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3 August 2017

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Expanding the Understanding Of '*Torah*':
An Exegetical Study of Psalm 1 As an Anthological Text

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Abstract

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This paper offers a fresh exegetical study on the poetry of Psalm 1 through an anthological perspective. This anthological lens will provide an expansion understanding of *Torah* in Psalm 1. The common consensus is that Psalm 1 is a wisdom-*Torah* psalm, which highlights that observance of the *Torah* is wisdom and it's a means to a blessed life. However, by including the anthological consideration in this text, the understanding of *Torah* is expanded. *Torah* in Psalm 1 not only alludes to the *Torah* of Moses but also to the *Torah* of Yahweh. The of *Torah* of Yahweh represents more than just observance of a set of law codes but it is itself a gift of Yahweh Himself. One who rejects this gift, the *Torah*, will be judged. But one who is devoted and committed to the *Torah* is lauded and commended.

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TRANSLATION OF PSALM 1

[Stanza 1]

O the blessedness of the man

who has not walked in the counsel of the wicked,

and has not stood in the way of sinners,

and has not sat in the seat of scoffers,

But in YHWH's law (*Torah*) is his delight,

in His law (*Torah*) he meditates day and night.

And he will be like a tree planted along the channels of water,

Which yields fruit in its season,

And whose leaves do not wither,

And with all he does, he prospers.

[Stanza 2]

Not so the wicked.

Rather, they are like chaff when the wind blows it away.

[Stanza 3]

Therefore, the wicked will not rise in the court of judgement,

Nor sinners in the gathering of the righteous.

Certainly, YHWH knows the way of the righteous

But the way of the wicked will perish.

INTRODUCTION

*Torah*¹ is the main literary character of Psalm 1. The general understanding of *Torah* referred here in this Psalm is from the Jewish understanding – a set of instructions or teaching. In this paper, I am establishing that through a uniquely post exilic mode of composition, *Torah* in Psalm 1 can be expanded from its common Jewish understanding. The expansion of the understanding of *Torah* is significant in that *Torah*, in Psalm 1, can be considered a lexeme to understanding not just the *Torah* in the Psalter but the *Torah* of Yahweh.

This essay offers an exegesis that corroborates the expansion of the understanding of *Torah* in Psalm 1, through an anthological reading of Psalm 1. Its purpose is twofold: First, to show how Psalm 1 as an anthological and poetic composition expands the traditional reading of *Torah* as a means to a blessed life; Secondly, is to show that in reading Psalm 1 anthologically, *Torah* in Psalm 1 can be considered a lexeme for understanding related meaning of *Torah* in the Psalms and collectively the *Torah* of God (Yahweh)

The initial question then focuses on how the presence of *Torah* in Psalms 1 is to be read and how it is connected to its purpose within the Psalter. With the nature of Psalm 1 being not of a single genre, this psalm should not be interpreted as an isolated wisdom poetry. There seems to be more to this psalm that relates to its purpose within the Psalter. Childs' opinion of Psalms that

¹ The Hebrew word *Torah* (תּוֹרָה) according to the *Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon* means, “direction, instruction, law”. Francis Brown, Samuel Rolles Driver, and Charles Augustus Briggs, *Enhanced Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), 435. This definition is the central understanding in Judaism. Rabbinic literature defines *Torah* as constituting of both “Written Torah” (the 5 books) and “Oral Torah” (interpretations and amplifications that are embodied in the Talmud and Midrash). Christian scholars often use *Torah* to refer to the Pentateuch (the first five books out of 24 books in the *Tanakh*). See also, Jacob Neusner, *The Emergence of Judaism* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2004), 57.

are not classified in a single genre is well worded as: “The Psalter [that] do not have a place in the *Gattungen* and *Sitze* of Psalm criticism, ...do have a place in the book.”²

Anthologies in The Old Testament

In noting anthologies or anthological styled writing, some of the earliest anthological styled writings can be found within Jewish literatures itself. The *Tanakh* or Hebrew Bible consist of a compilation of twenty-four different books. Although the English term ‘Bible’ is in singular form, the Greek translation, *ta biblia*, interpreted as “the books” is in the plural form. These are obvious original distinctiveness that the Bible or Scriptures is an anthological literature. So we begin with the agreed notion that anthologies do exist in the Bible. This original anthological distinctiveness can also be recognized when the codex, which is a collection of scrolls, was accepted by Christians from the second century onwards, and by the Jews in the post Talmudic era. This codex was not a single volume work, but a collection of writings which no one knew exactly how or what to call it. Ben Sira in *Ecclesiasticus*, referred to that collection of scrolls as “the Law, the Prophets and the other books”³. In the New Testament, the author of the gospel of Luke described it as “the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms”⁴. Other references to the collection of scrolls such as the rabbinic name *haSefarim*⁵ are translated as “the books” and the acronym *tanakh*, is translated as “the Torah, the Prophets and the writings”. Jerome’s connotation of the *Bibliothēca*, “the collection of books” nuances the anthological characteristic of the Bible.⁶

² James Luther Mays, "The Place of The Torah-Psalms in The Psalter", *Journal of Biblical Literature* 106, no. 1 (1987): 3-12, 3.

³ Richard G. Moulton, *Ecclesiasticus Modern Reader's Bible* (New York: Macmillan, 1896), 5.

⁴ See Luke 24:44

⁵ Cf. Daniel 9:2

⁶ David Stern, *The Anthology in Jewish Literature* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 15.

The anthological distinctiveness of the entire corpus of the Bible is also a specifically common style of writing within some individual books of the Bible. The anthological style in individual books such as Psalms, Proverbs and the minor prophets simply means that these books are compilations of works or speeches by the author. Sometimes such compilations of different sources are done implicitly without explicitly noting the borrowing or replicating of a certain source. Such implicit anthological styled writings can be found in Isaiah, Hosea, Micah, and Zechariah. On the other hand, there are explicit anthological styled writings found in the Psalms. These borrowing, alluding and compilations of works from other sources certainly points its readers to the real purpose of that Psalm.

