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TECHNIQUE AS REVELATION OF THE PSYCHE:

A Study of the Book of Psalms

R. Corneli Agnes Rosabella, M.A., M.Phil.

**TECHNIQUE AS REVELATION
OF THE PSYCHE:
A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF PSALMS**

R. Corneli Agnes Rosabella, M.A.

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ABSTARCT

- Chapter I Introduces the book of Psalms and its author. It also deals with the scope of the dissertation and explains the title, ‘Technique as revelation of the Psyche’.
- Chapter II Deals with the study of the biography of David which throws light on the struggles and triumphs, conflicts and frustrations in David’s life, which play a vital role in his poetic process.
- Chapter III Exemplifies the caption, ‘Psyche and Artistic Creation’, where in the psalmist gives utterance to every mood, every contrasted feeling and the movements of the mind through various poetic devices which embellish the Psalms and proves that the psalmist’s psychic disposition permeates the Book of Psalms.
- Chapter IV Is the conclusion, which epitomizes all the findings of the earlier chapters and justifies the universality and ever-lasting value of the Book of Psalms, which is as living as when it was written.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The **Book of Psalms**, noted for its literary value, belongs to the lyrical genre in English Literature. Mark Van Doren exclaims that they are the “supreme lyric poems of our world. This is the verdict of civilization.” (qtd. In Daniel 61). Apparently, it is one of the marvellous books of praise, extolled as the “Hymnbook of Humanity” (Daniel 64). The book of Psalms abounds with rich poetry and prayers of deep spirituality. According to Paschal Botz, “each psalm is an unique spiritual creation” (10). This compilation of sacred songs is the inspired prayer and praise book of Israel.

The tremendous breadth of subject matter in the Psalms constitutes diverse topics such as jubilation, war, peace, worship, judgment, messianic prophecy, praise and lament. Most of the psalms are full of praise and worship and prayer, while some psalms are didactic. Many are personal outcries from the heart of the poet. Finally there are songs of public worship, the collection was originally a Hebrew hymnbook, for the Psalms were definitely sung.

“The Bible attributes authorship of 73 of its 150 Psalms to David, the shepherd boy, warrior, poet and king who established the Judean dynasty at Jerusalem around 1000 B.C.” (Daniel 62). Twenty – seven Psalms are ascribed to the authors other than David, thus: descendants of Korah, ten; Asaph, twelve; Solomon, two; Ethan, one; Heman, one; and Moses, one; fifty psalms by a family of Levitical singers. According to the Irving L. Jensen:

David who wrote so many of these Psalms, has given to a world-wide audience through the ages an insight into the rich and varied experiences of his life with God ... a humble shepherd boy, a servant in the king’s palace, a successive warrior, a fugitive, a great king, an exile, an old man ... sometimes poor sometimes rich, sometimes hated and sometimes beloved, sometimes persecuted and sometimes honored, sometimes obscure, sometimes prominent, sometimes profligate sometimes penitent, sometimes sad and sometimes joyful (11).

The Psalms also throw light on the greatness of the God of Israel and “these Psalms arise from a consideration of what God has done in the past, what he will do in the future, and the need for God in the immediate present with a recognition of His sovereignty and goodness (Scofield 601). It also depicts God’s marvellous ways with man. The moral and spiritual overtone that runs through and vibrates in all the Psalms, show the unique relationship between the man of God and God himself.

Henrietta C. Mears remarks that “intimacy with God is the author’s strength” (82). Such a close relationship prevailed between God and David. Theodore Williams remarks that the “basis of his actions and aspirations is the Lord. His life revolves around Him (1:1). God is the center of his life and his life seems meaningless without Him and as “all the good in the psalmist’s life finds its source in God ... He is the source of blessing and meaning in his life. Without Him nothing makes sense” (Williams 1:59). Therefore, the Psalms can be cited as an example of the “personal prayer of a just man in close friendship with God” (Botz 9).

The unshakable confidence in God is the Psalmist’s greatness strength, that no circumstances could mar his relationship with God. Such an unswerving faith is a hallmark of David’s character. For him, “trust in God was more effective than the sword” (Botz 328). The twenty-third psalm of unsurpassable lyrical beauty and spiritual grandeur which brings out the deep rooted faith of David. According to Haddon W. Robinson it, “is the affirmation of a profound, personal faith in God” (8). David’s close communion with God and His delight at presence of God is describes by Botz thus: “God’s presence is a rich banquet of food and drink that satiates the soul. Calling out His Name day and night, meditating on God in his solitary hours, resting in the Shadow of God’s wing and clinging to His Holy place, that is the author’s inmost Desire” (140).

David’s deep desire is to dwell in the House of God and, his love and deep reverence for the courts of the Lord is evident in Psalm 84, where he exclaims: “How amiable are thy tabernacles O LORD of hosts” (Ps. 84.1). This reflects David’s great zeal and yearning for the courts of the Lord.

The Psalmist is also hailed as a prayerful man. He always walks in the light of the Lord who is, “the light to walk by and an intangible barrier against the pursuer” (Williams 1:109). The outstanding feature of David’s character is his integrity and true allegiance to God. And God in return bestows him not only with the gift of composing Psalms but David is also “endowed ... with the gift of prophecy” (Schuster 123). The Prophet-King prophesies about the crucifixion of Christ and His despicable lot. And F.B. Meyer exclaims thus, regarding the twenty-second Psalm: “What a vivid picture of the anguish of the cross; the gaping crowds; the strength and virulence of their abuse; the bones wrenched from one another; the broken heart; the fevered lips; the pierced hands and feet; the parted garments; the thrusting of Jehovah’s sword against his fellow”(qtd. in Williams 79).

But the zenith of David’s glory lies in the fact that he is “the progenitor or forefather of Jesus Christ ... a figure of the Redeemer” (Schuster 124). Therefore, the Psalms contain rich poetry, lament and prophecy and David remains as the greatest Psalmist everknown.

This dissertation mainly deals with the technique and subject matter of the Psalms of David and “the Psalms are a true record of human experience, a record of God’s activity and leading in various human situations” (Williams 1:162). And David Watson describes that in the Psalms, “... almost every human mood and emotions honestly expressed, with a strong confidence in a reigning, living and loving God piercing through the gloom of sickness, suffering, loneliness, depression, fear “(qtd. in Williams Preface).

Therefore they unfold the triumph of God’s love and the victorious living of man. It brings home, the love of God in all its boundless dimensions and how God persists in His efforts to establish His fellowship with man and ultimately conquers.

“Psalms which express the personal experience of the soul are the core of the earliest element of the psalter” (Carleton Introduction vii). Many are the lines that echo the personal outcries of the poet. The poems are the expressions emanating from different moods ranging from despondency to triumph. They are vibrant spirituality.

A deep and purposeful study of the Psalms, drive to us that it is mostly a philosophical inquiry into the meaning of life.

The book of Psalms delineate the various and varied stages of spiritual conflicts which David passes in different periods of his life. It is nothing more than an honest statement of his different experiences in his spiritual life and growth. He is able to depict with undying force the terrible struggle with which his vigorous state of mind has been shaken and torn. But “even in the midst of seeming desolation and forsakenness, the believer’s (Psalmist’s) faith does not falter (Williams 1:45)

In the Book of the Psalms the poem is not merely a form but an actual event that yields its meaning as the reader progresses from the beginning to the end. The poetic technique plays a vital role in the Psalms. This concurs with the view of Mark Schorer who remarks that the “technique ... will help . . . discover and evaluate our subject matter, and ... discover the amplification of meaning of which our subject matter is capable” (397).

Great and noble though the Psalms are as poverty the supreme place that it occupies in the sphere of literature is due not much to its aesthetic or exclusively literary excellence as to the author’s extraordinary inner struggle or close communion with God and the spiritual experience resulting therefrom. So the direct source of this collection of poems is David’s own experience and it is fashioned in the author’s image. The ejaculations of David are the revelations of his inner heart. Such reflections as these work at the back and basis of the theme and title ‘Technique as revelation of the psyche’.

The subject matter of this dissertation is intimately concerned with the genesis, growth and development of the spiritual life of King David. The accomplishment of such a literary project involves a close and dispassionate study of his life, spiritual struggle and final triumph of which all, he has left behind very valuable and authentic records in the form of poetry.

Chapter two entitled ‘The Psychology of the Poet and Poetic Process as seen in the Biography’ deals with a study of the biography of David which reveals that his

life is marked out by a series of spiritual struggles and experiences in all its dimensions. It also proves how David's life and experiences serve as the fundamental background to his poetry, so much so that, they seem to play an important role as a connecting nexus of the design and format, the material and substance, the finale and achievement of his works. It also represents a highly personal experience translated into poetry.

The Psalms set down the fluctuations of the author's emotions between despair and bliss, between agitation and serenity and the discipline of suffering which leads to peace of spirit. The form adopted is not a mere accident but an integral part of the Psalms and it is as inevitable as the matter or substance.

David's feelings and thoughts emerge together and there is a total harmony between them and the technique takes shape in his artistic consciousness and at the same time reflects the complexity of his experience. The technique explores and discovers and, echoes and interprets his struggle and progress and thereby, becomes a revelation of his psyche which is dealt with in the next chapter captioned, 'Psyche and Artistic Creation'.

The final chapter is the conclusion, which recapitulates the findings of the earlier chapters and justifies the title, 'Technique as revelations of the Psyche' and proves the universal value of the unparalleled Book of the Psalms.

The succeeding one is Chapter II which deals with the psychology and poetic and poetic process of the psalmist as seen in the biography with the external events, trials and frustrations which serve as a backdrop and illumine most of the psalms.

CHAPTER II

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF THE POET AND POETIC PROCESS AS SEEN IN THE BIOGRAPHY

David, “the apple of God’s eye” (Mears 81) is a renowned musician and a versatile personality. The Holy Bible introduces the David in the first book of Samuel, where the Prophet Samuel awaits to anoint the Bethlehemite, Jesse’s youngest son, who tends the sheep. The name David means, “Beloved of Yahweh” (The Open Bible 540). And he assuredly finds grace in the eyes of the LORD as he is anointed by the Prophet Samuel to ascend the throne of Israel in the future. In the First Book of Samuel, “David is presented as a shepherd lad, a minstrel, an armor bearer, a captain, the King’s son-in-law, a writer of Psalms, and a fugitive ... and was to be the founder of the royal line of which the King of King’s came” (Mears 81).

David is not only a musician but, a mighty valiant and valorous man prudent in all his actions and, is close to the LORD. He is extremely brave and his life in the wilderness exposes him to all sorts of dangers especially the wild beasts and his “schooling in warfare” (Botz 328) begins here as he fights the wild beasts empty-handed. When God rejects Saul, he commissions Samuel to anoint David as Israel’s next king. God’s King-elect, serves in Saul’s court and defeats the Philistine Goliath. David becomes a growing threat to the insanely jealous Saul, but is protected from Saul’s wrath by God, Saul’s son Jonathan and Prophet Samuel.

Time and again David’s life is at stake. Trouble seeks him from many angles, so day and night he is pursued and his life is full of troubles and persistent turmoils, but, as the LORD is with him He safeguards David the “successor-designate to Saul... watched over him through every danger and exhibited him to the nation as a man of God’s favour” (Motyer 296).

