

EDITED BY
WILLIAM P.
BROWN



The Oxford Handbook of
THE PSALMS

THE OXFORD HANDBOOK OF

THE PSALMS

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WILLIAM P. BROWN

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CHAPTER 28

FEMINIST INTERPRETATION OF THE PSALMS

MELODY D. KNOWLES

THE *Midrash Tehillim* to Psalm 18 records that “R. Yudan taught in the name of R. Judah: All that David said in his Book of Psalms applies to himself, to all Israel, and to all the ages” (1966 [1891]: 135). In his letter to Marcellinus, Athanasius also took a comprehensive view of the Psalms. For him, the Psalter covers “all human life” to the extent that “nothing further can be found in humanity (*en anthrō*)” (1857: par. 30, col. 41).

These and similar sentiments are repeated throughout academic discussion on the Psalms (e.g., Sarna 1993: 4; Mays 1994: 1). But are they correct? Does this “all human life” contained in the Psalms for “all the ages” include the lives of women as well as men? This question is especially critical because of the formative function the Psalms aims to exert on its readers. In the same letter to Marcellinus, Athanasius wrote that the Psalter possesses a “peculiar marvel” that distinguishes it from all other biblical books because, while other books simply command acts such as repentance and thanksgiving to God, the Psalms “teach what one must say” when repenting or giving thanks (1857: par. 10). Given the attention that feminists attach to “voice” as a metonym for full personhood (e.g., Gilligan 1982; Belenky 1986), what kind of gender experience is assumed or suppressed or valorized within these texts that teach one how to pray? And, given the theological assumptions inherent in such words “one must say,” a related question concerns the kind of God these words construct, a deity that may or may not be sympathetic to women and their experience.

These basic issues emerge while reading through the lens of feminist biblical criticism, a perspective that begins with the experience of women and seeks to expose and critique the patriarchal assumptions and justifications of androcentric hegemony inscribed in biblical texts.¹ Because of this fundamental perspective, feminist criticism can employ a variety of methods, including historical criticism, literary criticism, rhetorical criticism, and so on. Also, because feminist criticism self-consciously foregrounds the experience of the interpreter, it is never a purely consistent reading strategy: Looking at and for gender inevitably leads one to see other key components of identity such as race, class, religious background, and driving concerns, such that many

contemporary feminists claim multiple identities (postcolonial feminist, ecofeminist, mestiza feminist, etc.).

In this essay I enact this methodological amalgam by analyzing some of the feminist work already done with the Psalms alongside supportive material from less predictable sources and point to avenues for further study using three focal questions to structure the material. The first question has to do with the images of God presented throughout the text: Who is God in the Psalms? The second has to do with the representation of women: Who and where are women in the Psalms? Both questions have their own history of development within the feminist interpretation of the larger biblical canon, but this essay aims less to chart this history than to marshal and evaluate its resources to aid a closer investigation of the Psalms. The third question has been less frequently examined within Psalms studies, but, as I attempt to show, it plays a particular role in the investigation of the Psalms and the development of female literacy within the Western world: What is the history of women's use of the Psalms? Investigating these three lines of inquiry can help flesh out the fundamental, but often overlooked, question that began this essay: Does the "all human life" that both Athanasius and Rabbi Judah recognized in the Psalter include the lives and interests of women?

GOD IN THE PSALMS

Male images and metaphors for God clearly predominate in the Psalms. Throughout the Psalter God is named as father (e.g., 68:6[5]; 89:27[26]; cf. 103:13), king (e.g., 5:3[2]; 24:10; 29:10; 44:5[4]), judge (e.g., 7:12[11]; 94:2 [both marked as grammatically masculine]), and YHWH of Hosts (e.g., 24:10; 46:8[7]; 84:2[1], 4[3], 13[12]). These largely patriarchal and militaristic images for God, voiced by a human who is most often a male warrior himself and fixated on his adversaries has led David Clines to argue that it is mistaken to consider the text "human and humane rather than indefeasibly masculine" (2008: 1). Rather, in his reading the Psalms were written from a male perspective and pre-occupied with the concerns of men. YHWH is an "arch-killer" avenging worshippers motivated by male honor and shame who seek the destruction of their seemingly omnipresent foes (e.g., "When my enemies turned back, they stumbled and perished before you"; 9:3). The evidence leads Clines to suggest as possible inscriptions for the book of Psalms: "God will make a man of you" and "God helps you kill people."