This anthological mode of composition is a useful tool to explore the question of the genre of psalms that are not confined to a single genre. Psalms with mixed form genre are recognized by the psalm's use of varied ideas, images and themes. Psalm 1 and 119 are two common Psalms that fall into such mixed genre classification. Some studies have classified Psalms 1 and 119 as wisdom psalms and *Torah* psalms. The question is in the labelling of Psalm 1 and Psalm 119 as "*Torah* psalms" and if that label can even be noted as a genre. According to James Mays, Psalm 1 and 119 "do not fit easily into any of the accepted genres" but they have "notable influence in the shaping of the Psalter"⁷. Mays listed in his article, a group of Psalms including Psalms 1 and 119 functions in the final shaping of the Psalter.⁸ Mays also noted that, "they all belong to the [collection] ... [that] have been developed by *Torah* interests."⁹ In other words, the label "*Torah* psalms" need

⁷ Mays, "The Place of The Torah-Psalms in The Psalter", 3.

⁸ Mays groups Psalm 18; 19b; 25; 33; 89; 93; 94; 99; 103; 105; 111; 112; 147; 148 as wisdom psalms forming the final shape of the Psalter. See Mays, *The Place of The Torah-Psalms in The Psalter*, 8.

⁹ Mays, "The Place of The Torah-Psalms in The Psalter", 8.

not be discarded but we can follow its lead is as a guide that refers to a grouping of Psalms related to “*Torah*” theme but do not establish a “*Torah* psalms” genre.¹⁰

Psalm 1 – An Anthological Composition

It is here that I must acknowledge, Alfons Deissler for his major work on Psalm 119, where he identified the ‘anthological’ style in which he calls it *Mischgattung* (mixed genre)¹¹. This identification of *Mischgattung* sheds light as to how we can look at the psalms that do not fit easily into any of the accepted genres. Though his methodology has been criticized but there is an aspect of his argument that is convincingly sufficient to prove that anthology is another essential step to reading the Psalm correctly. He notes that the *Mischgattung* (mixed genre) text is composed in a style that creatively alludes, borrows, re-reads and re-expresses portions of wisdom texts, prophetic texts and parts of the Torah. These anthological elements are critical clues to understanding the author’s influences, intentions and message.¹² Similarly, the *Mischgattung* that describes Psalm 119’s use of “diverse motifs and locutions”¹³ is also a constitutive feature employed by the author of Psalm 1. The author or editor of Psalm 1 “draws images and phrases from various parts of the Scripture... among these parts of Scriptures are the books of, Joshua, Jeremiah, Job, Ezekiel and Psalms”¹⁴.

¹⁰ Kent Aaron Reynolds, *Torah As Teacher* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 27.

¹¹ Alfons Deissler, *Psalm 119 (118) Und Seine Theologie* (München: Zink, 1955), 268, 277.

¹² Reynolds, *Torah As Teacher*, 27.

¹³ Reynolds, *Torah As Teacher*, 27. Gunkel who also agrees that Psalm 119 is an example of *Mischgattung*. See Hermann Gunkel, Joachim Begrich and James D Nogalski, *Introduction to Psalms*. (Macon: Mercer University Press, 1998), 306.

¹⁴ Phil Botha, "Intertextuality and The Interpretation of Psalm 1", *Old Testament Essays* 18, no. 3 (2005): 503-520, 517.

Reading Psalm 1 anthologically begins first by recognizing the varied features, images and other elements within the text. But without explaining the function and purpose of these varied elements that make up the composition of Psalm 1 will only complicate matters. In this paper, I will be researching using the same literary feature (anthological styled writing) used by Deissler, but only to interpret more clearly the meaning of *Torah* in Psalm 1. I will not be studying the literary feature identified by Deissler to argue for a relationship between the text of Psalm 1 and its other borrowed texts. Therefore, the anthological styled writing will only serve as a rubric for interpreting Psalm 1 to further investigate the purpose of the possible expansion of the term *Torah* that the author of Psalm 1 had intended.

EXEGESIS AND ANTHOLOGICAL INSIGHTS OF PSALM 1:1–6

From the onset, the Psalms were accepted as poetry. In the findings of the Dead Sea Scrolls in Qumran, we see a little more than ten scrolls had the Psalms written in poetically lineated structure.¹⁵ Watson and Bullough are among the minority of scholars who disagree that Psalm 1 is poetry.¹⁶ However it is has been proven a possibility for Hebrew poetry to obtain a free and rhythmic form as well.¹⁷ In this exegetical study of Psalm 1, I will consider Psalm 1 as poetry that consists of three stanzas. The first stanza starts off with an opening introductory line “Blessed is

¹⁵ In Emanuel Tov’s table of *Manuscripts of Poetical Texts Displaying a Stichographic Layout*, Psalm 1 is does not appear to be preserved in any of the findings of poetically lineated psalms. Emanuel Tov, *Scribal Practices and Approaches Reflected in The Texts Found In The Judean Desert* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2009), 157-158.

¹⁶ Wilfred Watson is unsure of the poetry form. Wilfred G. E. Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 2009), 45. Bullough disagrees by claiming that the structure of Psalm 1 is “plain rhythmic prose” that is absent of meter. See Sebastian Bullough, “The Question of Metre in Psalm 1”, *Vetus Testamentum* 17, no. 1 (1967): 42-49.

¹⁷ Alan Holder, *Rethinking Meter: A New Approach to the Verse Line* (Lewisburg: London Associated University Press, 1995). Holder notes, “there is no absolute basis for differentiating between poetry and prose”. He quoted: “the differentia of poetry is the verse line; it is hard to overestimate its importance in creating the poetic rhythm and the very being of the poem.” Holder, *Rethinking Meter*, 135.

the man...” in a well-balanced lineation of a triplet, followed by a couplet, and a quatrain. The second stanza then takes a drastic shift to a couplet of unequal lines, equating it to the lifestyle of the wicked person. The structure of the second stanza intends to capture the attention of its readers to its obviously imbalanced lineation – a one-liner stanza! The final couplet of the third stanza concludes with a dramatic closure of divine goodness, and vindication even while evil still exist.