Saul, on the other hand openly rebels against God, which is manifest in his refusal to give up what God said, cannot be his. So he keeps on pursuing David unawares, and constantly threatens him, thereby making David’s life, a life of unrest and inquietude. But many a time David’s alterego, Jonathan protects him from Saul’s murderous intent, but he becomes all the more active in his pursuit of David. So

David, the future King flees away from Saul, and lives the life of a fugitive. He hides in caves, which become his sojourn and refuge when Saul pursues him. Half of his life David lives as a fugitive wandering here and there but always seeking refuge in God, the surest protector.

The implacable persecution of Saul and the hardships of the fugitive life as a backdrop for many of David's Psalms. His sweetest songs are those which he has written during perilous moments. His agonizing moments play a vital role in the Psalms. And Wiersbe remarks that, "a good number of David's Psalms were written when he was in tight spots" (Preface 9). Though his life marked by the whirlpools of bitter struggles, they are followed by joyous triumphs. Hence, the Psalms are an admixture of joyous and triumphs. Hence, the Psalms are an admixture of joys and sorrows, pangs and praises. In the words of Wiersbe, "Some of the Psalms are ... mournful dirge of sorrow and complaint or ... a happy song of victory. Often the psalms are a mixture of trial, trust, and triumph. The writer begins in a minor key of painful lament but before he is finished, he moves into a major key of triumphant praise" (12).

Saul intermittently follows David and during one such jeopardizing and disillusioning situation the Psalmist voices out his pathetic condition and pleads unto God. This supplicatory prayer is depicted in Psalm 54 where he prays: "Save me O God, by thy name, and judge me by thy strength"/ "Here my prayer, O God: give ear to the words of my mouth" (Ps. 54.1, 2). His prayer is instantaneous and efficacious. The poignant faith in Him makes him to look upon God and utter boldly that the LORD is his helper. Even amidst danger his faith is unshaken. So he triumphantly sings of his deliverance and praises the LORD who protects him always. And his sadness vanishes and gladness remains.

David wanders in the wilderness and hides himself in the caves situated in and around Adullam city. Saul pursues David and besieges him. As David is accustomed to look upon God, he fervently pleads for mercy and Psalm 57 describes this calamitous moment in David's life. He is aware of the fact that God alone is his protector and so he cries out: "Be merciful unto me O God be merciful unto me: for

my soul trusteth in thee: yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast” (Ps. 57.1)

The gruesome foes who encompass him are very harmful people and the awe-stricken psalmist cries that his soul is among the lions, who are the ferocious enemies. His soul is sorrowful within him and his enemies plot to entrap him. At this critical juncture when crisis totally engulfs him, he rises above these mishaps and gives praise to God. The lofty spirit of confidence in God is explicit in this Psalm. Kidner calls it a “paean of praise” (207). David believes that the Lord will not suffer him in the hands of Saul, which enables him to sing thus: “I will sing and give praise”/ “Awake up, my glory; awake psaltery and harp” (Ps. 57.7b, 8a). And thereby he glorifies and honours the Lord who is his sole but sure succour. David gives vent to his struggles through his psaltery at every critical juncture and his “... heart is ever ready and steadfast, singing praises in time of trouble” (Botz 128).

In the mean time the Philistines and the other enemies attack Israel, so the wandering David rises against the Philistine foes and this occasion is portrayed in Psalm 56. He is distressed that the fierce enemies may assault him like wild beasts yet he is sure that God will keep His promise and save him. Kirkpatrick remarks thus: “The danger is imminent; fear is inevitable; but faith is victorious over fear” (315). Most of his prayers for help against his persecutors contain strongest expressions of stout confidence in God. And the Psalmist’s faith proves to be triumphant and he sings victoriously: “When I cry unto thee, then shall mine enemies turn back: this I know for God is for me” (Ps. 56.9).

Undoubtedly, his power rests neither in his valour or prowess, nor in his lesser number of soldiers, but in God and God alone. So he is very confident that God will show His supremacy against the vain-glorious Philistines. So he asserts, “In God have I put my trust: I will not be afraid what man can do unto for me” (Ps. 56.11). Such a deep and unshaken faith is described as “... a deliberate, determined act in defiance of one’s emotional state” (Williams 2:28).

Once again the Philistines attack him, and Psalm 143 pictures the sore-distressed psalmist fervently pouring out his grievous lot in the verse, “... the enemy

hath persecuted my soul: hath smitten my life down to the ground; he hath made me to dwell in darkness, as those that have been long dead” (Ps. 143.3)

Though life seems dark and gloomy and the spirit is over –whelmed with fear and despair, he awaits for the saving grace of the Lord, and steadfastly holds to his faith throughout the struggle and attack of his enemies. He meditates on the loving kindness of God in his earlier days and of his saving grace in the past. Under the shadow of His wings, the psalmist finds refuge. He prays:

Cause me to hear thy loving kindness in the
morning; for in thee do I trust; cause me
to know the way wherein I should walk;
for I lift up my soul unto thee

Deliver me, O LORD from mine enemies:
I flee unto thee to hide me (Ps. 143.8, 9)

and thereby gets over his fears for, his reliance is on God’s saving power. Later he flees to a Philistine city where he feigns insanity, and flees again to Adullam where a band of men join him in this wilderness. He begins to “weld this motley band into an effective military unit” (Motyer 299).

Saul pursues David yet again but the Hand of God protects him. And on two other occasions David spares Saul’s life when he has the opportunity to take it. Psalm 59 which depicts David’s anxiety and fear, begins with his desperate prayer for defence and deliverance from this virulent enemy as follows: “Deliver me from mine enemies O my God defend me from them that rise up against me” (Ps.59.1). He senses the threat to his life and escapes cleverly but his heart and soul is distressed. He is tasting a weary life, even in his own house he is unsafe. His house is but a death-trap. He is swayed between life and death, so his only defence is God, and to him alone he pours out his heart and prays to God to punish his antagonist. And finally the enemy disappears demonstrating the sovereignty of His God. Darkness dispels as the grace of God illumines him. The psalmist passes from sorrow to

singing. Hence, towards the close, the prayer ends in an excellent and peaceful note of triumph. To quote:

But I will sing of thy power: yea I will
sing aloud of thy mercy in the morning;
for thou hast been my defense and refuge
in the day of my trouble

Unto thee, O my strength, will I sing:
for God is my defence and the God of my
mercy (Ps. 59.16, 17).

Therefore this psalm is a mixture of “frustrated grumbling and exuberant singing” (Kidner 214).

David always “places himself in God’s hands rather than, in Saul’s” (Motyer 300). Meanwhile Saul dies. Even though Saul is David’s murderous pursuer arch-rival and the prime persecutor, David does not rejoice over his death but he bitterly laments over his death because he recognizes that Saul has been divinely anointed as King. Unexpectedly, Saul’s son Ishbosheth is installed as a puppet King over the Northern tribe of Israel but the powerless Ishbosheth is murdered by his own men.

Time mellows for David to become the King and so “the man of God’s choice” (Motyer 306) ascends the throne to become one of the most famous kings ever known and to be hailed as the “Lamp of Israel” (2 Sa. 21.17 (R.S.V.)). David justly and righteously rules, and “as he feared God he never imposed on his people any but just and righteous laws” (Schuster 121). He also shows reverence to the cultic personnel, unlike Saul who insults the prophets and priests and he “reversed Saul’s acts and policies completely and emerged with yet greater promises of divine blessings” (Motyer 304). David also found the temple choir and installed singers, to praise God with music and song and he being the sweet songster of Israel, enriches the Temple worship greatly. Moreover he makes Jerusalem the main sanctuary and establishes close ties with the priesthood.

David soon captures and fortifies Jerusalem and makes it the civil and religious centre. Under David's rule the nation prospers politically, spiritually and militarily. He rules them efficiently and sagaciously and above all he is a just and righteous king. He brings the Ark to Jerusalem and seeks to build a house for God. His obedience in placing the Lord at the centre of his rule leads to greater national blessing. And the Lord preserves David wherever he goes.

The grace of the Lord overflows in his life and his kingdom is abundantly blessed. The righteousness and piety of the King helps bringing the blessing of God on the nation. There is peace and happiness. There is perfect harmony between the King and his subjects. Under the guidance of the Divine Shepherd, David and his kingdom enjoy abundant grace and blessing.

Ascension to the throne does not put an end to his struggles, but even after ascending the throne, trouble pursues him from many angles, and his life is marked by incessant suffering, yet "David trusted God with all his heart and did not lean on his own understanding" (Mears 81). His wholesome trust is in the Lord, who is like a stronghold to him, who never fails him, but who always upholds him however he sinks into whirlpools of deep darkness and death.

David, though, he is a man after God's own heart, is yet not a person without blemish, he is but flesh. Therefore he is "a man moved conflicting passions" (Basset 58). So he succumbs into the shameful sin and sinks into the depths of sin and shame by murdering one of his soldiers Uriah and committing adultery with his wife, Bathsheba. These crimes of adultery and murder of David mark the pivotal point of the book of II Samuel, where David the psalmist, warrior and the king falls "to the level of a wife-stealing murderer" (Zeldenrust). Because of these transgressions, David's victories and successes give way to personal, family and national trouble.

Although David sins, his contrition is "immediate and genuine" (Motyer 307) when God rebukes him through Prophet Nathan. And Psalm 51, the immortal, penitential psalm abounding in tears, brings to light the grief and remorse of David in indulging in a disgraceful act. And the psalmist writes this psalm "in great anguish of conscience in the midst of his struggle with guilt" (Williams 2:2). Out of the real

contrition the broken-hearted David pleads, “Have mercy upon me O God, according to thy loving kindness; according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions” (Ps. 51.1).

Such deep repentance and heart-rending cries of David come out from his darkest moment of self-knowledge, so he bitterly sings unto the Lord:

Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity;
and cleanse me from my sin.

For I acknowledge my transgressions:
and my sin is ever before me.

Against thee, thee only, have I sinned,
And done this evil in thy sight.
(Ps. 51.2, 3, 4).

His conscience pricks him deeply and he feels that his dirty deed is a great injury to God who is ever good unto him. Therefore his covetous, stealthy, adulterous and murderous deed looms large before him. David detests his deed so much that he looks at himself as a dirty thing which needs cleansing. The unconfessed sins wrap him like a coat of grime. And Kidner says, he is, “comparing himself to a foul garment needing to be washed and washed his sin looms up as an accusing presence” (190). “Behold I was shapen in iniquity: and in sin did my mother conceive me” (Ps. 51.5). This is a strong expression of the wretched, wry creature he is. Likewise David’s mental torture and guilt is exquisitely described by Theodore Williams thus: “David is concerned about the deeds of sin and the defilement of sin, the consequences of his past acts and the contamination of his present condition, his guilt and his guile” (2:6).

He weeps unto God to save him from blood guiltiness. As this grave iniquity lies heavily on his heart he is not at peace until he is cleansed of this iniquity. “In the most secret springs of thought and will, unseen by man but known to God, he desires truth, perfect sincerity, whole-hearted devotion, incapable of deluding self” (A.F. Kirkpatrick qtd.in Williams 2:7). The personal piety of David is explicit in this Psalm.

