

THE PSALMS OF SOLOMON

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Number 40

THE PSALMS OF SOLOMON

LANGUAGE, HISTORY, THEOLOGY

Edited by

Eberhard Bons and Patrick Pouchelle

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ABBREVIATIONS

AB	Anchor Bible
ABD	<i>Anchor Bible Dictionary</i> . Edited by David Noel Freedman. 6 vols. New York: Doubleday, 1992.
ABRL	Anchor Bible Reference Library
AcBib	Academia Biblica
AGJU	Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums
A.J.	Josephus, <i>Antiquitates judaicae</i>
AJEC	Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity
AJP	<i>American Journal of Philology</i>
ALGHJ	Arbeiten zur Literatur und Geschichte des Hellenistischen Judentums
Am.	Ovid, <i>Amores</i>
AnBib	Analecta Biblica
ANRW	<i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt</i> . Edited by Hildegard Temporini and Wolfgang Haase. Berlin: de Gruyter, 1972–.
Ant. Rom.	Dionysius of Halicarnassus, <i>Antiquitates Romanae</i>
APOT	<i>The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament in English</i> . Edited by Robert H. Charles. 2 vols. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913.
BDAG	Danker, Frederick W., Walter Bauer, William F. Arndt, and F. Wilbur Gingrich. <i>Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</i> . 3rd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000.
Bibl.	Diodorus Siculus, <i>Bibliotheca historica</i>
B.J.	Josephus <i>Bellum judaicum</i>
BSGRT	Bibliotheca scriptorum Graecorum et Romanorum Teubneriana
BWANT	Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten und Neuen Testament

<i>BZ</i>	<i>Biblische Zeitschrift</i>
BZAW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
CBET	Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology
CBQ	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
ConBNT	Coniectanea Biblica: New Testament Series
CQS	Companion to the Qumran Scrolls
CRINT	Compendia Rerum Iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum
CSSCA	Cambridge Studies in Social and Cultural Anthropology
<i>CurBR</i>	<i>Currents in Biblical Research</i>
<i>Cyr.</i>	Xenophon, <i>Cyropaedia</i>
<i>DBSup</i>	<i>Supplément au Dictionnaire de la Bible</i> . Edited by Louis Pirot and André Robert. Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1928–.
DCLY	Deuterocanonical and Cognate Literature Yearbook
DJD	Discoveries in the Judaean Desert
DNP	<i>Der neue Pauly: Enzyklopädie der Antike</i> . Edited by Hubert Cancik and Helmuth Schneider. Stuttgart: Metzler, 1996–.
DPA	<i>Dictionnaire des philosophes antiques</i> . Edited by R. Goulet. Paris: CNRS, 1989–.
DSD	<i>Dead Sea Discoveries</i>
<i>Ecl.</i>	Stobaeus, <i>Eclogae</i>
EKKNT	Evangelisch-katholischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
EJL	Early Judaism and its Literature
<i>Elem. Apo.</i>	Paulus Alexandrinus, <i>Elementa apotelesmatica</i>
<i>Ep.</i>	Nilus Ancyranus, <i>Epistulae</i>
<i>Epict. diss</i>	Arrian, <i>Epicteti dissertationes</i>
<i>Epigr Graec.</i>	G. Kaibel. <i>Epigrammata Graeca ex lapidibus conlecta</i> . Berlin: Reimer, 1878.
<i>Evag.</i>	Isocrates, <i>Evagores</i> (Or. 9)
FBBS	Facet Books Biblical Series
fr.	fragment
<i>FGrHis</i>	<i>Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker</i>
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments
<i>Geogr.</i>	Strabo, <i>Geographica</i>
HBS	Herders Biblische Studien
<i>Hist. Rom.</i>	Cassius Dio, <i>Historia Romana</i>
<i>Historia</i>	<i>Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte</i>
<i>Il.</i>	Homer, <i>Ilias</i>