The Blessedness of the Person Who Walks in The Ways of The *Torah* (vv. 1–3)

Psalm 1:1 begins with a proclamation of blessedness, “How blessed is the man...” (NASB). The translation from the Masoretic Text (MT) reads, “the blessed man” (שִׂיֵּאֵהֶיָּרְשָׁא). Both the Latin Vulgate (Vg.) and the Septuagint (LXX) interprets the opening phrase similarly, “blessed is the man”, while the Targum (Tg.) and Syriac (Syr.) interprets it as “goodness” or “fortunes”. In the Hebrew Bible, the word רִשָּׁא could mean “blessedness” or “happiness”.¹⁸ Stemming from the root רִשָּׁא, it juxtaposes another word, בָּרַךְ “to bless”. This juxtaposition clarifies the opening word “blessedness” רִשָּׁא here does not denote a promise of a blessing. A word study on the use of רִשָּׁא throughout the MT shows that this word never occurs with somekind of involvement with Yahweh.¹⁹ If the רִשָּׁא in the opening phrase was meant to be a promise or assurance of blessing, surely it would have been a promise assured by Yahweh (some kind of involvement with Yahweh) would have been noted. Since Yahweh’s involvement is not nuanced, one can reasonably conclude that רִשָּׁא would carry a tone of commendation, and “blessedness” would be a better translation of

¹⁸ Francis Brown, Samuel Rolles Driver, and Charles Augustus Briggs, *Enhanced Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), 80.

¹⁹ C. L. Seow. “An Exquisitely Poetic Introduction to the Psalter”, *Journal of Biblical Literature* 132, no. 2 (2013): 275-293. Seow notes that “the verb אשר is never used with God as the subject or object”, only Psalm 41:3 אשר comes close to only implying of Yahweh’s involvement. Seow, “An Exquisitely Poetic Introduction to the Psalter”, 277.

רשע.²⁰ This opening line functions as an introduction to Psalter by lauding or commending (not promising a life of blessings) the one who would live by the ways of the *Torah*.

After the opening phrase, the poem begins with a triplet in verse 1. The triplet comprises of synonymous parallelisms reflected in the verbs in each line:

*...who has not walked (initial action) in the counsel of the wicked,
And has not stood (continuing action) in the way of sinners,
And has not sat (comfortable abiding action) in the seat of scoffers,*

Each line demonstrates a declining of conduct. The decline begins with the action of walking in the counsel of the wicked followed by the action of standing in the way of sinners. The persistence in wickedness, culminates to the action of sitting or remaining in the seat of scoffers.²¹ Alter sees that the set of verbs does not merely function as a list of actions of one who does not live by the *Torah*, but more importantly the verbs progresses line by line in a rhetorical crescendo. An intensifying the action of one who does not live by the *Torah*. The intensification verbs and situation in verse 1 shows the downward spiral from being in the presence of bad company, to heading down in a bad direction which ended up in the person settling down comfortably among the ungodly. Yet, the righteous person resisted every of these ungodly scenarios with a triple negation “not” in the first triplet. The negations “not” become significant when we note that the negated verbs in verse 1 are in the perfect (*qatal*) aspect²². The perfected aspect views the situation from the ““outside” as whole and complete...[and] expresses totality without dividing up its

²⁰ Mayer Irwin Gruber. *Rashi's Commentary on Psalms 1-89, Books I-III* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998). Rashi, in his Psalms commentary renders the word רשע in Psalm 1 as “laudations” or “the commendations...the praises of a person”. Gruber, *Rashi's Commentary on Psalms 1-89*, 49.

²¹ The idea of a degeneration of conduct is generally noted by both Christian and Jewish interpreters. Cf. G. W Anderson "A Note on Psalm I 1." *Vetus Testamentum* 24, no.2 (April 1974): 231-233.

²² The Targum and Syriac uses the perfected *qatal* aspect but the OG and Vg. employs the imperfect (*viqtol*) aspect.

internal temporal structure.”²³ Hence it causes the readers to view the commitment the of righteous person to avoid the ways of the ungodly as a completed aspect. In other words, the righteous person’s commitment to “not walk, not stand and not sit” was decided sometime back.²⁴ C. L. Seow who concurs with the significance of employing the perfect (*qatal*) aspect to the negated verbs notes that, “this poem is not about anyone at all but about anyone who has already made a commitment to faith.”²⁵ This insight is coherent and confirmed by the Masoretic accents marks.

Then as if almost immediately, verse 2 enters the poetry with a sudden contrasting “but”; presenting the alternative action in which the commendable person is committed to instead.

*But in YHWH’s law (Torah) is his delight,
in His law (Torah) he meditates day and night.*

This time the imperfect (*yiqtol*) aspect is employed so that one may “view the situation from the inside”²⁶, giving insights to the internal nature of the action of “delighting” and “meditating”. The adverbs that modify the imperfect verbs establishes the continual and habitual internal nature of “delighting” and “meditating”. The poetic lines in this couplet, expands and amplifies the preceding line. In line 1 of this couplet, one may note that the continuing nature of “delighting in the *Torah*” leads to the nature of “engaging in the *Torah* day and night” in the preceding line. The “law” or *Torah* used in the MT could be alluded to the idea of “direction” or “way”. This “direction” or “way” idea was reflected in the triplet that came before this couplet. It would make sense now for the couplet that comes after the triplet to pick up this same idea of “direction”, using the word

²³Gary A. Long, *Grammatical Concepts 101 for Biblical Hebrew: Learning Biblical Hebrew Grammatical Concepts through English Grammar* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001), 92 -93.

²⁴ See Norbert Lohfink “Die einsamkeit des Gerechten: Zu Psalm 1”, *Im Schatten deiner Flugel* (1999): 162-163.

²⁵ Seow, "An Exquisitely Poetic Introduction to The Psalter", 282.

²⁶ Long, *Grammatical Concepts 101*, 94.

Torah. Contrast to the triplet where a person could be enticed to follow and remain in the “direction” of the wicked, the couplet is about Yahweh’s “direction” through the *Torah* becoming the “way” the commendable person follows in.

“And he will be like...”, a simile begins verse 3 which comprises of a quatrain that draws a connection notably to Jeremiah 17:8 with the similar imagery of a “tree planted by the water”. The commendable person here is likened to the imagery of the tree. The tree is significant as Brown states: “the free-standing tree-pillars that flank the entrance to the temple.”²⁷ Brown further comments that the Psalm replaces the temple with the *Torah*.²⁸ The connection seen in the third verse is that the commendable person who engages in the *Torah* will be sturdily secure and rooted like the trees or the tree-pillars of the temple. Like the security the temple provides, the *Torah* now replaces the temple and is the real assurance of security. Creach points out that Psalm 1:3 implies the “shift in the perceived source of safety from temple to *Torah*.”²⁹ The poetic lines of this quatrain enhances the language of the “tree”. The lines within this quatrain convey the flourishing of the “tree” with descriptions of the tree “yielding fruit”, “leaves that do not wither” and “flourishing in every way”. Similar to the preceding verses, each line intensifies. Here the intensification of the flourishing tree is alluded to the flourishing of the commendable person who intensely engages in the *Torah*. Unlike the downward spiraled direction of the wicked, the direction of the commendable person, is a well-directed one. As the commendable person progresses, he leads a gradually flourishing life. The central metaphor of “way” or “direction” is also obviously kept in this third verse.