In Psalm 39, David in deep repentance for his sins cries out in grief: “Deliver me from all my transgressions; make me not the reproach of the foolish” (Ps. 39.8). He feels that the heavy hand of God is on him, crushing him severely and this is followed by the offending nature of mean vulnerable men. He becomes a laughing-stock before fools. He is burdened by this agonizing situation, so he pleads, “Remove thy stroke away from me: I am consumed by the blow of thine hand”/ “Hear my prayer, O LORD and give ear unto my cry; hold not thy peace at my tears” (Ps. 39.10, 12).

Commenting on these lines Carleton remarks:

He still feels the burden of sin, but he prays not for forgiveness but for freedom. For sin may be forgiven, but its effect remains in a weakened will and a deformed character, in liability to particular temptations, and sensitiveness to the taunts of evil men. These disabilities are felt as fetters which only fall off gradually as the man grows in grace .(48)

Even though David sins grievously, he stands as a rock for Jehovah God, and repents sincerely and rises above his wicked deeds. “Repentance is a change of mind regarding the nature of God and the Law of God. Repentance is a 180° turn from walking in our ways to walking in God’s way” (Sheila 1). This unique quality in David makes him one of the greatest Kings of the Bible. Though he falls into the quagmire of sin he cleaves to God and repents whole-heartedly until God forgives and restores him.

The disobedience of the King produces chastisement and confusion at every level. The former glory, pomp and splendour of his mighty kingdom dwindle. David’s glory and fame fade never to be the same again. Glory, mirth and joy give way to gloom and dejection. Nevertheless David confesses his guilt, and is restored by God. But still the stigma remains and his tarnished character never becomes lustrous as before and a sword remains in David’s house as a consequence of the sin; the baby born to David house as a consequence of the sin; the baby born to David and Bathsheba dies. As per the adage, sin begets sin, David’s son Amnon commits incest, and his son Absalom murders Amnon.

In Psalm 13, the psalmist seems to struggle with unceasing trials. The billows of life toss him and he wonders whether God has forsaken him and so he questions the Lord in distress: “How long wilt thou forget me, O LORD? for ever? How long wilt thou hide thy face from me?” (Ps. 13.1). The psalmist is facing the gales of life, and the waves of despair and his spirit crumbles. Commenting on this experience of David, Irving L. Jensen remarks: “Things looked dark to David on every hand; without, the enemy’s exaltation; within his soul’s sorrow; above God’s silence” (31). But he trusts in the unfailing love of God. A Christian writer remarks that even though the “waves of despair threaten, He (the Lord) is there to rescue and save” (Otto). The Lord of Israel is a Lord of perpetual succour and the psalmist clings unto him tenaciously. So his faith and trust transforms his anxiety to assurance and fright to fortitude. The verses seem to climb up from dark depths to a high summit of hope and confidence. And this stresses the fact that even amidst, anxiety, fear, depression and nervousness the faith of the psalmist sparkles. Matthew Henry’s commentary reads: “What a surprising change is here in a few lines: In the beginning of the psalm we have him drooping, trembling, and ready to sink into melancholy and despair; but in the close of it, rejoicing in God, and elevated and enlarged in his praises” (Church 590).

Trials and turmoils keep following David incessantly, Psalm 27 brings out one such “... time of trial, possibly warfare, in David’s life” (Jensen 44). He becomes fearful and perplexed; the enemy threatens to engulf him. Trouble darts from all the sides when David gripped with fear prays for mercy. “Deliver me not over unto the will of mine enemies: for false witnesses are risen up against me, and such as breathe out cruelty” (Ps. 27.12). Being crushed by the enemies who are ebullient with hatred on him, and amidst this encircling doom the psalmist is totally eclipsed. But the thought of His Lord of light who is his salvation brings effervescent praise. Hence the psalmist completes the psalm with the confidence and the hope because he sure that the Lord is the “the light to walk by and an intangible barrier against the pursuer” (Williams 1:109). So he sings thus: “Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart” (Ps. 27.14ab). The secret of David’s success is his inner trust in God. A writer remarks, “development of ... trust in God within provides...

with renewed strength and guidance.” (ed. Zuck 24). This trust in God is undoubtedly the psalmist’s strength.

The physical suffering also batter the psalmist and Psalm 6 depicts one such struggle. It is a grief-torn psalm. He is weak and weary and the psalmist pleads for healing both in body and mind. Afflicted by physical inability and the constant thrust of guilty conscience the psalmist cries out bitterly: “O LORD, rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure” (Ps. 6.1). These grief-stricken words of the psalmist portray his bitter lot. To be rebuked by God is an unbearable situation for a person like the psalmist who is so close to Him and that the suffering he undergoes is undoubtedly the chastisement of God.

Commenting on this pathetic prayer Kidner remarks that it is a “prayer by one who is deeply troubled and alarmed ... but finally an outburst of defiant faith” (60). This is evident in the verse which says” “The LORD hath heard my supplication: the LORD will receive my prayer” (P.s 6.9). There is a sudden shift from grief to gladness, from the dark troubles he comes out triumphantly to the glorious sunshine of joy through intrepid faith. This “sudden access of confidence found in almost every suppliant psalm, is most telling evidence of an answering touch from God, almost as if we saw the singer’s face light up in recognition” (Kidner 62). At times the psalmist’s faith seems to be like the flickering flame of a dying candle, almost extinguishing, but suddenly it gets illumined and brightened. Such ardent faith of the psalmist lifts him up from all the struggles and Motyer remarks that “...his tranquillizing agent is prayer” (454).

In Psalm 31 the suffering of the psalmist is partly physical and partly mental. He cries out helplessly for succour and he needs no help from man but from God. Though weak and weary, his faith in the Lord, his Rock and Fortress is never unstable. Eventhough his strength fails, he is sure that the Lord who is his strength will rescue him. He is desperate, lonely and dejected yet his “trust amid apparent hopelessness” (Fleming 52) is explicit. A writer says that through the personal faith in Him one has, “calm retreat in the storms of life, even while the howling winds of trial are sweeping over” (De Haan). Likewise, the psalmist is calm amidst alarming situations. So he utters words of courage with sublime faith in the last verse: “Be of

good courage and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the LORD” (Ps. 31.24). Therefore this psalm is a telling example of triumph amidst trials, a shift from loneliness to liveliness and Theodore Williams quotes, “this psalm sparkles all through with lamps which have lighted the steps of men in dark places” (1:115)

Absalom, his son poses constant threat to David and he is forced to flee from Jerusalem. In the meantime Absalom sets himself up as a King. Fear, pain and shattered dreams threaten him. He becomes fearful and perplexed. His royal throne is usurped by his own beloved son. Erstwhile Saul and Philistines trouble him, but here is his own kinsman, and that too Absalom his pride, turns against him in an infelicitous manner. Filled with despair and brimming with sorrow he flees away from his son with a broken heart. But even in this bewildered state, as he is wont to, he looks up to the hills from where his help comes, and supplicates to his divine Protector. He is very much appalled by the uprising of his own son and kinsman, but is imperturbable faith in the Lord delivers him from this sad state of affairs. But David is led by his Divine Protector, into deliverance. And Carleton exquisitely describes that during these struggles the Psalmist “... passes on the ship of prayer from the storm of despair to the calm where hope is victorious” (13).

Psalm 61 portrays the weariness of the psalmist’s spirit as he cries to the Lord regarding the distress caused by Absalom’s rebellion. Utter shock and desolation crush him and in a heart-rending manner he weeps unto the Lord: “Hear my cry, O God; attend unto my prayers” / “from the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is over-whelmed” (Ps.61.1, 2a) But through his efficacious prayer the psalmist is able to overcome his spiritual weakness and weariness and so he glorifies the Lord saying:

For thou, O God, hast heard my vows:
thou hast given me the heritage of
those that fear thy name

So will I sing praise unto thy name
forever, that I may daily perform
my vows (Ps. 61.5, 8).

Regarding this Kidner says it is like, “a thanksgiving for the assured answer, and a constructive request for lasting grace” (218).

In the meantime Absalom’s intermittent threat pains David to the core but God forbids Absalom from pursuing David until he has time regroup his forces. Absalom’s army defeated by David’s, and Absalom is tragically killed. After that David seeks to amalgamate the kingdom, but conflict breaks out between the ten northern tribes of Israel and the two southern tribes of Judah and Benjamin. The people of Israel revolt against David, but Judah remains faithful to him. This leads to war and the rebels are defeated.

Turmoil in the nation causes distress and such political struggles are also portrayed in the Psalm. Psalm 44 is one such song sung during the time of political unrest and unmerited disaster and humiliation” (Kirkpatrick 234). They feel derelict, and unable to bear the derision and scorn of others, they urgently appeal to God. Defeat is being tasted with all its bitter humiliation. They are neither against God nor presumptuous and the psalmist “is conscious of no national apostasy which could account for Jehovah’s desertion of His people as a justly merited punishment” (Kirkpatrick 236). Yet they are beaten disastrously and a heart-rending appeal to God is made thus:

Awake, why sleepest thou, O Lord?
arise, cast us not off forever
wherefore hidest thou thy face
and forgettest our affliction
and our oppression (Ps. 44.23, 24)

Their piteous condition is evident through the verse: “Thou hast given us like sheep appointed for meat; and hast scattered us among the heathen” (P.s. 44.11). The defeat is a great disgrace. The fact that the heathen people will be ready to enjoy the humiliation of Israel is a sharpest trial of their faith. But “the divine sleep, aloofness and inattention of verses 23f are the appearances; the reality behind them is given in the last word in the psalm: thy steadfast love” (Kidner 170).

Manifestly, God's blessing and the King's obedience go hand in hand and so closely knit are the affairs of the people to the spiritual and moral conditions of the king. The nation enjoys God's blessings when David is obedient to the Lord and suffers hardships when David disobeys God. There never was a great warrior or statesman than David. The desire to be whole with God marks David's devotion and his very "vicissitudes of life and of the goodness of God" (Motyer 312) brings him to feed His people Jacob and His inheritance, Israel, and David too guides them dexterously. Henrietta C. Mears further says that, "He left a rich heritage – a heritage that included power, wealth, honor and songs and Psalms. But above all he left an example of faithfulness and loyalty to God" (84-85) and hence he is undoubtedly the man after God's heart.

Apparently, the "Psalter is a record of man's life with God and one seeks to find in it the description of the character of the man of God" (Carleton xi). And the Psalms also depict the testing periods and trials, sorrowful circumstances under which these verses were composed and the abundant and loving kindness he finds in the Lord. Thus the biography of David highlights the moral, intellectual and emotional development of his genius – "the ideals of religious piety, ... sorrow for sin, ... of walking in darkness, unafraid, by the lamp of faith, ... reverence for the Word of God; of humility under chastening rod, trust when evil triumphs and ... serenity in the midst of storm" (New Bible Dictionary 992). It thus affords material for a systematic study of the psychology of the poet and of the poetic process.

The succeeding chapter attempts to prove that the technique adopted in the Psalms reveal the mind and soul of the poet.

CHAPTER III

PSYCHE AND ARTISTIC CREATION

The human psyche is the womb of all the sciences and arts” exclaims C.J. Jung (175). He further says that, “... psychological research ... explains the formation of a work of art, on the other to reveal to factors that make a person artistically creative” (Jung 175).

The psalms depict the psychic life, which begins at a level of great complexity and deal with widely ranging descriptions of the happenings and with the vivid portrayal of the warp and weft of the author’s mind in all its amazing and astonishing intricacies.