<i>Inst.</i>	Quintilian, <i>Institutio oratoria</i>
JAJSup	Journal of Ancient Judaism Supplements
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
JCTC	Jewish and Christian Texts in Contexts and Related Studies
<i>JSHRZ</i>	<i>Jüdische Schriften aus hellenistisch-römischer Zeit</i> . Edited by Werner G. Kümmel. Gütersloh: Gerd Mohn, 1973–.
<i>JSJ</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Periods</i>
JSJSup	Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism
<i>JSNT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i>
JSOTSup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament: Supplement Series
<i>JSP</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha</i>
<i>JSQ</i>	<i>Jewish Studies Quarterly</i>
LAVTG	Fritzsche, Otto Fridolin, ed. <i>Libri Apocryphi Veteris Testamenti Graece</i> . Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1871.
LEH	Lust, Johan, Erik Eynikel, and Katrin Hauspie, eds. <i>Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint</i> . Rev. ed. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2003.
LSTS	Library of Second Temple Studies
LUÅ	Lunds universitets årsskrift
<i>Luc.</i>	Plutarch, <i>Lucullus</i>
LSJ	Liddell, Henry George, Robert Scott, Henry Stuart Jones. <i>A Greek-English Lexicon</i> . 9th ed. with revised supplement. Oxford: Clarendon, 1996.
LXX	Septuagint
<i>LXX.D</i>	Karrer, Martin and Wolfgang Kraus, eds. <i>Septuaginta Deutsch: Das griechische Alte Testament in deutscher Übersetzung</i> . 2nd ed. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2010.
<i>LXX.D-E</i>	Karrer, Martin and Wolfgang Kraus, eds. <i>Septuaginta Deutsch: Erläuterungen und Kommentare</i> . 2 vols. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2011.
MAAR	Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome
MMT	Miqṣat Ma'asê ha-Torah (4QMMT)
MS(S)	manuscript(s)
MSU	Mitteilungen des Septuaginta-Unternehmens
MT	Masoretic Text of the Hebrew Bible

NETS	<i>New English Translation of the Septuagint</i> . Edited by Albert Pietersma and Benjamin G. Wright. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.
<i>NovT</i>	<i>Novum Testamentum</i>
NovTSup	Novum Testamentum Supplements
NTS	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
OLA	Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta
OTP	<i>The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha</i> . Edited by James H. Charlesworth. 2 vols. New York: Doubleday, 1983, 1985.
OTS	Augsburg Old Testament Studies
PMTKA	Palingenesia: Monographien und Texte zur klassischen Altertumswissenschaft
<i>PO</i>	<i>Patrologia Orientalis</i>
<i>Pomp.</i>	Plutarch, <i>Pompeius</i>
Ps. Sol	Psalms of Solomon
PTSDSSP	The Princeton Theological Seminary Dead Sea Scrolls Project
PVTG	Studia in Veteris Testamenti Graece
QC	<i>Qumran Chronicle</i>
Rahlfs	Rahlfs, Alfred and Robert Hanhart, eds. <i>Septuaginta: Id est Vetus Testamentum graece iuxta LXX interpretes</i> . Rev. ed. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2006.
<i>RBL</i>	<i>Review of Biblical Literature</i>
resp.	respectively
<i>RevQ</i>	<i>Revue de Qumran</i>
<i>RRJ</i>	<i>Review of Rabbinic Judaism</i>
SAM	Studies in Ancient Monarchies
SBEC	Studies in the Bible and Early Christianity
SCS	Septuagint and Cognate Studies
Sib. Or.	Sibylline Oracle
SJ	Studia Judaica
<i>SJC</i>	<i>Scripta Judaica Cracoviensia</i>
SJLA	Studies in Judaism in Late Antiquity
SJMT	Studies in Judaism in Modern Times
SOLZ	Sonderabzug aus der orientalischen Litteratur-Zeitung Jahrgang
SQAW	Schriften und Quellen der alten Welt
SR	<i>Studies in Religion</i>
STDJ	Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah

SUNVA	Skrifter utgitt av det norske videnskaps-akademi i Oslo. Historisk-filosofisk klasse
SVTG	Septuaginta: Vetus Testamentum Graecum Auctoritate Academiae Scientiarum Gottingensis editum
SVTP	Studia in Veteris Testamenti Pseudepigrapha
Sym	Symmachus
SymS	Symposium Series
T. Mos.	Testament of Moses
TDNT	<i>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</i> . Edited by Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich. Translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley. 10 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964–1976.
TSAJ	Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum
TUGAL	Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur
<i>Vit. philos.</i>	Diogenes Laërtius, <i>Vitae philosophorum</i>
VT	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
VTSup	Supplements to Vetus Testamentum
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
ZNW	<i>Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche</i>
ZPE	<i>Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik</i>
ZWT	<i>Zeitschrift für wissenschaftliche Theologie</i>