Can women pray to a God so clearly styled as male and supportive of male concerns, even to the point of violence, without themselves supporting patriarchy? Can women find in the God prayed to in the Psalms a true hope and refuge, a God for their particular praise and lament?

Although clearly not as numerous, female or feminine aspects are also present in the depiction of God in the Psalms, and these have often been a starting point for feminist scholars to rethink the identity of the divine. In Psalm 22, God, like an attentive midwife, aids the birth and new life of the psalmist: "You are the one who took me from the womb; you kept me safe upon my mother's breasts" (22:10[9]; see also 71:6; Claasens

2006: 166–75). The language of God’s creation of the mountains in Psalm 90:2 features the root *hwl*, a term used most frequently to describe women giving birth (Isa. 45:10), occasionally to describe God’s creative work (Prov. 8:24, 25; Deut. 32:18), and never applied to men (Foster 1994: 93–102). God’s “compassion” and quality of being “merciful” are terms derived from the word for “womb” (*rehem*) and enumerated throughout the Psalms (145:8; 86:15; 78:38; 103:8, 13).² Disputed images include reference to God’s “wings” (more likely related to a winged sun disk rather than a female vulture)³ and “breasts” (“Shaddai” refers not to mountains per se but rather to “wilderness”).⁴

As striking as these images may be, they are not entirely without problems for feminist interpretation. Although womb and birthing imagery might allow a woman to relate to or read her own life into the God of the Psalms (or complicate a too-easy identification of God as male), female attributes and affinities cannot be confined to what is biologically sex-specific. Further, naming and associating behaviors (e.g., compassion) as feminine runs the danger of composing an essentialized femininity that conforms to socially prescribed behaviors and attributes—reifying “feminine” into a construction that constricts women instead of understanding it as a cultural performance.⁵

Alongside an examination of the female or feminine aspects of God, the goals of feminist interpretation are also served by a reevaluation of the male metaphors as well. Images of the divine king and father can reflect and authorize a hierarchical system that, as Judith Plaskow puts it, “both fosters and mirrors the tendency to conceptualize all difference in terms of graded separations” and that judges women to be inferior (1990: 132–33). Yet in addition to *undergirding* hierarchical social structures to the detriment of women, feminists such as Letty Russell (1987) have highlighted the need to ask whether such male metaphors for God might also *undercut* such structures.

This is certainly at play when looking at male imagery for the divine in the Psalms, because it often occurs in contexts that redefine power relations in ways perhaps surprising to a contemporary audience. In the Psalms, the divine judge and king often takes particular care of the disenfranchised, especially widows, orphans, and strangers. As “judge of the world,” YHWH is called upon to mete out punishment to those who “kill the widow and the stranger, (and) murder the orphan” (94:2, 6; cf. 146:7, 9; 10:16, 18). Although this redefinition of power is not as prevalent in association with “Lord of Hosts” imagery, Psalm 84 pictures the altars of YHWH the “king” and “LORD of Hosts” providing a home for the sparrow and swallow. This redefinition of power within individual psalms is amplified by the detection of a pattern identified by Susan Gillingham in which several psalms are deliberately placed side by side in order to hold together models of authority and vulnerability (2006: 25–49). The God who establishes the king on his “holy hill” to rule over the nations (Psalm 2) answers the helpless and besieged individual from the same “holy hill” (Psalm 3; cf. Psalms 72 and 73, etc.). In Gillingham’s reading, this pairing is a deliberate attempt to redefine social power structures and emphasize that God acts benevolently on behalf of both the mighty and the meek.

This redefinition of power within the Psalms is significant because of its implications for the moral obligations of the powerful toward the widow, orphan, and stranger. In an economic system that privileged men through the handing down of the family’s parcel of land, undivided, from father to son as an inalienable *nahālā*, and with no evidence for

dowries consisting of enough movable goods to sustain a person for any length of time, widows and the landless in ancient Israel faced destitution (Hiebert 1989: 125–41, especially 137). By portraying YHWH as one invested in the plight of the powerless (either in the role of a missing male relative for vulnerable widows or of taking special care of the social and economically invisible members of society such as orphans and clients), the Psalms reflect a male-centered society while at the same time construing power as interest for and with the weak.