Kirkpatrick quotes Luther who remarks that “the Psalms exhibit the mind of the saints; they express the hidden treasure of their hearts, the working of their thoughts, and their most secret feelings” (Introduction cvi). And, this book represents “all the stormy emotions by which the human minds are wont to be agitated” exclaims Calvin (qtd. in Kirkpatrick introduction cvi), The motions of the soul and the movements of the mind can be observed in the Psalms.

The Psalms deal with the lessons of life with the experience of passion, with emotional shocks, crises and acutely dangerous situations in David’s life which go to make up the conscious life of the poet and his feeling in particular. The poet assimilates these experiences and gives an expression through the poetic technique which Mark Schorer remarks, “is the means by which the writer’s experience, which is his subject matter compels him to attend to it; technique is the only means he has of discovering, exploring, developing his subject of conveying its meaning”(387). And hereby the psyche is revealed through the poetic technique, which forces the reader to greater clarity and depth of human insight. “It has all the freshness of a creative genius” (Kirkpatrick introduction xiii).

The Psalms are poetic and rooted in a poetic tradition. They belong to lyrical genre in English literature. Lyric poetry is an ancient kind of poetry. The Psalter is a collection of religious lyrics. Lyric poetry is defined by Kirkpatrick as “that which directly expresses the individual emotions of the poet” (Introduction x). And Mark

Von Doren says that, as lyrics it is poetry entirely of the heart, which reveals the thoughts and feelings, the moods and tones of the poet. Simplicity and directness are the hallmarks of these lyrics. And Kirkpatrick puts in thus:

The tongue is loosed to give utterance out of the abundance of the heart,
to every mood, every contrasted feelings of the changeful human mind.
From all the hidden depths, from all the strange and secret consciousness
of the awakened and enlightened soul spring up unexpected and vivid words.
(Introduction cvii)

Therefore the secret workings of the soul is explicit in the Psalms and it is an indisputable fact that “the poet’s psychic disposition permeates his work root and branch” (Jung 185). So the psalms prove to be lyrical, presenting the author’s very image, experiences, feelings, moods and thoughts.

The Psalmist expresses his feelings through the psalms. The Psalms being musical are mostly concerned with the psalmist’s experiences. One of the foremost lyrical features seen in the Psalms is Parallelism. Parallelism adorns the psalms exquisitely. Hebrew poetry is rich in its parallel structure. Parallelism or thought-rhyme is the fundamental characteristic of this poetry which is “its way of matching or echoing one thought with another” (Kidner 2). Basset defines parallelism as the “juxtaposition of two or more ideas that are parallel in sense” (78). Parallel structure serves to the comprehension of the subtlety and richness of this Hebrew lyric, which projects the psalmist’s state of mind. “This balanced symmetry of form and sense . . . known as parallelism . . . can often be appealed to in order to determine the construction of connexion of words, to elucidate the sense” (Kirkpatrick Introduction lxi). Parallelism is otherwise described as balance, because it forms a special connection between the lines of a verse.

Parallelism is of different kinds. They are Synonymous, Antithetical and Cumulative parallels. The Cumulative parallel is sub-divided into five relations. They are i) Sequential relations ii) Cause and effect relations iii) Result-cause relations iv) Parallelism of analogy and v) Conditional relation.

Synonymous parallelism is very common. It is the juxtaposition of two statements, which are slightly different in form but the idea is same and it is not a mere refrain, but the fundamental thought reiterated. It is recognizable in the following verse: “He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities” (Ps. 103.10). Here the second line reinforces the first line so thought is enriched and there is an impressive effect. Having experienced the forgiving nature of the Lord the psalmist acknowledges His graciousness. Another illustration is, “Let all the earth fear the LORD: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him” (Ps. 33.8). This brings out David’s reverence to God, and his declaration of God’s greatness. Psalm 114.1 reads so, “When Israel went out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people of strange language”, where the exodus of Israel is mentioned. Yet, another exquisite example is found in the verse: “O LORD, rebuke me not in thy wrath; neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure” (Ps. 38.1) portrays the psalmist’s fear of being chastised by God.

Climactic parallelisms are those, which show the second line to be more powerful than the first and the third line out-beating it. A fine example is in Psalms 92 and 93 respectively. To quote: “For, lo, thine enemies, O LORD, for, lo, thine enemies shall perish: all the workers of iniquity shall be scattered” (Ps. 92.9). The righteous nature of psalmist is brought to the light by his vehement hatred towards the workers of iniquity. And yet another illustration is, “The floods have lifted up, O LORD, the floods have lifted up their voice; the floods have lifted up their waves” (Ps. 93.3).

Modification of the matching lines occur in some occasions, and the second line expands on a single feature of the first as in the verse : “The LORD also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble” (Ps. 9.9) and also in the verse which states : The LORD is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth” (Ps. 145.18) and otherwise rather being an echo it is a counterpart or complement as in the following verse: “My soul followeth hard after thee; thy right hand upholdeth me” (Ps. 63.8).

Synonymism sometimes tends to be vague as in the verse that follows: “There is no soundness in my flesh because of thine anger; neither is there any rest in my

bones because of my sin” (Ps. 38.3). Another synonymous parallelism is explicit in the verse which speaks of the redeeming quality and grace of the Lord, that: “The LORD redeemeth the soul of his servants; and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate”. (Ps. 34.22).

Antithetical Parallelism or Contrasted Parallelism is found “when the thought expressed in the first line of a couplet is corroborated or elucidated by the affirmation of its opposites in the second line” (Kirkpatrick Introduction 1xii). These have opposite statements set together, which are characteristic features of the didactic psalms. An example is “The wicked borroweth, and payeth not again: but the righteous sheweth mercy, and giveth” (Ps. 37.21) and the psalmist’s attitude regarding the righteous and wicked is depicted thus: “For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish” (Ps. 1.6). Akin to these are the following verses: “Many sorrows shall be to the wicked: but he that trusteth in the LORD mercy shall compass him about” (Ps. 32.10) and “The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the LORD shall not want any good thing” (Ps. 34.10). This verse effectively reflects the psalmist’s mind and his willingness and wistful urge to seek God.

Cumulative relations are “other balanced or parallel thought relations” (Basset 79). This term can be sub-divided as Sequential relation of parallels which is discerned in verses like, “I cried unto the LORD with my voice, and he heard out of his holy hill” (Ps. 3.4). This is followed by the cause-effect relation as exemplified by the verse: “The LORD has done great things for us whereof we are glad” (Ps. 126.3). Result-cause relation is where result is spoken of before the cause. A fine example cited could be, “Rejoice in the LORD, O ye righteous: for praise is comely for the upright” (Ps. 33.1). Parallelism of analogy is yet another feature which is embedded in this poetic simile: “As the mountains are round about Jerusalem so the LORD is round about his people from henceforth even for ever” (Ps. 125.2). Lastly, the conditional relation follows which contains “unless” or “except” which occurs in the verse: “Except the LORD build the house they labour in vain that build it; except the LORD keep the city the watchman waketh but in vain” (Ps. 127.1).

One of the lyrical features of the Psalms “..... allows the author much liberty in terms of structure of a single line, and accounts for the large variety in the line lengths, from very short to very long” (Jensen 6). A fine illustration for the short and long line respectively is, “I will love, O LORD, my strength” (Ps. 18.1) and, “The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer, my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower” (Ps. 18.2).

The lyrical feature which throws light on the personal experiences of the psalmist and his emotions and innermost feelings in a picturesque and tangible manner is evident in Psalm 23, wherein David states:

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want
Yea, though I walk through the valley of shadow of death,
I will fear no evil, for thou art with me: thy rod and thy staff
they comfort me. (Ps. 23.1.4)

The above Psalm is extolled as a masterpiece in the realm of lyricism. And this psalm “..... is the (Psalmist’s) affirmation of a profound person faith in God. It reveals the God of personal experience” (Robinson 8). Kidner’s comment illumines the psalm and also brings to the forefront the workings of the psalmist’s mind thus: “Depth and strength underlie the simplicity of this psalm. Its peace is not escape; its contentment is not complacency; there is readiness to face deep darkness and imminent attack, and the climax reveals a love which homes towards no material goal but to the Lord Himself” (109).

Psalm 42 is an excellent lyrical psalm which depicts the psalmist’s yearning for God. “Home sickness for the Altar is the cry of this man, who compares the yearning thirst of the deer for running water to his longing for God’s Altar” (Botz 96). To quote:

“As the hart panteth after the
water brooks, so panteth my soul
after thee, O God.

My soul thirsteth for God, for the
living God : when shall I come and
appear before God ? (Ps. 42.1.2).

This psalm abounds with lyrical grandeur and the piety of the psalmist soars to the heights of mysticism. There is “poetic beauty and...devotional earnestness ... It is a monument of the spirituality and the joyousness of the religion of Israel” (Kirkpatrick 227).

Psalm 114, yet another lyrical masterpiece is a song of the psalmist’s ancestors during their exodus. Here the presence of God makes the earth tremble and it is said to have “...turned the rock into a standing water, the flint into a fountain of waters” (Ps. 114.8), thereby the psalmist’s reverence for the Omnipotent Lord of Israel is evident.

Thus the psalms are rich in their lyrical beauty and by means of this technique the psalmist “is apparently attempting to project directly his own state of mind” (Daiches 355).

Dualism is one of the fundamental virtues of David’s psalms. The spiritual conflicts and triumphs are embodied in the dualism. It is seen in the themes, ideas, thoughts and feelings, moods, tones, paradoxes, plaintive questions and reasoned arguments. Every word is resonant with his voice. Every line seems to be the stamp of his peculiar personality. Mark Schorer remarks that:

.... Certain techniques are sharper tools than others, and will discover more; that the writer capable of the most exacting technical scrutiny of his subject matter will produce works with the most satisfying content, works with thickness and resonance; works with reverberate, works with maximum meaning. (387)

And a close analysis of the dualistic technique in the Psalms justifies Schorer’s remarks.

The dualism in theme is manifested in Psalm 54 which begins with a prayer amidst a dangerous and perilous moment in David's life but closes with a thanks giving. Kirkpatrick comments that it is a "prayer for help in imminent peril from godless enemies A profession of unshaken confidence that God will defend and avenge the Psalmist, with a vow of thanksgiving for the deliverance which he is well assured is in store for him" (304). And Psalm 57 sung from the caves of Engedi "breathes the same lofty spirit of confidence in the presence of danger," (320) remarks Kirkpatrick. Though these Psalms begin with desperation and depression they end up in a song of praise.

The psalmist draws upon the resources of poetic language to portray his own swaying emotions and sweeping conflicts. The anti-thesis of David's spiritual conflict is very well explained by the anxiety and hope as seen in Psalm 59. Though baffled by the enraging enemies he is clam trusting in the Lord and thanking Him for deliverance. There is joyfulness and worry. In Psalm 29 there is agitation and quietude, storm and calm is really pictured. And Psalm 13 has frustration and contentment. These dualistic features in themes, moods and feelings, and emotions give a picture of the psalmist's state of mind.

The tone varies in the Psalm owing to the change of psalmist's mood. In Psalm 28 his tone is gentle and moderate and the manner of his expression is released when his attempt to reach God proves successful. Here the psalmist struggles against the wicked endeavours of the malicious people of the society. The pain they inflict hurt him very much that he gives vent to his melancholic lot thus: "... I become like them that go down into the pit" (Ps. 28.1b). But his prayer which begins with such a pathetic and sad tone culminates with a eulogy unto the Lord which is as follows: "Blessed be the LORD, because he hath heard the voice of my supplications" (Ps. 28.6).