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INTRODUCTION

Eberhard Bons and Patrick Pouchelle

The idea of organizing a conference on the Psalms of Solomon began in autumn, 2012, during a telephone conversation between two Old Testament scholars, Eberhard Bons (University of Strasbourg, France) and Markus Witte (Humboldt Universität, Berlin, Germany). Both of them had students who were working on the same neglected corpus of the Psalms of Solomon: Patrick Pouchelle, who had written a master's thesis on Ps. Sol. 13, and Sven Behnke, who was preparing a doctoral dissertation on Ps. Sol. 14. An initial contact between the two young scholars was soon accomplished. Patrick Pouchelle and Sven Behnke were convinced that the corpus of the Psalms of Solomon still does not receive as much attention as it deserves in the context of biblical studies. Hence, they decided to organize an international conference with a twofold aim: to take a fresh look at established views and to develop perspectives for future research. This First International Meeting on the Psalms of Solomon convened in Strasbourg, France, in June, 2013.

Indeed, when, in 1994,¹ Joseph L. Trafton presented the *status quaestionis* of the Psalms of Solomon, he defined a framework for future research. In particular, he formulated the following needs:

- (1) A new critical edition.
- (2) Fresh consideration of the authorship because the arguments in favor of Pharisaic authorship turn out to be invalid and no other identification has convinced the community of scholars.²

1. Joseph L. Trafton, "The *Psalms of Solomon* in Recent Research," *JSP* 12 (1994): 3–19.

2. Robert B. Wright ("The *Psalms of Solomon*: The Pharisees and the Essenes," in

- (3) New methods to be used in order to analyze the Psalms of Solomon, for example, literary criticism.
- (4) New monographs and new commentaries.

In the last twenty years, these objectives have been partly achieved. Surprisingly, whereas there is a degree of renewal in studies of the Pseudepigrapha as well as of the Septuagint, the corpus of the Psalms of Solomon remains the poor cousin of current research.

Indeed, the long-awaited critical edition by Robert B. Wright, published in 2007, has met with a mixed response.³ That is why the Göttingen Unternehmen has decided to edit a new edition. During the 2013 colloquium in Strasbourg, Felix Albrecht explained the need for a new edition in an English translation of a previous contribution in German.⁴

The authorship of the Psalms of Solomon is still debated. Mikael Winninge argued that this collection is of Pharisaic origin, or that it is at least the “ultimate link between the Chasidim and the Pharisees.”⁵ On the other hand, Kenneth Atkinson contends that the authorship cannot be deter-

1972 *Proceedings for the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies and the Society of Biblical Literature Pseudepigrapha Seminar*, ed. Robert A. Kraft, SCS 2 [Missoula, MT: Society of Biblical Literature, 1972], 136–54) promoted the identification with the Essenes. However, this identification is also problematic; cf. Trafton, “The *Psalms of Solomon* in Recent Research,” 12.

3. Cf., e.g., Joel Willitts, “Review of Robert. B. Wright, *The Psalms of Solomon: A Critical Edition of the Greek Text*,” *RBL* (2009), http://www.bookreviews.org/pdf/6010_6722.pdf; Rodney A. Werline, “Review of Robert. B. Wright, *The Psalms of Solomon: A Critical Edition of the Greek Text*,” *RBL* (2009), http://www.bookreviews.org/pdf/6010_6398.pdf; and Felix Albrecht, “Zur Notwendigkeit einer Neuedition der Psalmen Salomos,” in *Die Septuaginta: Text, Wirkung, Rezeption: 4. Internationale Fachtagung veranstaltet von Septuaginta Deutsch (LXX. D), Wuppertal 19.–22. Juli 2012*, ed. Wolfgang Kraus and Siegfried Kreuzer, WUNT 1/325 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014), 110–23.