In a text that both reflects and subverts the hierarchy assumed in the metaphors of king and judge, it is perhaps not surprising that other male metaphors used for God can be unstable. In Psalm 46, YHWH, as Lord of Hosts, breaks the weapons of war. The designation of God as father, used rarely in the Psalms (89:27[26]), is strained by the divine title “Father of orphans” (68:6[5]). Indeed, the comparison between YHWH and a parent of either sex is opposed in Psalm 27:10: “My father and my mother have forsaken me, but YHWH will take me up.”

Considering these male metaphors that, at times, break beyond our predetermined categories and assumptions about power, alongside female images such as midwife in Psalm 22 and the nonhuman images for God such as rock and fortress, the divine image in the Psalms is styled masculine in a context that reveals the inadequacy of one-sex symbolization and points to a sense of unknowability. Paradoxically, this unknowability (communicated by multiple and unstable metaphors) is met by another profile of the divine that pervades the Psalms: God’s intimate involvement in both the public and private areas of humanity. In the genre of prayer, God is presented as being concerned with both the outcomes of war and growth in the womb. Alongside thanksgiving for military victory (“All nations surrounded me; in the name of YHWH I cut them off!” [118:10]), God is praised for reversing infertility (YHWH “gives the barren woman a home, making her the joyous mother of children” [113:9]). In a memorable picture of proximity and care, Psalm 139:13 portrays God as active in the womb: “You formed my inward parts, you knit me together in my mother’s womb.”

In the language of poetry and prayer, God in the Psalms is both masculine and feminine as well as neither. In a similarly capacious way, God is the one who kills the enemy and knits together a child. Feminists must continue to struggle with the preponderance of male imagery for the divine and with the portrayal of God destroying the nations. Yet the metaphors for God in the Psalms destabilize any sense that a single metaphor or gendered symbolization is literal or adequate. In their multiplicity and complexity, the Psalms present divine ciphers that are loaded but always incomplete, ready to be reappropriated with contemporary concerns in mind while always resisting complete interpretation.

WOMEN IN THE PSALMS

As with female imagery for God, women themselves appear rarely in the Psalter, and their limited appearances usually reflect either the status quo of the ancient patriarchal-agrarian society and/or the need to balance a poetic line. In Psalm 50:20

reference to a woman assists the rhythm (“You sit and speak against your kin; you slander your own mother’s child”), and in 128:3 the “fruitful wife” manifests her husband’s blessedness. The ancient division of labor, with men working outside and women indoors, is seen in 144:12: “May our sons in their youth be like plants fully grown, our daughters like corner pillars cut for the building of a palace” (Meyers 2000a: 301–2). In one of the only psalms with a sustained female presence, the woman about to marry a prince is charged to “forget your people and your father’s house” and bidden to “bow down” to her new lord and husband in a prayer inscribing patriarchal marriage relations (45:11–12[10–11]).⁶

There are also a few references to women as participants in public worship: “Praise YHWH... young men and maidens (*bētûlôt*)” (148:7, 12), and “maidens (*‘ălāmôt*) playing timbrels” process together with other cultic functionaries in 68:26[25]. It may also be that the superscription of Psalm 46 (“According to *‘ălāmôt*”) should be read as an additional indication of female cultic singers.⁷ Nonsanctioned religious practices involving women are also present when 106:35–38 represents the community sacrificing their sons and daughters to the idols of Canaan.⁸

This very restrained place of women in the *contents* of the Psalms is intensified by the *superscriptions* that associate particular texts with men such as David (e.g., Psalm 3: “A Psalm of David [*ldvd*], when he fled from Absalom, his son”).⁹ With the traditional understanding of *ldvd* as an indication of authorship, earlier generations moved the character of David from a somewhat incidental figure within the texts of the Psalms (he is mentioned in the body of only six psalms)¹⁰ to the author of seventy-three psalms. The Septuagint includes even more Davidic superscriptions and also attempts to solidify authorship with the gradual replacement of *to(i) david* with *tou david*, a trend culminating with the superscription of Psalm 151 in the LXX: “This psalm is an autograph of David” (*idiographos eis david*; Pietersma 1980: 213–26).