²⁷ William P. Brown, *Seeing the Psalms: A Theology of Metaphor* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002), 75.

²⁸ Brown, *Seeing the Psalms*, 75.

²⁹ Jerome E. D. Creach, "Like a Tree Planted by the Temple Stream: The Portrait of the Righteous in Psalm 1:3." *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 6, no. 1 (1999): 34-46, 46.

Anthological Insights of Psalm 1:1–3

The author of Psalm 1 made adaptations from Psalm 37, Psalm 119 and some early chapters of Proverbs to draw out a spectrum of definitions on the *Torah*. The close adaptations of images and allusions of these texts in Psalm 1, show: (1) observance of *Torah* is true wisdom that leads one to the blessing; (2) It also speaks of the individual's attachment and devoted engagement to *Torah* because *Torah* is 'the blessing' for one's life.

Observance of Torah as True Wisdom That Leads to the Blessing

Psalm 1 is undoubtedly a psalm with wisdom themes. The opening line of Psalm 1 "O the Blessedness of the one" would remind its readers of the wisdom texts such as Proverbs 2:13; 8:34; 28:14. These texts lauds or commends the person who pursues wisdom. Wisdom themes are obviously anthological evidence within Psalm 1. Many of the wisdom ideas in Psalm 1 have been drawn out of the book of Proverbs but also reinterpreted and rephrased from other texts which the author thought of as authoritative. In 2006, Bernard Gosse demonstrated in his article how Psalm 1 drew from the "wisdom" context of Proverbs 1:103 by replacing "wisdom" with "*Torah*".³⁰ The context of Proverbs 1:20–23 concerns the consequence of the "simple minded ones" and the "scoffers". The themes of the "simple minded ones" and "scoffers" was taken up by Psalms 19 and 119 and adapted into Psalm 1:1–2. The personification of wisdom as *Torah* by the editor of Psalm 1 calls to the "simple minded ones" as interpreted in Psalms 19³¹ and 119³². The "testimony" (Ps 19:8 תוֹדָעַ) of Yahweh and the "words" (Ps 119:130, יְמִרְבָּךְ) of Yahweh are the allusions of

³⁰ Bernard Gosse, "Le Livre Des Proverbes, La Sagesse, La Loi Et Le Psautier", *Études théologiques et religieuses* 81, no. 3 (2006): 387-394, 387-393.

³¹ Psalm 19:8, The "testimony" תוֹדָעַ of Yhwh

³² Psalm 119:130, The "words" יְמִרְבָּךְ of Yhwh

wisdom that the author of Psalm 1 drew from these other psalms respectively into the term “Torah” in Psalm 1:2. The echoes of Proverbs 1: 22 reprimanding “scoffers” can be found in Psalm 119:51 and then also in Psalm 1: 1. These inspirations drawn from Proverbs 1:20–23, Psalm 19 and Psalm 119 is intentional by the author of Psalm 1 to expanding *Torah*, from merely meaning a set of instructions to essentially *Torah* being the true wisdom of Yahweh. The language used within the first two verses of Psalm 1 shows it being closely related to the wisdom terminologies in the book of Proverbs and other Psalms that drew from Proverbs. Such use of closely related language to the wisdom terminologies proves that the Psalm 1 was inspired by other sources which the author considered as authoritative texts.

With *Torah* now being established in Psalm 1:2 as true wisdom of Yahweh, the author of Psalm 1 then expounds further on the benefits of pursuing “true wisdom” by drawing upon the “land imagery” from Psalm 37³³ and Proverbs 2³⁴ where the righteous will inherit the land. I would further argue that the purpose in adapting these two texts into Psalm 1 is to ascertain that *Torah*, which is true wisdom, leads one to inheriting the blessing (inheritance of the land). This connection is supported by Botha’s notion that Psalm 1 and Psalm 37 are related by the understanding that “‘success’ [relates to] eventual inheritance of the Promised Land, and attachment to the *Torah*...”³⁵ Psalm 37 clearly piece together the essentials of observance of the *Torah*. The pious life seems to be the theme emphasized throughout Psalm 37, highlighting the importance of trusting in Yahweh (Ps 37:3, 5)³⁶, practicing what is upright and faithful (Ps 37:3, 27)³⁷, delighting in Yahweh (Ps

³³ See. Psalm 37: 11, 18, 22, 27, 29, 35.

³⁴ See. Proverbs 2: 20–22

³⁵ Phil Botha, “Interpreting ‘Torah’ in Psalm 1 in the light of Psalm 119”, *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 68, no. 1, Art. #1274, (2012): 1–7, 2.

³⁶ cf. Proverbs 3:5

³⁷ cf. Proverbs 3:27

37:4), living humbly (Ps 37:11)³⁸, being generous towards others (Ps. 37:21)³⁹ and finding shelter in Yahweh (Ps 37:40)⁴⁰. In Psalm 37, the reward of such pious lifestyle through observance of the *Torah* is the inheritance of the Land. This importance of observance of *Torah* in Psalm 37 was also clearly on the mind of the author of Psalm 1. The author of Psalm 1 employed the emphasis of Psalm 37 using the triplets in Psalm 1:1. The triplets with the triple negation, followed by the perfected (*qatal*) verbs precisely tells of a life of piety in a succession of actions that a righteous person chooses not to be engaged in because those actions contradict the *Torah*. From the onset, it is obvious that the importance of observance of the *Torah* in Psalm 1 is a borrowed and reinterpreted theme from Psalm 37 and the book of Proverbs. Hence from this anthological standpoint, one may suggest that the author of Psalm 1 shares the same conviction as with the author of Psalm 37 that observance of the *Torah* is the means to a blessed life. This is once again accompanied by images borrowed from Psalm 37. The images of the ungodly withering like green herbs (Ps 37:2 נבל) and a ruthless man flourishing like a luxuriant tree (Ps 37:35 זָרְחָאֵץ נֹרֵץ) is cleverly employed but in an inversed manner in Psalm 1. The author of Psalm 1 inversed the borrowed images into a description about the righteous flourishing, like trees whose leaves do not wither and bearing fruits⁴¹ (Ps 1:3). Another image that is used inversely in Psalm 1 is the advice of Psalm 37:7 to the righteous to not fret at the success (צלח) of evildoers. In Psalms 1:3 inverts that idea of “success” to a description of the righteous being successful and prospering⁴². Echoing that the theme that observance of the *Torah* is a means or way towards success. These anthological observations of reinterpretation of the images in Psalm 37, by inverting the images tells us that the

