In conclusion, some, if not all, of the historical superscriptions appear to be written by David and in some instances brought into groups with David's oversight. A canonical approach to the topic is shown to be the best view that incorporates all perspectives and fills in details that otherwise would remain unknown. The theological context of the Davidic Covenant provides the basis for understanding how the historical superscriptions are appropriated in subsequent literature. The life of David is paradigmatic as a theological model. The ultimate meaning of the historical superscriptions is represented through the development of Yahweh's plan for his covenant people and promises.