Psalm 7 "moves from the intensely personal plea of a man who is betrayed and hounded, to the conviction that God is judge of all the earth, and that wickedness is self-defeating, so it ends with praise" (Kidner 63). The emotional pattern of the psalm is depicted thus: "Arise O LORD, in thine anger, lift up thyself, because of the rage of mine enemies" (Ps. 7.6a). But David seeks justice in the hands of his Divine Arbiter

and Carleton says, “He rather brings his innocence to God and leaves his complaints with him” (8). So he praises the Lord with ecstasy saying: “I will praise the LORD and will sing praises to the name of the LORD most high” (Ps. 7.17).

In Psalm 22 dualism is evident in the change of tone. The cry of dereliction gives way to praise in the midst of a great congregation. It opens with the wild grieving from the depths of the psalmist’s heart, and in deep agony and anguish he laments unto the Lord thus: “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” (Ps.22.1). He experiences darkness and doom, a sort of a dark night of the soul but eventually hope shines and dispels the darkness and the psalmist remarks with exuberance thus: “My praise shall be of thee in the great congregation”. (Ps. 22.35a).

Dualism of thoughts and feelings are also found in the Psalms. David is afflicted by his guilty conscience. But it appears utterly incredible to him that God should manifest kindness to such a sinner as he is, and this introspection is coupled with the sense of personal unworthiness and profound conviction of the mercy of God.

Psalm 77 pictures David’s sorrow, doubts and fears which are triumphed over by his recollection of God’s love and power. Earnestly striving to understand the real attitude of God towards him he questions and makes reasonable arguments with God thus :

Will the LORD cast us off forever ?
and will he be favourable no more ?

Is his mercy clean gone forever ?
doth his promise fail for ever more ?

Hath God forgotten to be gracious ?
hath he in anger shut up his
tender mercies. (Ps. 77.7-9)

Commenting on this Carleton remarks :

This is one of the Psalms that reveal a deep spiritual experience and are like a chart to the voyager on the sea of prayer. Perowne's description of it is admirable: this Psalm is a record, first of a sorrow, long and painfully questioning with itself, full of doubts and fears trying in vain to find itself, or in the past, a light for the present: and then of the triumph over that sorrow by the recollection of God's love and power as manifested in the early history of Israel. (96)

In Psalm 31 the poet passes from gloom and despair to hope and praise and it is the cry of David at "a time of trouble and grief weakness reproach loneliness ..., slander and fear and danger" (Jensen 49). This psalm has an unusual feature, that is, it "makes the journey twice over from anguish to assurance" (Kidner 130). The victim passes from gloom to total despair. But he is wrested from the slough of despondency by his stout faith in God's loving care and Artur Weiser remarks that the psalm, "reflects the vivid movement of emotions, moods and thoughts of a soul which in its distress seeks and finds its support in God" (275). Hence he exultantly sings : "Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee" (Ps. 31.19).

The times of his deepest depression are just the moments that follow his loftiest flight. Psalm 55 is "a crescendo of distress" (qtd. in Williams 2:14) where David mournfully complains about the pang within his heart. This is aggravated by the incessant attack of the enemies. "Despair, sorrow, indignation, faith find expression by turns in this pathetic record of persecution" (Kirkpatrick 307). But there occurs a shift, and prayer follows which shows the poignant and triumphant faith of the psalmist which is able to "push the crushing circumstances of life wide apart" (Peale 66). Therefore this Psalm which opens with the cry of the psalmist, ultimately pictures the psalmist's faith soaring high. His trust in the Lord relieves him from distress, which marks his triumph over the struggle.

Psalm 109 brings out the desperate and helpless lot of the psalmist which is intensified by character-assassination. The psalmist is compassed by enemies on all sides and their attack reduces him to a shadow. Carleton picturesquely describes it saying, "His adversaries are vociferous: the Psalmist is confident that there is a word

from God and waits for it. In this hope he does not allow their hatred to change his disposition of love, nor to disrupt his life of prayer” (135). But towards the close, the adversaries of the psalmist who encompass him become obscure and “there is no adversary at the right hand of the righteous, but an Advocate, a Paraclete, who is God himself” (Carleton 136).

The sufferings of the faithful and the undeserved prosperity of the wicked becomes a severest trial and shakes the faith and patience of the psalmist. And Psalm 73 “is a touching confession of faith sorely tried but finally victorious” (Kirkpatrick 431). Faith is tried when he sees the wicked prosper and the godly suffer. But later his dubious nature gives way to faith in God and “now he can find an endless theme for praise in the dealings of God with the righteous and the wicked” (Kirkpatrick 439). Therefore he sings: “But it is good for me to draw near to God: I have put my trust in the LORD God, that I may declare all thy works” (Ps. 73.28). And there is a shift from “Nervousness to Newness of Life” (Zeldenrust).

Psalm 79 can be cited for dualism in the tone of the psalms and it depicts the earnest prayer of the psalmist, at a time when his faith is at the verge of dwindling. He weeps “How long LORD ? wilt thou be angry forever ?”(Ps. 79.5). And Kidner comments that, “The gloom is almost unrelieved, but never reaches despair It is a cry of faith in perplexity, not of fundamental doubt” (286). Though pathetic in tone it is one of indignation for those who have desecrated the Temple and there is a deplorable plea for compassion. Such a fervent appeal never culminates in dejection but it kindles the psalmist’s faith in the Lord. Hence he happily sings : “So we thy people and sheep of thy pasture will give thee thanks for ever; we will show forth thy praise to all generations” (Ps. 79.13). And regarding this Dr. Macduff remarks : “It is in the night of trouble the brightest lamps of the believer are often kindled” (qtd.in Cowman 41).

Therefore the Psalmist’s life is full of griefs and sorrows, doubts and hopes, depression and exaltation, anxieties and amusements, mirth and malady, songs and sighs, dances and dirges, lyrics of joy and laments. But the applaudable quality of the psalmist is that even in the whirlpool of such severe trials he indulges in prayer. Even though he is badly smitten weakened and almost withered in his agony, he believes in

the unchanging love of God and also acknowledges the fact that God's purposes are always good and beneficent. It is a truism that all these difficulties serve as the basis of all his poetic speculations.

Metaphors employed in the Psalms are an important feature of the technique which highlights the poet's spiritual experience in their intensity. Metaphor is defined as :

.... the supreme agent by which disparate and hitherto unconnected things are brought together in poetry for the sake of the effects upon attitude and impulse which spring from their collocation and from the combinations which the mind establishes between them Metaphor is semi-surreptitious method by which a greater variety of elements can be wrought into the fabric of experience. (Richards 189)

David's conception of God and his experiences with Him are effectively presented by the metaphors he has employed. According to him the Lord is his divine succour which is explicit in the verse: "The LORD is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer, my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower" (Ps. 18.2). None can so realistically portray the loving, protecting and saving grace of God than David who enumerates the several divine virtues such as compassion, sacrifice, forgiveness and immutable love through the metaphors.

Psalms 23 is an extended metaphor wherein David acknowledges God as his Good Shepherd, and seeks refuge in the bosom of his Divine Shepherd as expressed in the unique oft-quoted metaphor par excellence which states: "The LORD is my Shepherd" (Ps. 23.1). Regarding this Artur Weiser ejaculates that "it is marked by the tender touch of a serene soul enjoying perfect peace of mind that flows from an undoubted trust in God" (277).

The Lord, to David is also his light as seen in the verse: "The LORD is my light and my salvation; The LORD is the strength of my life" (Ps. 27.1) and He is also the " sun and the shield" (Ps. 84.11a). The LORD of Hosts, "hast been a

shelter And a strong tower from the enemy” (Ps. 61.3). And Psalm 91 depicts that “his (the LORD’s) truth shall be thy shield and buckler” (Ps. 91.4). The psalmist’s repeated comparison of God being his rock, fortress, shield and tower reveals that the Lord is his sole and everlasting refuge.

The word of God is “a lamp and a light” (Ps. 119.105).

Metaphors about Man reveals him to be “a worm” (Ps. 22.6a) and “dust” (Ps. 103.14). On commenting graphically about his ghastly enemies, David says: “Their threat is an open sepulchre” (Ps. 5.9c). So he pleads to God to succour him, saying: “Save me from the lion’s mouth” (Ps. 22.21). Describing their gnashing teeth and lashing tongue he exclaims: “....their teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword” (Ps. 57.46).

The graphic portrayal of God’s love, might and glory through the similes are noteworthy. Righteousness and justice mark the God of Israel and His “righteousness is like the great mountains” (Ps. 36.6). And the Divine Protector always hides his children under His mighty wings so, rejoices the Psalmist thus: “As the mountains are round about Jerusalem so the LORD is round about his people from henceforth even for ever” (Ps. 125.2). The God of Israel is Omnipotent and: “He gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap” (Ps. 33.7).

The Lord also reprimands and corrects His people. The moment of chastisement is very terrorizing, and His wrath engulfs remarks the Psalmist, “round about me daily like water” (Ps. 88.17a). But the God of David is full of love, mercy and compassion, He forgives the transgression of people. Though He detests sin, He is compassionate towards the sinner and His forgiving nature is depicted by the Psalmist thus: “As far as the east is from west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us” (Ps. 103.12). God’s love is clearly portrayed in the following simile: “.... like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him” (Ps. 103.13).

The mighty hand of God has led the Israelites through their exodus from Egypt to the Promised Land, “like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron” (Ps. 77.20), and, “....rained flesh upon them as dust, and feathered fowls like as the sand

of the sea” (Ps. 78.27). The Lord never leaves them to the mercy of the enemies and, “hath not given us as a prey to their teeth” (Ps. 124.6). He also makes the foothold of His people secure, so sings the psalmist. “He maketh my feet like hinds’ feet and setteth me upon my high places” (Ps. 18.33). Lord of Israel is compassionate and so He “setteth the poor on high from affliction and maketh him families like a flock” (Ps. 107.41), but as for His enemies remarks the psalmist thus: “Thou shalt make them as a fiery oven in the time of thine anger” (Ps. 21.9).

The greatness of God is graphically portrayed by the psalmist in many similes. As “the psalms were designed to evoke praise to the Lord, they are replete with references to Him which emphasize His power, His greatness, His wisdom, His majesty, His love, and His holiness” (De Haan 4). Nature too echoes the greatness and Omnipotence of God: “He maketh them (cedars) also to skip like a calf; Lebanon and Sir’-i-on like a young unicorn” (Ps. 29.6). The whole universe is His handiwork and “He giveth snow like wool: he scattereth the hoarfrost like ashes” / “He casteth forth his ice like morsels” (Ps. 147.16-17).

The Psalmist’s love and devotion towards the Word of God and his diligence in abiding by the law of the Lord is explicit in the following similes: “The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times” (Ps. 12.6). He further exclaims: “I have rejoiced in the way of thy testimonies, as much as in all riches” (Ps. 119.14) and “I rejoice at thy word, as one that findeth great spoil” (Ps. 119.162).