Although the decidedly male content and encroaching Davidic authorship of the Psalter begins to strain any notion of the applicability of these texts for all women, some ground is regained by reading particular psalms as prayers of ancient women. Locating *women in the Psalms* is thus expanded to *hearing their voice in prayer*. Kathleen A. Farmer has suggested parallels between the prayers of women recorded in the narratives (Miriam, Deborah, Judith, and Mary) with the psalms of thanksgiving or, as she calls them, “Psalms of reversal by and for survivors” (Farmer 1992: 147–48). Erhard Gerstenberger argues that Psalms 127, 128, and 131 (“family hymns”) may reflect pre-Yahwistic domestic traditions in which the house cult devoted to family gods was administered by women (2001: 47). According to Maria Häusl, Psalm 17 can be read as the prayer of a childless woman in which the innocent sufferer (grammatically unmarked gender-wise) asks for protection from God (2002: 205–22).¹¹ Finally, Gottfried Quell solved many of the grammatical issues in Psalm 131:2 by simply construing it as a prayer said by a woman: “My soul is like the weaned child that is *with me*” (*italics mine*; 1967: 173–85; see also Knowles 2006: 385–89).

A more sustained approach for recovering voices of women throughout the Psalms is modeled in two separate monographs by Ulrike Bail (1998) and Beth LaNeel Tanner (2001;

see also Bowen 2003: 53–57). Both authors employ their own versions of intertextuality, linking their work to poststructuralist literary theorists such as Julia Kristeva to present psalmic texts as complex intersections of quotations, allusions, and echoes of other texts (either intentionally embedded by the author or subsequently recognized by the reader). This intertextual approach to the Psalms allows an interpreter to hear them as the prayers of ancient women, as, for example, Bail's reading of Psalms 6 and 55 in the context of the story of Tamar after her rape (2 Sam. 13:1–22). Pointing to the verbal and thematic links between the narrative and poetic texts (betrayal, shame, and the desire for revenge), Bail argues that the two psalms present a possible answer to Tamar's question, "Where can I carry my shame?" (2 Sam. 13:13). Taking another brutal story, Tanner links Psalm 88 with the story in Judges 19, suggesting that the phrase "I cry to you, YHWH, every day; / I spread out my hands to you" (Ps. 88:10[9]), might be read alongside the image of the hands of the Levite's concubine, grasping the threshold in her vain attempt to find safety (Judg. 19:17; Tanner 2001: 167–68).¹² In addition, Tanner reads Psalm 112 as a description of the "righteous one" described in Proverbs 31:10–31 (2001: 141). Although the explicit referent in Psalm 112 is "he" in contrast to "she" in Proverbs 31, the texts are linked by genre and style (acrostic poems in the wisdom tradition), and both protagonists "fear YHWH" (Prov. 31:28; Ps. 112:1), possess prosperity and wealth (Prov. 31:13, 18, 22, 24, etc.; Ps. 112:3), act justly in business dealings, and are attentive to the poor (Tanner 2001: 150).

Still within the field of literary criticism, but taking the different approach of dialogic criticism, Carleen Mandolfo opens up additional possibilities for hearing women's voices in the Psalms (2002; 2004: 27–51). The heart of Mandolfo's method (informed by Bakhtin, Buber, and Brueggemann) consists of distinguishing the alterations in tone and voice within individual lament psalms, such as the repeated shift from a supplicatory address to a deity (in the second person; e.g., "O God, rouse yourself!") to didactic assertions about the deity (now in the third person; e.g., "he hears your cry"). So, for instance, when the didactic voice in Psalm 7 is represented in italics, the text reads as a theological dialogue:

Arise, YHWH, in your anger;
 lift yourself up against the fury of those vexing me. . . .
YHWH arbitrates between the peoples;
 Judge me, YHWH, according to my innocence (*kěšidqī*). . . .
The one who tests the thoughts and emotions is a just god ('ēlôhîm šaddîq)
 (vv. 8[7], 10–11[9–10]).¹³