³⁸ cf. Proverbs 3:34

³⁹ cf. Proverbs 14:21, 31

⁴⁰ cf. Proverbs 30:5

⁴¹ cf. Proverbs 1:31 “evildoers eating the *fruit* of their way (מִפְרֵי דַרְכָּם)”

⁴² “The contrasts between the righteous and the wicked is an important motif in both Psalm 1 and Psalm 119 and both use the metaphor of path to figure behavior. These details cannot be mere coincidence...” See Reynolds, *Torah As Teacher*, 152.

author of Psalm 1 wanted the readers to know something more than what Psalm 37 has to say. Psalm 37 seems to be calling the righteous to be patient even when evil doers are “flourishing” like trees and “succeeding” in their wicked ways. But Psalm 1 recaptured these images of “flourishing” and “success” as images of blessings or hallmarks of a righteous man. Such images of blessings especially the image of faithfulness to Yahweh’s command leads to blessings likened to the fruitfulness of a tree is found in other instances⁴³ too. Leviticus 26:3–4 especially, is a closely linked instance that seems to parallel what the author of Psalm 1 is trying to communicate with these images of blessings:

“If you follow הַלְךָ my decrees and are careful to obey my commands הִשַׁע, I will send you rain in its season עֵתָּב and the ground will yield נָתַן its crops and the trees פָּרִי of the field their fruit.”

Therefore, it is possible from an anthological perspective that the author of Psalm 1 was inspired by more than one sources by employing literary rephrasing of scriptural texts that was considered by the author as authoritative.

Torah of Yahweh is ‘the Blessing’

Having discussed the wisdom forms in the term “*Torah*” within Psalm 1, another striking feature about this Psalm is the association of wisdom to a specific term, “*Torah* of Yahweh” (יהוה) (תורה) in Psalm 1:2. This phrase “*Torah* of Yahweh” is unique as it is only found in Psalm 1, Psalm 19 and Psalm 119. And in Psalm 1 and Psalm 19, both speaks of the person “delighting” (הפיץ) in the *Torah* of Yahweh. The idea of “*Torah* of Yahweh” is an idea that is borrowed from Joshua 1:7,

⁴³ cf. Deuteronomy 11:14; 26:2, 10; 28:11–12.

8, Jeremiah 17:5–8⁴⁴ and 1 Chronicles 22:12. In Joshua 1 we can see the idea of meditating on the Law that the author of Psalm 1 is borrowing from. The *Torah* in Joshua is referred to as “the Law (*Torah*) of Moses”. However in 1 Chronicles 22:12 the *Torah* is being labeled as the *Torah of Yahweh* instead: “May Yahweh give you discretion and understanding when he puts you in command over Israel, so that you may keep the law (*Torah*) of Yahweh your God.”⁴⁵ Citing Reynolds,

“the expression “*Torah* of Yahweh” in Psalm 1... may have an expansion of meaning, which in Chronicles was not yet intended...Psalm 1 intentionally uses the term “*Torah* of Yahweh” which has a somewhat broader scope [broader than “*Torah* of Moses”] and increases the authority and thereby points to an entity outside of the Psalter, surely the Pentateuch and in all likelihood also already the collection of the Former and Latter Prophets...”⁴⁶

According to Reynolds, the formulation, “*Torah* of Yahweh” in Psalm 1 came later after the formulation in Chronicles. And the formulation in Chronicles is related and maybe even influenced by other sources of work such as the Pentateuch, the prophets and the writings of the latter prophets. With all these wide range of sources supplementing the idea of *Torah*, the author of Psalm 1, intentionally used “*Torah* of Yahweh” to show the collectiveness of the *Torah* and *Torah* encompasses more than just wisdom teaching or a set of instructions –there is just more to it! There is a literary entity that includes, “primarily the Pentateuch and in addition the later part of the canon, the ‘Prophets’ which is based on the *Torah*”⁴⁷. Since there is more to *Torah* than just a piece of wisdom literature, the author of Psalm 1 fuses devotion to the *Torah* and the person’s relationship

⁴⁴ Kratz and Reynolds both concurred that this formulation in Psalm 1:2 is supplemented by Joshua 1:7, 8 and Jeremiah 17:5–8 too. See. Reinhard Gregor Kratz, "Die Tora Davids: Psalm 1 Und Die Doxologische Fünfteilung Des Psalters: Odil Hannes Steck Zum 60. Geburtstag", *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche* 93, no. 1 (1996): 1-34. *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche* 93 (1996): 1-34, 6. See also Reynolds, *Torah As Teacher*, 160-161.

⁴⁵ Reynolds, *Torah As Teacher*, 161. Reynolds adds that “1 Chronicles assumes its parallel verse in 1 Kings 2:3, which in turn sounds like the passage in Joshua 1: 7–9.” All these layers are evidence of anthological composition within Psalm 1.

⁴⁶ Reynolds, *Tora As Teacher*, 161.

⁴⁷ Reynolds, *Torah As Teacher*, 162.

with Yahweh. For the author of Psalm 1 is implying that no observance of the *Torah* (as exemplified in Ps 1:1) can be without commitment to Yahweh through the delighting (יִפְתֵּחַ) and meditating (הִגִּיד) on the *Torah*. “Either one – a relationship with God [Yahweh] or a relationship with *Torah* – entails the other; they are inseparably intertwined”.⁴⁸ Hence the verbs delighting (יִפְתֵּחַ) and meditating (הִגִּיד) in the *Torah* presents the righteous person is not only devoted to observances of the *Torah*, but also to the study of the *Torah*. The righteous person’s love for the *Torah* is shown through the keenness and joy for Yahweh the revealer of the *Torah* to teach him day and night. It is this message that *Torah* is not just a precondition to a blessed life but *Torah* is itself a gift – a self-revelation of Yahweh, that the author of Psalm 1 is trying to present to its readers. Only when a person observes and study (delighting and meditating) the *Torah*, he is then lauded as “the Blessed one!” (Ps 1:1). This expansion of *Torah* as the gift is supplemented by Psalms 119 which similarly attached the description of the joy in meditation and continual engagement with the *Torah*. Botha notes that Psalm 119 argues, “that success and blessedness is to be able to walk in the *Torah* of Yahweh”⁴⁹

The same ‘anthological’ and comprehensive understanding of *Torah* identified in Psalm 1:1–3 brings together the various texts’ understanding of *Torah* by replaying these images, fusing the themes and recasting the focus on *Torah* not only as the means to a blessed life but it is itself *the blessing*.