The Psalmist beatifies the righteous people with prosperity in fine similes thus: “He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water” (Ps. 1.3). One who trusts in the Lord eternally is “like a green olive tree in the house of God” (Ps. 52.8). The just shall flourish “like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon” (Ps. 92.12) and, “they that trust in the LORD shall be as mount Zion which cannot be removed, but abideth forever” (Ps. 125.1).

Many are the persecutions of the wicked and the psalmist, from the jaws of death cries unto the Lord to deliver him: “Lest he tear my soul like a lion rending it in pieces” (Ps. 7.2). He (the wicked) also crouches and “lieth in wait secretly as a lion in

his den: he lieth in wait to catch the poor” (Ps. 10.9) and “like as a lion that is greedy of his prey and as it were a young lion lurking in secret places” (Ps. 17.12).

The psalmist puts forth a truth about the short span of the wicked, though they thrive earlier. He remarks, “I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a bay tree” / “yet he passed away, and, lo, he was not” (Ps. 37.35-36a). About the braggart’s tongue he says: “Thy tongue deviseth mischiefs; like a sharp razor, working deceitfully” (Ps. 52.2). The venomous nature of the wicked is depicted thus: “Their poison is like the poison of a serpent: they are like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ears” (Ps. 58.4). The psalmist feels that the wicked prosper inspite of their vices and they are vain-glorious and: “the pride compasseth them about as a chain; violence covereth them as a garment” (Ps. 73.6).

Life’s bitter feelings as an outcome of the experiences with wicked are brought forth by the similes of imprecation. Though they seem to be ghastly, Kidner remarks that “this is the fierceness of men who care about justice” (210). The psalmist says : “Let them melt away as waters which run continually” / “As a snail which melteth, let everyone pass away: like the untimely birth of a woman, that they may not see the sun” (Ps. 58.7a,8). He pleads God to “make them like a wheel; as the stubble before the wind” (Ps. 83.13). Wheel means “like chaff or thistle-down whirled about by the wind” (Henry, Scott 75). Thus he denounces the wicked.

The psalmist’ ejaculations are embedded with similes which portray pathos, pain and passion. In Psalm 22 he cries plaintively, “they gaped upon me with their mouths as a ravening and a roaring lion” / “I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint” (Ps. 22.13-14a). Psalm 38 depicts the sorrow of a man who is hurt by his own kinsmen. Their lashing tongue agonizes him but he says:

.... I as a deaf man, heard not;
and I was as a dumb man that
openeth not his mouth.

Thus I was as a man that
heareth not, and in whose

mouth are no reproofs. (Ps. 38.13-14)

The psalmist portrays the compendious life of man in an exquisite manner. He exclaims that “they are as a sleep; in the morning they are like grass which groweth up” (Ps. 90.5) but wilts and withers, and, “As for a man, his days are as grass; as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth” (Ps. 103.15). Thus the “... thin tenuous nature of man” (Botz. 236) is depicted.

One of the prominent similes which recaptures the psalmist’s yearning for a communion with God is stated in the following verse: “As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee O God” (Ps. 42.1) and, “Behold as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their master, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress; so our eyes wait upon the LORD our God until that he have mercy upon us” (Ps. 123.2).

Bereft of God’s presence he says:

I am like a pelican of
the wilderness : I am
like an owl of the desert.

I watch, and am as a
sparrow alone upon the
house top.(Ps. 102.6-7).

Portraying a happy God-fearing family he remarks thus : “Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house: thy children like olive plants round about thy table” (Ps. 128.3) and he adds, “As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth”. (Ps. 127.4).

The psalmist gives vent to his love for unity and fraternity and he beautifully states:

Behold how good and how pleasant

it is for brethren to dwell together
in unity:

It is like the precious ointment
upon the head, that ran down
upon the beard, even Aaron's
beard: that went down to
the skirts of his garments.

As the dew of Hermon and
as the dew that descended
upon the mountains of Zion. (Ps. 133.1-3)

The usage of figurative language is another effective device of the psalmist which reveals his psyche, in the book of Psalms. Arrow, Beam, Thunder and Sun stand as figuratives of God's power and glory and His awesome voice. The following verses bring them out respectively: "There brakes he the arrows of the bow the shield, and the sword and the battle" (Ps. 76.3). "Who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters" (Ps. 104.3a), and "At thy rebuke they fled: at the voice of thy thunder they hasted away" (Ps. 104.7) and again, "The LORD is a sun and shield" (Ps. 84.11a).

God's salvation and protection are figuratively expressed by the terms Banner and Wings which is are as follows: "We will rejoice in thy salvation and in the name of God we will set up our banners" (Ps. 20.5a) and "... in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge until the calamities be overpast" (Ps. 57.1c).

The mercy, concern remembrance and grace of God is figuratively denoted by the terms Bottle and Grass, in the following verses where the psalmist sings: "put thou my tears into thy bottle: are they not in thy book" (Ps. 56.8bc) and "He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass" (Ps. 72.6).

The precious and eternal word of God is figuratively expressed by the terms Honey, Lamp and Silver as quoted in the following verses: "How sweet are thy words unto my taste: Yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth"/ "Thy word is a lamp unto my

feet, and a light unto my path” (Ps.119.103, 105) and “The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times” (Ps. 12.6).

The wrath of God and his fury is described figuratively by the wine in the cup:

For in the hand of the LORD,
there is a cup, and the wine
is red: it is full of mixture:
and he poureth out of the same:
but the dregs thereof, all the
wicked of the earth shall wring
them out, and drink them.(Ps. 75.8).

But the Lord protects His people as “the Apple of the eye” (Ps. 17.8).

Tears, trials, agony and affliction are part of the psalmist’s life and Ashes figuratively denote his afflictions in the verse: “For I have eaten ashes like bread, and mingled my drink with weeping” (Ps. 102.9). And Gunkel also drew particular attention to the description which the Psalmist gives of his sufferings, noting that “as a rule it is expressed in very general terms and highly figurative language” (Johnson 170).

Arrows, Adder, Sharp razor and the like are figuratives of the lashing, venomous, vicious and deceitful tongues of the malicious and bragging enemies of the psalmist. The following verses throw light on their deadly nature as “.... who whet their tongue like a sword and bend their bows to shoot their arrows, even bitter words” (Ps. 64.3) and “have sharpened their tongues like a serpent; adders’ poison is under their lips” (Ps. 140.3) and the braggart’s “tongue deviseth mischiefs, like a sharp razor, working deceitfully” (Ps. 52.2).

Net stands as a figurative for the plots of the malignantly fierce men, and the enmeshed man of God cries to God to retrieve him thus; “Pull me out of the net that they have laid privily for me” (Ps. 31.4a).

Amidst these wicked people, there are many righteous people who are blessed by God. The Olive tree, the Palm and Cedar are figuratives of the righteous people as seen in this verse: “But I am like a green olive tree in the house of God” (Ps. 52.8a) and “The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree” (Ps. 92.12a) and “he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon” (Ps. 92.12b).

Man’s life is also depicted in the Psalms. Grass, Hand-breadth, House and Bit stand as figuratives of man’s life and nature. Grass and Hand-breadth denotes the brevity of man’s life in the following verses: “in the morning they are like grass which groweth up” (Ps.90.5c) and “Behold thou hast made my days as handbreadth”(Ps.39.5a). House stands for life in this earth and Bit stands as a figurative of the stubborn and obstinate man.

Incense is a figurative of worship depicted in the verse. “Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense” (Ps. 141.2a). “Marrow stands for spiritual sustenance” (Open Bible 207). And, water depicts figuratively the spiritual well-being of the righteous in the verse: “And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water; that bringeth forth his fruit in his season” (Ps. 1.3a). Wean stands for spiritual calm and peace as in the verse: “.... My soul is even as a weaned child” (Ps. 131.2). And smoke stands as a figurative of spiritual suffering as in the verse: “For I am become like a bottle in smoke” (Ps. 119.83a).

Bough-branch, Pasture, Sheep and the like stand as figuratives for Israel. True Israel and Jews respectively in the following verse: “Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt” / “She sent out her boughs into the sea and her branches into the river” (Ps. 80.8a,11). As the Lord is the God of Israel, “.... and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand” (Ps. 95.7) and the sheep plead to the Shepherd: “O God, why hast thou cast us for ever ? Why doth thine anger smoke against the sheep of thy pasture” (Ps. 74.1).

Family or household is exquisitely described in a figurative language where Vine, Olive Plants, Arrows and Quiver depict the wife and children. The verses are as follows: “Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house thy children like olive plants round about thy table” (Ps. 128.3) and again, “As arrows are in the

hand of a mighty man : so are children of the youth” / “Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them” (Ps. 127.4-5a).

Brethren to live in peace and harmony is described in figurative terms as “the dew of Hermon and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion (Ps. 133.3).

Chamber and Curtains stand figuratively for Heaven, the abode of God who “watereth the hills from his chambers” (Ps. 104.13) and also “stretchest out the heavens like a curtain” (Ps. 104.2). And Zion is figurative of God’s heavenly kingdom and “they that trust in the LORD shall be as mount Zion which cannot be removed but abideth forever” (Ps. 125.1).

Hence the Psalms are strewn with figuratives abundantly and Gunkel’s statement that the sufferings of the psalmist are described in an excellent figurative language is undeniable.

Imagery highlights the poet’s rich experiences and Abrams defines imagery as “a picture made out of words” (78).

God is visualized as a warrior ready brandishing his weapons to punish the wicked. “If he turn not, he will whet his sword; he hath bent his bow, and made it ready” (Ps. 7.12), God hastens to help the Psalmist after his doleful prayer which is described dramatically with fine images drawn from nature like “the earthquake, the fire, the dark clouds of the gathering storm, the stoop of the eagle, the roar of the thunder, the recessions of the waters and the drying of the sea” (Carleton 18). This is revealed in the verses:

Then the earth shook and trembled;
the foundations also of the hills
moved and were shaken, because
he was wroth.

There went up a smoke out of his

nostrils, and fire out of his mouth
devoured; coals were kindled by it. (Ps. 18.7-8)

Psalm 22 comes “from the depths of a human heart. There is a wealth of poetic imagery unsurpassed in any poem of the Psalter” (Carleton 23). This is explicit in the verse: “Many bulls have compassed me: strong bulls of Ba’-shan have beset me round” (Ps. 22.12) and he adds: “They gaped upon me with their mouths, as a ravening and a roaring lion” (Ps. 22.13). Likewise the psalmist describes the enemies who torture him, and his life almost drains that he laments: “I am poured out like water and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax: it is melted in the midst of my bowels” (Ps. 22.14).

The psalmist’s agony is described through such images as the following:

I sink in deep mire, where
there is no standing : I am
come into deep water, where
the floods overflow me.

I am weary of my crying : my
throat is dried : mine eyes
fail while I wait for my God. (Ps. 69.2-3)

Psalm 29 brings out the majestic nature of God, through the storm image thus: “The LORD sitteth upon the flood, yea, the LORD sitteth king forever” (Ps. 29.10). The “imagery of storm forms the heart of the Psalm” (Carleton 32). The Lord’s majesty and might is revealed through the powers of nature, which is in His control, as revealed in the following verse: “.... by his strength setteth fast the mountains : being girded with power:” “which stilleth the noise of the seas, the noise of the waves, and the tumult of the people (Ps. 65.6-7).