4. Albrecht, “Zur Notwendigkeit.”

5. Mikael Winninge, *Sinners and the Righteous: A Comparative Study of the Psalms of Solomon and Paul's Letters*, ConBNT 26 (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1995), 180. But his conclusions have not been widely accepted, cf. Joseph, L Trafton, “Review of Mikael Winninge, *Sinners and the Righteous: A Comparative Study of the Psalms of Solomon and Paul's Letters*,” *RBL* (2009), http://www.bookreviews.org/pdf/2815_1253.pdf. On the contrary, cf. Jens Schröter, “Gerechtigkeit und Barmherzigkeit: das Gottesbild der Psalmen Salomos in seinem Verhältnis zu Qumran und Paulus,” *NTS* 44 (198): 557–77.

mined precisely.⁶ Several essays in this volume will refer to the full range of possibilities and problems related to this issue.

New methods have been applied to the Psalms of Solomon, mainly by Rodney A. Werline, who also noticed similarities between these texts and a genre he defined as “penitential prayer.”⁷ However, one of the major desiderata still is a literary analysis.⁸

Finally, to the best of our knowledge, apart from the critical edition by Robert B. Wright, only two important monographs have been published, namely, by Mikael Winninge and Kenneth Atkinson.⁹ Atkinson’s work made significant contributions to the task of relating the psalms to historical events of the era while avoiding the overly ambitious approaches of the old commentary by Ryle and James.¹⁰

These and other open questions were the major reasons for organizing the conference. Admittedly, it was not our intention to answer all the long-debated, open questions. On the contrary, our purpose was to focus scholarly attention on this corpus whose theological and literary importance is

6. Although Kenneth Atkinson (*I Cried to the Lord: A Study of the Psalms of Solomon’s Historical Background and Social Setting*, JSJSup 84 [Leiden: Brill, 2004], 220–21) asserts that “the community of the *Psalms of Solomon* was theologically closer to the Pharisees than to the Sadducees” and that there is “no evidence to connect these poems with this religious sect.” As for the Essenes attribution, he noticed that “many of the Dead Sea scrolls were not written by the Essenes, but were composed by unknown authors who apparently did not belong to the Essenes.” In a nutshell, the Psalms of Solomon cannot be attributed to any known Jewish religious sect.

7. Rodney A. Werline, *Penitential Prayer in Second Temple Judaism: The Development of a Religious Institution*, EJL 13 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1985); idem, “The Experience of God’s *Paideia* in the *Psalms of Solomon*,” in *Experientia, Volume 2: Linking Text and Experience*, ed. Colleen Shantz and Rodney A. Werline, EJL 35 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2012), 17–44. See also, e.g., Robert R. Hann, “The Community of the Pious: The Social Setting of the *Psalms of Solomon*,” SR 17 (1988): 169–89.

8. Rollin J. Blackburn (“Hebrew Poetic Devices in the Greek Text of the *Psalms of Solomon*,” [PhD diss., Temple University, 1995]) has done such research, but his dissertation is still unpublished.

9. Winninge, *Sinners and the Righteous*; Atkinson, *I Cried to the Lord*.

10. Atkinson, *I Cried to the Lord*. See also idem, “On the Herodian Origins of the Militant Davidic Messianism at Qumran: New Light from *Psalms of Solomon* 17,” *JBL* 118 (1999): 435–60; Herbert E. Ryle and Montague R. James, *ΨΑΛΜΟΙ ΣΟΛΟΜΩΝΤΟΣ: Psalms of the Pharisees, commonly called The Psalms of Solomon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1891).

beyond doubt. Therefore, we invited some of the most renowned experts on the Psalms of Solomon, asking them to take a fresh look at frequently held assumptions. Concretely, the articles collected in the present volume deal with the following subjects:

(1) The question of the date of the Psalms of Solomon and their importance as a historical source for the Hasmonean period is addressed afresh by Benedikt Eckhardt. He explains the bias of scholars who determined the date of composition of these psalms. Obviously, modern approaches to the Psalms of Solomon bear the traces of nineteenth century research, particularly negative statements about Jewish piety as well as those concerning putative oriental despotism. Needless to say, these approaches should be dismissed. For Eckhardt, the date of composition of the Psalms of Solomon is still an open question and modern scholars should be careful about using them as a historical source.

(2) The question of the original language of the Psalms of Solomon also needs fresh consideration. Eberhard Bons and Jan Joosten independently address this issue. In their view, the former consensus about a Hebrew *Vorlage* should be challenged. Jan Joosten provides an overview of words and expressions that would suggest a redaction of the Psalms of Solomon in Greek. He concludes by putting forward a new hypothesis concerning the provenance of these psalms. For him, the Psalms of Solomon display several points of contact with the Greek vocabulary of the revisions of the Septuagint. Eberhard Bons claims that the vocabulary of Ps. Sol. 9:4 is to be explained against the background of contemporary Greek Stoic philosophy. Therefore, the words in question could hardly be retranslated into Hebrew.