The Life of the Person Who Does Not Walk in The Ways of The *Torah* (v. 4)

⁴⁸ Reynolds, *Torah As Teacher*, 77.

⁴⁹ Phil Botha, “Interpreting ‘*Torah*’ in Psalm 1 in the light of Psalm 119”, *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 68, no. 1, Art. #1274, (2012): 1–7, 2.

Half of the poetic lines in this entire Psalm alludes to the life of the person who walks in the way of the *Torah*. Now, in verse 4, the poetry shifts to contrast the life of the ungodly. The author of Psalm 1 performs a literary contrast by employing a brilliant linguistic feature. The poetic lines of verse 4 is structured in an uncommon poetic style to highlight the contrast of the both ways of life – the godly versus the ungodly. Verse 4 of the Psalm, employs imbalanced and disappearing lines within the stanza:

*Not so the wicked.
Rather, they are like chaff when the wind blows it away.*

The words used in this brief line of verse 4 is carefully chosen by the poet to contrast the metaphors of the way of the person who follows the ways of the *Torah*. The metaphors portray the ungodly as lightweight and insecure just like “chaff” that “the wind blows away”. Unlike “tree”, the ungodly is likened to “chaff” that is insignificant (no worth) and has no standing (no roots) in any location. Neither does it produces any good (not fruitful). Throughout the Bible the imagery of “chaff” being scattered is used in relation to the judgment of the ungodly (Job 21:18; Ps 35:5; Isa 17:13, 29:5; Hos 13:3; Matt 3:12). The Old Greek translation reads: “ου οὔτως ὁ ἀσεβής, ου οὔτως” (not so the ungodly, not so). This translation of having and additional “ου οὔτως” (not so) added in the first line of verse 4 is only found in Origen’s Old Greek. Kraus commented that the Old Greek added the extra “not so” to lengthen the first line of verse 4, thus giving it more balance in its poetic lineation.⁵⁰ It seems that the Old Greek is also using literary feature to emphasize the contrast of the life of the ungodly person, more than a misinterpretation of the Hebrew text (since the Hebrew text does not have the extra “not so”). Erasmus concurs with this hermeneutical

⁵⁰ Hans-Joachim Kraus, *Psalms 1-59* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publ. House, 1988). 1-2.

expression in the Old Greek on Psalm 1:4.⁵¹ The second line of the verse 4 the Old Greek again emended with an additional phrase: “ἀλλ’ ἢ ὡς ὁ χνους, ὃν ἐκρίπτει ὁ ἄνεμος ἀπὸ προσώπου της γης” (Rather, they are like chaff, that the wind blows away *from the face of this earth*). Again, we see the hermeneutical attempt rather than an altered translation from the original Hebrew text. The Old Greek picked up on the hermeneutical undertone of the author Hebrew text the imbalanced couplet of Psalm 1:4. Hence the Old Greek sounded that undertone rhetorically in its translation of Psalm 1:4. The “Old Greek adds ‘from the face of the earth’ at the end of the couplet to emphasize the completeness of their removal.”⁵²

Konrad Schaefer noted that chaffs were used throughout the Hebrew Bible to symbolize, “inconsistency and impermanence”⁵³ the outcome being “chaffs” is that they will be “blown away”. Just like that, the poetic lines in that second stanza ended. The imbalanced couplet of disappearing lines in the second stanza, creates that powerful linguistic and portrayal of the “blowing away” of the ungodly. Seow aptly comments, “In a single imbalanced couplet, the wicked are poetically blown away.”⁵⁴

However, the uncommon poetic lineation of verse 4 still causes some doubts in some scholars if such imbalanced poetic lines can stand alone as a stanza. There are scholars who would propose to view verse 4 being connected to verse 5 and 6, arguing that these three verses can be grouped into a stanza because the lines in these verses are focusing on the life of the ungodly. Milton for example, argues for this connection because he sees the *לְכָל־עַ* (therefore [the wicked] ...) in verse 5 being related to the *לְכָל־עַ* (not so; rather [the wicked]) in verse 4.⁵⁵ On the other hand,

⁵¹ See Seow, "An Exquisitely Poetic Introduction to The Psalter", 286.

⁵² Seow, "An Exquisitely Poetic Introduction to The Psalter", 286.

⁵³ Konrad Schaefer and David W. Cotter. *Psalms* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 2001). 7.

⁵⁴ Seow, "An Exquisitely Poetic Introduction to The Psalter", 287.

⁵⁵ John Milton and John Shawcross, *The Complete English Poetry of John Milton* (New York: New York University Press, 1963), 206.

Rashi notes “verse 5 is joined by the conjunction *כִּלְיֶֽע* (therefore) linking verse 5 to verse 6 rather than to verse 4.”⁵⁶ In other words Rashi finds acceptable to see verse 4 as a possibility to stand alone despite its uncommon lineation in Hebrew poetry while verse 5 and 6 stands together as a concluding stanza of the psalm. The connection between verse 5 and 6 makes more sense as a concluding verse summing up the end picture of both ways of life – the way of life of the commendable person and the way of life of the ungodly or wicked. One continues to find the literary contrast feature in describing the difference between the both ways of life become clearer when verse 4 is left as an intentionally imbalanced couplet standing on its own as its own stanza. The *כִּלְיֶֽע* (not so; rather) in verse 4 has more connection to *יָבֹא* (but) verse 2 – “*But* in YHWH’s law (*Torah*) is his delight, in His law (*Torah*) he meditates day and night. The connection is the contrast drawn of the lifestyle of the ungodly (vs. 4) compared to the lifestyle of the godly (vs. 2). The lifestyle of the ungodly are: “rather” but chaffs (vs. 4); “But” (vs 2) in contrast, the righteous, they “rather” delight in the *Torah* and meditate upon in day and night. With verse 4 more closely linked to verse 2 than verse 5, it suffices the suggestion that the term *כִּלְיֶֽע* (rather) in verse 5 serves as a closure term that is linked with verse 6. The term *כִּלְיֶֽע* (rather) in verse 5 is closure term and not a term that continues or carries on an earlier idea. If *כִּלְיֶֽע* (therefore) of verse 5 is a closure term, then verse 5 and 6 may have its own message that is different from the message of verse 4. If so, then verse 5 and 6 have its own concluding message and is not only the emphases on the life of the ungodly who doesn’t walk in the ways of the *Torah*. The significant of this closure term proposal in reading verse 5 and 6 will be further discussed in the next section of the paper.