Psalm 68 is “the grandest of themes expressed in the most powerful imagery of man’s poetical genius” (Carleton 81). It is seen in the verse, “Sing unto God, sing

praises to his name; extol him that rideth upon the heavens by his name JAH, and rejoice before him” (Ps. 68.4)

Psalm 93 begins with the announcement:

The LORD reigneth, he is
clothed with majesty; the
LORD is clothed with strength, wherewith
he hath girded himself;
the world as is stablished
that it cannot be moved. (Ps. 93.1)

The psalmist “uses the imagery of an oriental king in all his splendour to portray God’s majesty” (Lugt).

Psalm 97 brings out the glory of the Lord thus:

Clouds and darkness are round
about him : righteousness and
judgement are the habitation
of his throne:

A fire goeth before him,
and burneth up his enemies, round
about. (Ps. 97.2-3)

The image of the Lord as a ruler is explicit in the verse: “The LORD reigneth: let the people tremble: he sitteth between cherubims: let the earth be moved” (Ps. 99.1). Psalm 104 portrays God’s glory and grandeur through the verse that the Lord covers Himself “with light as with a garment: who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain” (Ps. 104.2). He also “layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters: who maketh clouds his chariot; who walketh upon the wings of the wind” (Ps. 104.3).

The poet’s excitement on realizing the power of God is expressed effectively in the usage of Prosopopoeia or animation of the inanimate which is another poetic

device used by the Psalmist. Here, either an inanimate object or abstract idea is spoken of as if it has life and feelings. The verses, “He maketh them also to skip like a calf; Lebanon and Sir’-i-on like a young unicorn” (Ps. 29.6) and, “the mountains skipped like rams, and the little hills like lambs” are very fine examples.

The refrain is another poetic technique employed by David. The refrain is the enveloped, figure or enveloping refrain or the repeated line coming at the beginning and end of the poem. “O LORD our LORD, how excellent is thy name in all the earth” (Ps. 8.1) and yet again in the same Psalm: “O LORD our LORD, how excellent is thy name in all the earth” (Ps. 8.9) is reiterated.

Psalm 136 the great hymn of praise has the refrain “....for his mercy endureth forever” (Ps. 136) in all the twenty-six verses. To quote a few verses: “O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth forever” (Ps. 136.1). “to him who alone doeth great wonders: for his mercy endureth forever” (Ps. 136.4) and “who remembered us in our low estate: for his mercy endureth forever” (Ps. 136.23).

The last three psalms have these refrains “Praise ye the LORD” (Ps. 148, 149, 150).

Psalm 46 contains the refrain, “The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge” (Ps. 46.7b, 11b).

Moreover the Psalms have incremental repetitions wherein the same verse is repeated but in a slightly altered form. This is explicit in the verse: “The floods have lifted up, O LORD the floods have lifted up their voice, the floods lift up their waves” (Ps. 93.3). Yet another example is:

If it had not been the LORD who
was on our side, now may Israel say :

If it had not been the LORD
who was on our side, when men
rose up against us :

Then they had swallowed us
up quick when their wrath
was kindled against us (Ps. 124.1-3).

Repetition of words and phrases is found throughout the book of Psalms.

Anadiplosis is one kind of repetition where the final words of one thought are repeated in the initial of the next line. Describing the wicked people who are puffed up with pride and never think of the Almighty, David opines, “The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts” (Ps.10.4). He speaks about his enemies thus: “All that hate me whisper together against me: against me do they devise my hurt” (Ps.41.7). Here the repetition ‘God’ and ‘against me’ mark the anadiplosis.

Anaphora is another type of repetition in which the initial words are repeated. And these are magnificently embedded throughout the book of Psalms. Many verses which speak of God’s greatness and goodness stand as examples of anaphoraic repetitions. Besides these, the prayer of the Psalmist and his denunciation of the wicked contain anaphoric repetitions. The determination of the psalmist to praise God as found in the verses “I will praise thee, O LORD, with my whole heart: I will shew forth all thy marvelous works”/ “I will be glad and rejoice in thee: I will sing praise to thy name O thou most High” (Ps.9.1,2) can be cited as an example. Here ‘I will’ marks the anaphoric repetition. The punishment meted out to the wicked is extolled by David thus: “Thou hast rebuked the heathen, thou hast destroyed the wicked, thou hast put out their name forever and ever” (Ps.9.5). The tender mercy of God is seen in the verse, “The meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach his way” (Ps.25.9). At one point David expresses so, “The LORD is my light and my

salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?" (Ps.27.1). He exhorts the people thus: "Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say on the LORD" (Ps.27.14). David instructs the people so, "Give unto the LORD, O ye mighty, give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name: worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness" (Ps.29.1,2). In the above passage, 'thou hast', 'the meek', 'the LORD', 'wait' and 'give unto the LORD' are the anaphoric repetitions. The majestic and awesome voice of the Lord is described in the following anaphoric repetitions 'the voice of the LORD' thus:

The voice of the LORD is upon the waters

The voice of the LORD is powerful:

The voice of the LORD is full of majesty

The voice of the LORD breaketh the cedars

The voice of the LORD divideth the flames

of fire

The voice of the LORD shaketh the

wilderness

The voice of the LORD maketh the hinds to

calve. (Ps.29.3-5, 7-9)

The Lord is a king who blesses and strengthens, is evident in the verses, “The LORD sitteth upon the flood; yea the LORD sitteth king for ever”/ “The LORD will give strength unto his people; the LORD will bless his people with praise” (Ps.29.10,11). ‘The LORD’ marks the anaphora here. David’s heart bubbles with praise and he sings, “Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing: thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness” (Ps.30.11). He continues, “Thou art my hiding place; thou shalt preserve me from trouble; thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance” (Ps.32.7). ‘Thou hast’ and ‘thou’ are the anadiplosis’ in these verses. The God of David is an unfailing counsellor, is evident in the verse, “I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go; I will guide thee with mine eye” (Ps.37.8). Even in the jaws of death David knows that the LORD will deliver him so he praises thus: “I will praise thee forever, because thou hast done it: and I will wait on thy name” (Ps 52.9). He adds, “I will freely sacrifice unto thee: I will praise thy name, O Lord for it is good” (Ps.54.6). ‘I Will’ is the anaphora in the last few verses. The power of God over the earth is exquisitely described through the anaphora ‘thou hast’ in the following verses

Thou hast made the earth to tremble;

thou hast broken it: heal the breaches

thereof; for it shaketh

Thou hast shewed thy people hard

things thou hast made us to drink the

wine of astonishment

Thou hast given a banner to them that

fear thee, that it may be displayed

because of the truth (Ps .60.2-4)

David speaks to himself saying, “Bless the LORD, O my soul : and all that is within me bless his holy name”/ “Bless the LORD, O my soul and forget not all its benefits” (Ps.103.1,2). He rouses everything to bless the Lord saying, “Bless the LORD all his works in all places of his dominion: bless the LORD, O my soul” (Ps.103.22). Here ‘bless the LORD’ remains an anaphoric repetition. He determines to sing praises to the Lord and says, “I will sing praise to my God while I have my being” (Ps.104.33). He also says, “I will praise thee, O LORD among the people: and I will sing praises unto thee among the nations” (Ps.108.3). In yet another place he sings, “Thou art my God and I will praise thee: thou art my God, I will exalt thee” (Ps.118.28). ‘I will’ and ‘thou art’ can be cited as examples of anaphoric repetition.

The anaphora, ‘if it had not’ as presented in psalm one hundred and twenty four verses one and two is very effective. To quote: “If it had not been the LORD who was on our side, now may Israel say”/ “If it had not been the LORD, who was on our side, when men rose up against us” (Ps.124.1, 2). When commenting on the awesome majesty of God, the psalmist says, “Let all the earth fear the Lord: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him” (Ps.33.8). Here ‘let all’ can be traced as an anaphora. ‘How thou didst’ marks the anaphora, where the psalmist meditates on the Lord’s manoeuvres in dealing with the wicked in the verse, “How thou didst drive out the heathen with thy hand, and plantedst them: how thou didst afflict the people, and cast them out” (Ps.44.2). To such a God, praise and glory is due so he sings, “Give unto the LORD, O ye kindreds of the people; give unto the LORD glory and

strength”/ “Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name” (Ps.96.9,8). Only the people of God who have witnessed his glory can testify, therefore he says, “Who can utter the mighty acts of the LORD? who can shew forth all his praise?” (Ps.106.2). The mercy of God is everlasting and the psalmist exhorts, “O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth forever/ “O give thanks unto the God of gods: for his mercy endureth forever (Ps.136.1, 2). ‘Give unto the LORD’, ‘who can’ and ‘O give thanks’ are some of the anaphoras in the above verses. The anaphora ‘praise’ is evident where the heavens, the angels and the celestial bodies are called to praise the Lord by the psalmist thus:

Praise ye the LORD. Praise ye the LORD

from the heavens: praise him in the

heights

Praise ye him, all his angels; praise ye

him, all his hosts

Praise ye him, sun and moon: praise

him, all ye stars of light. (Ps.148.1-3)

In the repetition starting with ‘I am’, David who is in a miserable juncture laments so, “I am forgotten as a dead man out of mind: I am like a broken vessel” (Ps.31.12). He reminds the Lord about his piety with the anaphoraic repetition ‘I havenot’ in the verse, “I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation: I have not concealed thy loving kindness and thy truth from the great congregation” (Ps.40.10). Hidden dangers threaten David

but he knows that his only refuge is the LORD and so he says, “I will abide in thy tabernacle forever: I will trust in the covert of thy wings” (Ps.61.4). The psalmist speaks to his soul thus: “Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me” (Ps.42.5). ‘I will’ and ‘why art thou’ can be cited as anaphoras in the above verses.

David’s depth of faith and his close communion with God are powerfully highlighted in the following repetitive verses, which begin with ‘the LORD hath’ and ‘how long wilt’. To quote: “The LORD hath heard my supplication; the LORD will receive my prayer” (Ps.6.9). In a jeopardizing situation he prays, “How long wilt thou forget me, O LORD? forever? how long wilt thou hide thy face from me? (Ps.13.1). ‘Give them’ marks the anaphora when the psalmist prays God to punish the wicked saying, “Give them according to their deeds, and according to the wickedness of their endeavours: give them after the work of their hands: render to them their desert” (Ps.28.4). He pleads God thus: Let not the foot of the pride come against me, and let not the hand of the wicked remove me” (Ps.36.11). Yet again he pleads, “Deliver me from mine enemies, O my God: defend me from them that rise up against me”/ “Deliver me from the workers of iniquity, and save me from bloody men” (Ps.59.1, 2). When the enemies surround him he prays, “Make haste, O God, to deliver me; make haste to help me, O LORD” (Ps.70.1). He bemoans that the Lord has cast them and he cries, “Wilt not thou, O God, who hast cast us off? and wilt not thou, O God, go forth with our hosts?” (Ps.108.11). The psalmist, overwhelmed by affliction pours out his complaint thus: “I am like a pelican of the wilderness: I am like an owl of the desert” (Ps.110.6). ‘Let not’, ‘deliver me’, make haste, ‘wilt not thou’ and ‘I am’ are the anaphoras evident here.