Reading individual laments as texts that preserve a theological conversation (or conflict) highlights the multiplicity of voices within the Psalms, voices that, at times, express views alternative and marginal to normative theology. Granted, such conversations might not be considered equally transformative; the didactic voice retains an air of theological correctness, sets the "fundamental tone," and gets the final word. Yet the didactic voice is not simply unyielding and monoglotic but responsive. In Psalm 7 its proclamation of God as a "just god" (v. 11[10]) comes in direct response to the supplicant's demand: "Judge me, YHWH, according to my innocence" (v. 10[9]). In this reading,

individual laments preserve separate voices together, and neither totally subsumes the other. Without making explicit claims for a feminist interpretation of the Psalms, Mandolfo (2007) employs this method as a reading strategy by which to hear the voice of Daughter Zion in the book of Lamentations, thereby modeling its promise for emancipating the subverted voices of female characters within the biblical corpus.

Clearly no catalogue of women in the Psalms can present a full record of the spiritual life of ancient women, or even the sum total of prayer for contemporary life (recall Athanasius' "what one should say"). In addition, texts from the ancient world obviously reflect their own historically conditioned aspects of gender, economic, and labor conditions (i.e., women often working inside, concerned with biological fertility, etc.) and can also promote certain stereotypes (i.e., women often working inside, concerned with biological fertility, etc.). These time-bound aspects also include the presentation of women vis-à-vis the cult. Psalms 68:26[25]; 148:7, and so on present striking possibilities for inscribing ancient women as cultic actors. And by broadening the focus from a single woman with her child to the entire nation of Israel, Psalm 131 presents a female model of piety that could be taken up by the larger public cult ("O Israel, trust in YHWH" [v. 3]). Yet even with these prayers, the Psalter includes no details to deny the likelihood that women were routinely excluded from the divine presence in the public cult—they might have prayed to YHWH, but there is nothing to indicate that they could pray in all of the same areas where men could (Wegner 2003: 451–65).

Similarly, the recognition that the Psalter may preserve female voices presents its own advances and perils. Hearing psalms as the prayers of ancient women allows the reconstruction of a "counter-voice" that expresses alternative theological views (Mandolfo 2002; 2004: 27–51), the sorrow of victims of sexual violence (Tanner 1998; 2001: 283–301; Bail 1998), or the words of women silenced by the constrictions of patriarchy (Farmer 1992: 152). But the attempt to hear women's voices within these texts is not a straightforward exercise, and overreach may be counterproductive. Even Psalms 17 and 131 do not necessarily provide evidence of female authorship. Because the specific details linked with the speakers' experience are stereotypical and public (the entreaty for a child in Psalm 17, the avoidance of "high matters" and affirmation of humility in the company of a weaned child in Psalm 131), it is impossible to distinguish whether the text was written *by* a woman or whether it simply attributes a quotation *to* a woman (Brenner and van Dijk-Hemmes 1993: 6–11). One might also argue that in its valorization of humility, docility, and childlikeness, Psalm 131 could have been written by someone, either a man or a woman, intent on teaching women such behavior, creating a psalm *for* women to reinscribe patriarchal ideals.

Clearly there is promise in a variety of methodologies to find women in the Psalms, from the small-scale approach of textual criticism to the broad scope of intertextual and dialogical criticism. Contemporary translations and paraphrases that forefront the voices of women in prayer can also further this project.¹⁴ But care must be taken since the recognition of a female voice carries with it no guarantee that women who pray the Psalms will construe their reality within feminist parameters free from patriarchal constructs and expectations. And the broader concerns that animate postcolonial feminists—for example, the portrayal of peoples in distant lands and the gendered

ramifications of the text's treatment of "the nations"—remain largely unaddressed within the academic literature on the Psalms.¹⁵ Clearly more reconstructive work needs to be done and the results of such work evaluated in the light of feminist concerns.

WOMEN'S USE OF THE PSALMS

Focus on the text as a resource for reconstructing the ancient voices of women and images of God is a fairly standard procedure in feminist biblical scholarship. Yet the Psalter's particular character as a collection of prayers to be said by the reader makes it distinctive within biblical literature, as does its demonstrable use by women in the Western world even in contexts where the Bible was not regularly accessible to the laity. Obviously, the full details of this phenomenon cannot be unpacked in a few pages of a short essay, but this final section includes a snapshot of the Psalter's use in a particular time and place to point to its central place in the construction of the religious and literary lives of Western women.