⁵⁶ Gruber, *Rashi's Commentary on Psalms 1-89*, 51.

Future of the Both Ways of Life (v. 5-6)

*Therefore, the wicked will not rise in the court of judgement,
Nor sinners in the gathering of the righteous.
Certainly, YHWH knows the way of the righteous
But the way of the wicked will perish.*

כִּלְיֶֽע “Therefore” (verse 5) is a closure statement of “later effects not a proposed or anticipated response”⁵⁷. It is clear that, כִּלְיֶֽע “therefore” in verse 5 is a later effect of verse 4, “the ungodly are not so, but they are like chaff”. The ungodly “will not rise (or stand) in the court of judgment” (vs. 5). The verb ‘rise’ or ‘stand’ in verse 5 connects with the verb ‘stand’ in verse 1, when the righteous did not ‘stand’ in the ways of sinners. “...The ungodly on the other hand who stood in the ways of sinners now they will not be able to even stand in the judgment among the godly”⁵⁸. Also, by the conclusion of the Psalm there is an obvious quantitative increase of the “righteous and godly ones”. The “righteous” was singular in the beginning of the Psalm. Then, the author of the Psalm assures its readers that the “righteous” flourish, grow and prosper like a tree. The assurance that the author of the Psalm implied is one that is of secure flourishing and soon thereafter in verse 5 we see that the ‘righteous person’ increased to an ‘assembly of righteous’ that the ungodly will not be able to stand amongst. In contrast, the wicked, they may be many, but surely, they will be blown away (vs. 4), they will not be able to stand firm (vs. 5) and they will be finished (vs. 6).

In the brief lines of verse 6, a demonstration of Yahweh reciprocating the faithfulness of the commendable person who constantly meditates on the *Torah* is revealed. The poet begins verse 6

⁵⁷ Bruce K. Waltke, James M. Houston and Erika Moore. *The Psalms as Christian Worship: A Historical Commentary*. (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2010), 141.

⁵⁸ Cf. Matt 25:32

with an assuring tone, *דַע־יְהוָה יִכַף־יְהוָה* “*certainly* Yahweh knows”⁵⁹. It is an encompassing kind of knowing of Yahweh. It is the implication of the ‘fullness’ of the wisdom of Yahweh that will accompany the way or the path of the person who walks in the ways of the *Torah*. In the Old Testament, this verb *דע* (to know) has been used both ways as Yahweh the one who “knows” all things both the good and the evil (cf. Ps 93:11; Jer 1:5); and the second use is Yahweh’s people are also the ones who should “know” the character and relationship Yahweh has with His people (Deu 4:35, 7:9; Ps 45:10; Jer 9:24). It is clear in the Hebrew Bible the use of the word *דע* (know) reflects a relationship between Yahweh and the righteous (ones who ‘know’ of the covenant relationship between Yahweh and his people). Although the *Torah* is the tool to “know” Yahweh. It is more than a piece of legislation or a manual book that is imposed upon the people of Yahweh. *Torah* is a means to viewing Yahweh’s initiative of establishing a relationship with His people. Without the *Torah* one will not be on the path of “knowing” Yahweh and thus missing out on the relationship Yahweh wants to initiate with us. In verse 6 the poet brings back the imagery of the “direction, “path” or “way”; concluding that the choice of the commendable person will have his or her path guided by the full wisdom and knowledge of God. But the one who choose to indulge in sin and wickedness will have God absent in his or her path. And as the Psalm has clarified that if God is not present, the destination of the wicked is destruction and “they will perish”. The choice of word play in the final verse is interesting to note too. The final word of Psalm 1, *אֶהְרֹס* (perish) in the Hebrew bible ends with final letter of the Hebrew alphabet (*taw* ת), while the first word of Psalm 1, *אַשְׁרֵי* (happy or blessed) begins with the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet (*aleph* א). The

⁵⁹ Brown, Driver, and Briggs, *Enhanced Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*, 393. *דע*, “to know good and evil”, “way to wisdom”. The NIV and NRSV translates as “watches”. However, the Hebrew word “know” connotes to the fullness of Yahweh’s wisdom in watching, guiding and caring for His people.

meaning of the final word דָּבָאָה (perish) in Psalm 1 literally means “to put finality or to blot out”⁶⁰. The Targum translate that word as “the great day of judgment”, implying a future eschatological aspect of judgment. But the question of a present judgment in this text cannot be totally eliminated yet because Luther⁶¹ and Theodore of Mopsuestia⁶² believe in the present judgment in their commentary of this text. Regardless of the debate on whether it’s a present or future judgment, the author of Psalm 1 definitely had in mind, “the decisiveness of a final judgement remains a viable consequence of the poem’s claim.”⁶³ On the final note, the finality of the wicked and one who does not walk in the ways of the *Torah* is stated as: They will be *finished*- no commendation, no other description, no other comments needed! A perfect contrast to the exclamation, commendation, lauding or the אֲשִׁירָה (blessedness) that begins the Psalm for the person who walks in the ways of the *Torah*.