(3) Brad Embry offered a paper in which he addressed the issue of the genre of the Psalms of Solomon. For him, the genre has more in common with biblical prophecy and Deuteronomic thought than with psalmic prayer or biblical wisdom. The corpus focuses on a specific view of history, one which describes covenantal infidelity, God's judgment, and the restoration of Israel.

(4) As stated above, a crucial question concerns the community that lay behind the Psalms of Solomon. Of course, it is difficult to give clear-cut answers. However, by studying the corpus itself, one can arrive at a better understanding of this community. Kenneth Atkinson, who argues that the Psalms of Solomon were anti-Sadducean,¹¹ analyzed the way in which the

11. Atkinson, *I Cried to the Lord*, 221.

psalms perceive the temple priests. Such an analysis brings new insights into the community and the circumstances in which the Psalms of Solomon originated.

(5) Much work remains to be done on key terms and metaphors in the psalms; in fact, little has been accomplished in this area. Two more articles deal with specific topics of the Psalms of Solomon. Sven Behnke focuses on the imagery of sleep in the Psalms of Solomon, which has negative connotations. It is used to emphasize the difference between the righteous and the wicked. Patrick Pouchelle addresses the question of παιδεία in the Psalms of Solomon. He shows how the concept that lies behind this word is theological and less connected to historical events than expected.

(6) New methods may also offer fresh perspectives on the interpretation of these psalms. Rodney A. Werline analyzes the Psalms of Solomon using anthropological methods. He argues that the psalms belong to an emotional liturgy in which the community declares God's righteousness and the condemnation of the wicked. The aim of this liturgy is to invite the community to live a righteous life. Therefore, the psalms have an educational rather than a didactical goal.

(7) Last but not least, one of the main causes of interest in the Psalms of Solomon lies in the fact that it is an important witness of messianic expectation in the last century BCE. However, Joseph L. Trafton notices that this source, mainly Ps. Sol. 17, has been neglected in recent research. Furthermore, he states that the biblical texts alluded to by the authors of the Psalms of Solomon are completely different from those quoted by the Essenes. Hence, if the *χριστός*¹² described by Ps. Sol. 17 is a Davidic king, it is not clear why the author alludes sometimes to non-Davidic Scriptures. Trafton rounds off his contribution by raising many fundamental questions that should be taken into account by anyone wishing to study messianism in the Psalms of Solomon in particular and in the Judaism of the Second Temple in general.

At the conclusion of this colloquium, we were able to say that some long-held opinions had been challenged, particularly concerning the historical context, the original language, and messianic expectations. An analysis of content sheds some new light on the community, even if it appears too risky to draw definitive conclusions.

12. I.e., the Messiah.

Needless to say, some questions remain unaddressed. For example, research should be done on the Syriac version and its relationship to the Greek texts of the Psalms of Solomon. Moreover, the influence of this corpus on the New Testament, particularly on the theology of Paul, should receive further consideration. However, we hope that the present book will draw the attention of scholars to this important but neglected corpus. Our wish is that the articles will engender further discussions in biblical research on this unknown Jewish community behind the Psalms of Solomon.

In publishing the proceedings of the colloquium, we would like to express our gratitude to the EA 4377, “Équipe d’accueil en Théologie Catholique,” of the University of Strasbourg, and to the GIS Monde Germanique “Groupement d’intérêts scientifiques,” an organization of the French Research Agency that fosters academic cooperation between France and Germany. This has allowed Sven Behnke and Patrick Pouchelle to fulfill their dream of organizing a small but ambitious conference with the most eminent specialists of their beloved corpus. Our gratitude also goes to the MISHA (Maison Interuniversitaire des Sciences de l’Homme, Alsace), and particularly to Ms. Magali Vogt who provided the logistical support for this event. We are also grateful to the contributors who enthusiastically accepted the invitation.

Rodney A. Werline not only proofread some of the articles written by non-English-speaking authors but also made possible the publication of the proceedings in the Society of Biblical Literature series *Early Judaism and Its Literature*. The editors are particularly indebted to him for his invaluable advice.

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