With the growing influence of St. Benedict's rule, cloistered women and men read through the entire Psalter weekly and, in tenth-century Europe, developed an additional set of prayers and readings from the Psalms to be read at eight set times throughout the day. Called "The Little Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary," this devotional work began to circulate as an independent volume and, joined with other devotional material, formed the core of the Book of Hours (*Horae* in Latin, also called "Prymers" in English).¹⁶ The *Horae* soon became the standard book of popular devotion in Western Europe during the late Middle Ages and Renaissance, probably the most commonly available book during that time.

The significance of these *Horae* lay in their psalms-rich content and demonstrable use by women. Along with prayers and hymns, most *Horae* included at least fifty different psalms, and some were bound together with the entire Psalter.¹⁷ Evidence that women (both within and outside the cloister walls) used these *Horae* is indicated by ownership inscriptions, patron portraits, and feminine grammatical forms in the prayers.¹⁸ Although they were originally produced mainly for the aristocratic luxury market, more affordable versions also became available via mass production and the printing press.¹⁹ Even some who could not afford the cheapest versions were expected to memorize the contents: daily recitation of the "Little Office," the seven Penitential Psalms, and the Psalms of the Passion was a regular requirement of the poor living in almshouses throughout pre-Reformation England (Duffy 1992: 221).

The centrality of the Psalters and the *Horae* in prayer came to play a formative role in the basic education of both girls and boys. Already in the fifth century, Jerome advised Paula's young granddaughter to "learn the Psalter first" before reading the rest of the Bible.²⁰ To facilitate literacy in later periods, the *Horae* and Psalters regularly included a page containing the alphabet (some now smudged with small, tell-tale fingerprints) or glossed the Latin text with interlinear vernacular translations.²¹ The Psalms thus became the vehicle of literacy for generations of girls in the Western world.

Given the ancient proliferation of Davidic superscriptions, it is significant that readers of the *Horae* were often presented with visual imagery that provided a female lens through which to interpret the biblical texts. Illustrations from the life of David (as well as Jesus) were standard features of course, but so were those from the life of Mary and other women. For example, the de Brailes Hours opens each daily office with a full-page depiction of a scene from Christ's Passion and illustrates the decorated beginning letters of the Psalms and prayers (the historiated initials) with scenes from the life of Mary (Donovan 1991: 42–50; Wieck 1988: 60–88). Other *Horae* are decorated with the story of Susanna or Helena's discovery of the true cross,²² and the Gradual Psalms often depict Mary climbing up fifteen steps to the temple (Scott-Stokes 2000: 9). Given that the *Horae* include no page numbers or indices, the visual elements literally help the reader find their place in the text (Dücker 2009: 75–99). And, like the Psalter itself, that "place" can be navigated through the lives women and men throughout the ages.

This essay began by asking whether "all human life" can be found in the Psalms and whether women's voices can join with the prayers "one must say" while resisting androcentric agendas. The results of analyzing the divine images, women's portrayal in the Psalms, and women's use of the Psalms are obviously mixed. Clearly, the Psalms embrace certain aspects of women's lives and interests, including their victimization and vulnerability. Women have indeed found their voice and experience in these texts, and methods such as historical, textual, and literary criticism, as well as the fields of art history, gender studies, and popular religion promise even a more profound recovery of these ancient and contemporary voices.

Yet they are not sufficient resources for reconstructing the daily lives or cultic practice of ancient women, nor do they provide enough material to reconstruct a model of female religious actors adequate for contemporary feminist concerns. Instead of assuming (or hoping?) that the texts reflect a universal experience or piety, the goals of feminist interpretation require that the results of such recovery be evaluated from the different vantage points of feminist perspectives. There is great potential in the Psalms for feminist concerns, but just as they have been used to resist patriarchal values, they have also been used to support and reconstitute such values. There is therefore a risk that the recovery of women in the Psalms and presenting the texts as conducive for the spiritual lives of women may be used to reinscribe patriarchy and an imperialistic agenda on the reconstructions of the past and the liturgical resources of the present. Vigorous and ongoing feminist evaluation of the construction of God in the Psalms, their depiction of women, and their uses and reception remains an urgent task.