Anthological Insights of Psalm 1:4–6

Recalling the previous section on the anthological insights in Psalm 1:1–3, the author of Psalm 1 speaks of *Torah* not only as a set of instructions namely the Law, but *Torah* is true wisdom. And the observance of *Torah* leads to a blessed life, a theme that is consistent within the wisdom literature. It was also discussed that through the anthological similarities of Psalm 1 with other texts beyond the wisdom literature, the author of Psalm 1 undoubtedly saw *Torah* as more than a wisdom piece. Rather he explicitly noted that *Torah* is not only *Torah* of Moses but *Torah* of

⁶⁰ The *Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* defines it as, “become lost” because the context of Psalm 1 is related to ‘way’ or ‘direction’. See Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner, *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 2. The *Enhanced Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon* defines it as “destroy; perish”. This verb appears in Job 4:9, 8:13 and Judges 5:31 all of which the verb is used to imply judgment on the wicked. See Brown, Driver, and Briggs, *Enhanced Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*, 1.

⁶¹ See Martin Luther, *Luther’s Works*, Vol. 10: Lectures on Psalms (St. Louis: Concordia, 1974), 4.

⁶² See Theodore of Mopsuestia, *Commentary on Psalm 1-81* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2006), 13.

⁶³ Seow, “An Exquisitely Poetic Introduction to The Psalter”, 288.

Yahweh. Therefore, revealing that *Torah* is a gift of God's (Yahweh) self-revelation to His people. Because of that expanded view of *Torah*, the mention of *Torah* does not just involve the observance of one who seeks wisdom, but it also calls for the devotion and commitment of one who recognize Yahweh being interested in revealing Himself through the *Torah*.

In verses 4–6 of Psalm 1 we can see more anthological evidence that supports the anthological significance of Psalm 1:1–3. Though the anthological observations in verse 4–6 does not contribute further expansion to understanding the term *Torah*, the continual findings of anthological evidences throughout the Psalm 1 strongly speaks to any researcher of Psalm 1 that considering this Psalm as an anthological composition is an essential hermeneutical consideration.

Psalm 1:4, presents a graphic description of the outcome of the person who refuses to walk in the way of the *Torah*. The Hebrew word רוח (wind) is employed in the disappearing of the wicked. The question one may ask is why “wind” is chosen to be the agent of destroying the wicked and ungodly – why not “fire” or a “great flood”? Also, what could have been the influence of the author's choice of this word in verse 4? In Proverbs 1:22, wisdom warns the scoffers to stop “delighting” in scoffing. Then in Proverbs 1:27, the destruction of these scoffers came in the form of a “whirlwind” הַפָּרוּס because they refuse to heed the counsel of wisdom יַעֲזָבָה (Pr 1:30). Again, the wisdom literature seems to be influencing the author or Psalm 1. The choice of רוח (wind) in Psalm 1 could not be coincidental but rather it is in fact a direct reference to the הַפָּרוּס (whirlwind) that Yahweh⁶⁴ sent to those whose *delight* is not in the *Torah* but whose delight is in walking, standing and sitting in the assembly of sinners and scoffers. Notice how the judgment of the ungodly is not because they were disinterested in seeking and observing the *Torah*. But it was because they were “not delighting” in *Torah* that led to judgement. Proverbs uses the word “not

⁶⁴ Yahweh is undoubtedly responsible for the judgment of the wicked because in Proverbs 3:34 it notes that Yahweh himself “scoff and scoffers”.

delighting” as the verb that lead to the destruction of the wicked and ungodly. In Psalm 1:2 “delight” is used in expanding *Torah* as God’s gift of self-revelation to man – Yahweh’s initiative of having a relationship with mankind. In “not delighting” in the *Torah*, one is rejecting the gift itself. Rejection of the *Torah* is rejecting the initiative of Yahweh wanting to have a personal relationship with His people. Yahweh’s anger will then burn as judgment upon those who does “not delight” in the *Torah*. At this point, this notion should ring a familiar understanding about Yahweh. Mentioned not only in the wisdom literature, but as a matter of fact it was first mentioned in the Pentateuch followed up in the writings of the Prophets, that we see the idea of Yahweh’s jealous love for His people and His wrath that does not tolerate when His people reject Him. Rejecting the *Torah* equates rejecting Yahweh and that will only lead to Yahweh’s wrath burning upon those who does so. Psalm 1: 4 spells that out clearly supporting both the idea that *Torah* is wisdom and rejecting *Torah* is a foolish choice, it is blatantly rejecting Yahweh and His gift of initiating a personal relationship with man.

Psalm 1:5-6 spells out the outcome of the two ways is evidently drawn from the wisdom texts in Proverbs that describes and contrast the outcomes of the both way of life. Proverbs 2:12–20 speaks of wisdom saving a person from the ways of the wicked and Proverbs 1:31 describes the destruction or finality of the foolish complacent person. The exegetical notes above on the certainty and assurance carried in the phrase, *דַע־יִיכָ יְהוָה* “*certainly* Yahweh knows” in verse 6 of Psalm 1 is supported by the pronouncement of “hope” that the wicked will be destroyed (*אבד*) in Proverbs 10:28. It is this reminder of hope in the wisdom literature that the author of Psalm 1 drew his inspiration even as he finishes the composition of Psalm 1.

CONCLUSION

Despite the limited scholarly investigation on implications of Psalm 1 as an anthological text and its impact on the understanding of *Torah*, I have argued in this paper that Psalm 1 must be considered anthological. Proving sufficiently the anthological references and similarities that Psalm 1 shares with a variety of texts the author thought as authoritative, Psalm 1 does not only refer to *Torah* as a set of instructions to be observed for a hope of a blessed life, but more importantly, *Torah* is wisdom and a gift of God's initiative to relate to mankind. Rejecting *Torah* is not just refusing to follow a set of instructions, but it is essentially rejecting God Himself and that will not end well for anyone who decide to have nothing to do with God even after He has been gracious. But the one who walks in the ways of the *Torah*, and delights in the *Torah* of Yahweh, will be praised and lauded greatly because that person not only found wisdom that leads to a prosperous life, but that person recognized the essence of *Torah* as the gift itself.

In this endeavor of reading Psalm 1 anthologically, *Torah* in Psalm 1 can be considered as an arch lexeme in the Psalter and the entire Scriptures that teaches its readers about Yahweh. The author of Psalm 1 profoundly pulled in a comprehensive teaching of Yahweh, God Himself, in six brief verses and made connections with a variety of texts that is precise and undoubtedly non-coincidental. Psalm 1 bids its reader to uncover something more, something richer about the *Torah*. This understanding and expansion of a single word invites the reader to choose the example of one who walks in ways of the *Torah* amid the uncertainties and insecurities of the world we are living in. There is hope in the *Torah* of Yahweh because Yahweh initiated and is faithful to keep His word.

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