NOTES

1. According to Phyllis Trible, feminist criticism is "a critique of culture in light of misogyny" (1978: 7). See also Exum 1995: 65–69.
2. Although men, women, and God exhibit compassion throughout the Hebrew Bible (1 Kgs. 3:26; Gen. 43:30; Ps. 103:13), Trible points out that the adjectival form, "merciful" (*rahûm*), is applied only to God (1978: 38). See also Winter 1983: 531–35; Schroer 1998b: 173–76; Schroer 1995: 60–80, esp. 70.

3. God's *kēnāpayim* ("wings") are referenced in Pss. 17:8; 36:8[7]; 57:2[1]; 61:5[4]; 63:8[7]; 91:4. For discussion, see LeMon 2010; Schroer 1998a: 264–82.
4. From the root ŠDY. See Knauf 1995: 1416–23.
5. See, as merely one example of many who have made this point, McFague 1989: 139–50.
6. According to Nancy Bowen, the text is "a song of, by, and for patriarchy" (2003: 53–71, esp. 56).
7. Noted by Farmer 1992: 145–52, esp. 146. For a contrary view, see Brettler 2000: 298. Note also that Albert Pietersma has suggested that "it is not impossible" that the Greek translator of Psalms 52 and 87, who rendered *l mhl̄t* as *hyper maeleth* in the superscriptions, intended to refer to Maeleth (*mhl̄t*), the daughter of Ishmael in Gen. 28:9 (2005: 443–75, esp. 454, 461–62).
8. Less obvious examples include that of Carol Meyers, who suggests that the sense and syntax of Ps. 22:23[22] (where "my brothers" [ʿehā] is set in parallel to "congregation" [qāhāl]) indicates that the cultic audience for the speaker's praise of YHWH includes both men and women (Meyers 2000b: 297).
9. For a recent discussion, see Rendtorff 2005: 53–64.
10. Pss. 78; 89; 132; 18:52[51]; 122:5; and 144:10.
11. The biggest hurdle of this interpretation is interpreting the "enemies" in vv. 9–14 as the "social aspect" of the entreatant's need.
12. Tanner also reads Psalm 109 in light of the stories of Leah and Rachel (1998: 283–301).
13. Mandolfo discusses Psalm 7 (2002: 35–41; Mandolfo 2004: 33–46).
14. See Hopkins 2002, who refers to Western women's experience with obesity, the *han* of Korean women, and the suffering of black women to explicate various psalms (74–75, 112–113). See also Rienstra 1992: xv–xvi; Winter 1991.
15. Dube 2000 draws attention to the Bible's portrayal of people in distant lands as one aspect of postcolonial biblical interpretation. See also Kwok 2005 and McKinlay 2004.
16. The standard work on this development is Bishop 1918: 211–37. See also Leroquais 1927; Leroquais 1943.
17. For a chart listing the Psalms in the Hours of the Virgin according to the Use of Sarum, see Donovan 1991: 176–82. For the similar Roman Use, see Wieck 1988: 159–62. Other *Horae* include additional offices such as the Office of the Dead with twenty-two psalms (Wieck 1988: 166–76).
18. For numerous examples, see Duffy 2006: 1–64.
19. Duffy estimates that there were 57,000 printed copies in circulation in England in the two generations prior to the Reformation, some of which cost only a few pence (1992: 209–32).
20. Quoted by Abelard 2003: 124.
21. See, e.g., the Bolton Hours fol. 13^r and the fourteenth-century "Hunter" primer in Orme 2001: 248–49. There are also extant orders for such volumes: In 1403 Isabeau of Bavaria ordered an "a,b,c,d, des Psaumes" (cited in Bell 1982: 742–68, esp. 756). The feminine form in the prayer that closes an Anglo-Saxon glossed Psalter from Salisbury indicates that it was used by women learning to read Latin in a convent. See Sisam and Sisam 1959.
22. See the offices of the Passion in the De Bois Hours (New York, PML MS M. 700); Smith 2003: 85–95, Figs. 34, 366; Donovan 1991: 115–25.

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