Repetitions make David's prayer emphatic. This finds proof in the following verses, which begin with 'let'. To quote: "Let me not be ashamed, O LORD; for I have called upon thee: let the wicked be ashamed, and let them be silent in the grave" (Ps.31.17). He desires the destruction of the wicked and says, "Let them be confounded and put to shame that seek after my soul: let them be turned back and brought to confusion that devise my hurt"/ "Let them be as chaff before the wind" (Ps.35.4,5). Regarding the vain man David utters thus: "Surely every man walketh in a vain shew: surely they are disquieted in vain: he heapeth up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them" (Ps39.6). He pronounces judgment on his enemies in the verses, "Let them be ashamed and confounded together that seek after my soul to destroy it; let them be driven backward and put to shame that wish me evil"/ "Let them be desolate for a reward of their shame that say unto me, Aha aha" (Ps.40.14, 15). The psalmist prays to God regarding the wicked that, "Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel" (Ps.2.9). About the wicked who wait in ambush the psalmist says, "He lieth in wait secretly as a lion in his den"/ "he lieth in wait to catch the poor" (Ps.10.9). 'Surely', 'let them', 'thou shalt' and 'he lieth' are the repetitions in the few verses quoted above.

Alliterations are embedded throughout the book. These repetitive verses describe the greatness of God, the piety of King David and evil nature of the wicked. About the voice of the Lord Almighty he says, "The LORD also thundered in the heavens, and the highest gave his voice; hailstones and coals of fire" (Ps.18.13). 'Heavens and the highest' is the alliteration here. But the awesome God is gracious which makes David utter so: "Thou hast also given me the shield of thy salvation: and thy right hand hath holden me up; and thy gentleness hath made me great" (Ps18.35). 'Shield of thy salvation' and 'hand hath holden' are the alliterations. 'The deliverance

of the Lord is evident in the verse, “Our fathers trusted in thee; they trusted, and thou didst deliver them” (Ps.22.4). ‘Thee; they trusted, and thou’ are the alliterative repetitions evident. That the Lord hears the prayers of the afflicted, is beautifully brought out in these alliterative repetitions like, ‘abhorred the affliction of the afflicted, ‘hath he hid his’ and ‘him he heard’ in the following verse, “For he hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; neither hath he hid his face from him; but when he cried unto him, he heard” (Ps.22.24).

In Psalm one hundred and four verse three, David speaks about the magnificence of God as “Who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters: who maketh the clouds his chariot: who walketh upon the wings of the wind”. In this verse, ‘Who walketh upon the wings of the wind’ can be cited as an example of alliteration. In the house of the Lord his honour resides, and this is evident in the verse, “LORD, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth” (Ps.26.8). Tasting the bounties of God, David sings, “The Lord is my strength and song, and is become my salvation” (Ps.118.14). Such a God is praiseworthy and David utters, “Praise ye the Lord: for it is good to sing praises unto our God; for it is pleasant; and praise is comely” (Ps.147.1). ‘Habitation of thy house’, strength and song, and is become my salvation’ and ‘pleasant and praise’ mark the alliterations in the above verses.

David yearns for the presence of God and cries, “I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way. O when wilt thou come unto me? I will walk within my house with a perfect heart” (Ps.101.2). He pleads to the Lord thus, “My knees are weak through fasting; and my flesh faileth of fatness” (Ps.109.24). He acknowledges the presence of God even when he is in dangerous spots. So he sings, “When my spirit was

overwhelmed within me, then thou knewest my path. In the way wherein I walked have they privily laid a snare for me” (Ps.142.3). The psalmist speaks about himself in the verse, “Princes also did sit and speak against me: but thy servant did meditate in thy statutes” (Ps.119.24). ‘Will walk within’, ‘fasting and my flesh faileth of fatness’, ‘way wherein I walked’ and ‘sit and speak’ are some of the alliterations in this passage.

David laments that his friend had turned into a foe in the alliterative verse, “But it was thou, a man mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance” (Ps.55.13). The wicked describes the Psalmist, “... sittest and speakest against thy brother; thou slanderest thine own mother’s son” (Ps.50.20). ‘Sittest and speakest’ can be cited as an alliteration here. But the Lord says to the wicked, “These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one thyself: but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes” (Ps.50.21). ‘Thou thoughtest that’ is the alliteration in this verse. The psalmist utters a cry about the wicked thus: “They have taken crafty counsel against thy people, and consulted against thy hidden ones” (Ps.83.3) and “. . .they have consulted together with one consent: they are confederate against thee” (Ps.83.5). The psalmist prays, “Oh let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end; but establish the just” (Ps. 7.9). He opines thus, “Salvation is far from the wicked: for they seek not thy statutes” (Ps.119.155). About the life of Man, David describes, “As for man his days are as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth” (Ps103.15). ‘Crafty counsel’, ‘consulted together with one consent: they are confederate’, ‘seek not thy statutes’ and ‘flower of the field so he flourisheth’ are the alliterations in the above verses.

Epanalepsis is a repetition of the same word in a verse. This can be gleaned from the following verses. The Almighty God, “... rode upon a cherub, and did fly:

yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind” (Ps.18.10). ‘Fly’ is the epanalepsis. He smote the enemies of David and in his words he says, “He delivered me from my strong enemy, and from them which hated me: for they were too strong for me” (Ps.18.17). ‘Strong’ marks the epanalepsis. The nature of God is that, “With the merciful thou wilt shew thyself merciful; with an upright man thou wilt shew thyself upright;”/ “With the pure thou wilt shew thyself pure, and with the froward thou wilt shew thyself froward” (Ps.18.25, 26). Tasting the saving grace of God David says, “For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me upon a rock”(Ps.27.5). In Psalm29.5, 8 David describes the awesome voice of God thus: “The voice of the LORD breaketh the cedars: yea,the LORD breaketh the cedars of Lebanon”/ “The voice of the LORD shaketh the wilderness; the LORD shaketh the wilderness of Kadesh” (Ps29.8). In the above mentioned verses, ‘merciful’, ‘upright’, ‘pure’, ‘froward’, ‘hide’, ‘voice’, ‘LORD’, ‘breaketh’, ‘cedars’, ‘shaketh’, and ‘wilderness’ can be cited as epanalepsis’.

God Almighty as the source of life, is made evident in psalm thirty six verse nine by the use of the word ‘light’ the verse, “For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light” (Ps.36.9). The strengthening power of God and his grace is seen in the verse, “The LORD will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing: thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness” (Ps.41.3). ‘Bed’ is the epanalepsis. God is our salvation is emphasized in the repetition of the word ‘God’ in the verse, “He that is our God is the God of salvation; and unto God the LORD belong the issues from death” (Ps.68.20). The compassion of God is that, “Like a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him” (Ps.103.13). In the presence of the Almighty, darkness is dispelled so sings David, “Yea, the darkness hideth not from

thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee” (Ps.139.12). In the above verses, the repetition epanalepsis can be traced in the words, ‘pitieth’ and ‘darkness’.

The epanalepsis ‘heavens’, ‘cymbals’, ‘gold’ and ‘honey’ are found in the following verses. David calls the heavens to praise the Almighty thus: “Praise him, ye heavens of heavens, and ye waters that be above the heavens” (Ps.148.4). He exhorts the people to “Praise him upon the loud cymbals: praise him upon the high sounding cymbals” (Ps.150.5). The Word of God is so precious and sweet, “More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb” (Ps.19.10).

The psalmist gives a clarion call to the people thus: “Sing praises to God, sing praises: sing praises unto our King, sing praises” (Ps.47.6). ‘Sing praises’ is the epanalepsis found throughout the verse. The wrath of God is emphasized with the word ‘shall’ and described by the psalmist so, “Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him” (Ps.50.3). The same Lord surrounds his people with his mercy and so utters the psalmist thus: “As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the LORD is round about his people from henceforth even forever” (Ps.125.2). The Psalmist’s love for the Word of God is expressed in the verse, “Therefore I love thy commandments above gold; yea, above fine gold” (Ps.119.127). He adds, “Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and thy law is the truth” (Ps.119.142). ‘Round’, ‘gold’ and ‘righteousness’ are the other epanalepsis in the passage.

David’s obedience to God is evident in the verse, “When thou saidst, “Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, LORD will I seek” (Ps.27.8). The

forgiveness of God when he acknowledges his sins is focussed in an epanalepsis thus: “I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD: and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin” (Ps.32.5). As David is sure of the unfailing succour of the Almighty, he arouses himself and his music to give praise to the Lord. Therefore he cries, “Awake up, my glory; awake, psaltery and harp: I myself will awake early” (Ps.57.8). When the Lord saves him David utters, “Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers: the snare is broken and we are escaped” (Ps.124.7). The psalmist’s longing for God is exquisitely stated in the verse, “As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee O God” (Ps.42.1). He rests assured in the Lord’s care and he remarks, “Surely I have behaved and quieted myself, as a child that is weaned of his mother: my soul is even as a weaned child” (Ps.131.2). ‘Face’, ‘seek’, ‘iniquity’, ‘sin’, ‘awake’, ‘escaped’, ‘panteth’, ‘child’ and ‘weaned’ are the epanalepsis’ in this passage.

David who is a man of prayer, transforms any jeopardizing situation into a prayer. He emphatically says to the Almighty that he will seek His face in the ‘morning’ and stresses it thus: “My voice shalt thou hear in the morning O LORD; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up” (Ps.5.3). David desires not wealth, pomp or splendour. His soul craves for the Lord alone. His burning desire is brought out through the epanalepsis ‘Lord’ in the verse, “One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to inquire in his temple” (Ps.27.4). David’s only succour is the Lord and so he pleads, “Unto thee will I cry, O LORD my rock; be not silent to me: lest if thou be silent to me, I become like them that go down into the pit” (Ps.28.1). He prays against the wicked thus, “Grant

not, O LORD, the desires of the wicked: further not his wicked device; lest they exalt themselves” (Ps.140.8). ‘Silent’ and ‘wicked’ are other epanalepsis’ found here.

God is very much concerned about Man and David expresses it thus, “What is man that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?” (Ps.8.4). Regarding the righteous he remarks, “The righteous shall be glad in the LORD, and shall trust in him, and all the upright in heart shall glory” (Ps.64.10). The wicked are rebuked by the Lord which is uttered by David, “Have all he workers of iniquity no knowledge? who eat up my people as they eat bread, and call not upon the LORD” (Ps.14.4). The enemies of David are ready to devour him and he describes them thus: “Like as a lion that is greedy of his prey, and as it were a young lion lurking in secret places” (Ps.17.12). ‘Man’, ‘shall’, ‘eat’ and ‘lion’ are the epanalepsis’ here.

On another occasion the wicked besiege him and he says, “Many bulls have compassed me: strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round” (Ps.22.12). ‘Bulls’ is the epanalepsis here. David prays thus: “Yea let none that wait on thee be ashamed; let them be ashamed which transgress without cause” (Ps.25.3). In Psalm 59.13 David prays, “Consume them in wrath, consume them, that they may not be”. He is furious against the wicked, “For the mouth of the wicked and the mouth of the deceitful are opened against me: they have spoken against me with a lying tongue” (Ps.109.2). The psalmist remarks about the wicked thus: “He lieth in wait secretly as a lion in his den: he lieth in wait to catch the poor: he doth catch the poor when he draweth him into his net” (Ps.10.9). As the Lord is his surest anchor, the psalmist says, They compassed me about; yea, they compassed me about: but in the name of the LORD I will destroy

them” (Ps.118.11). ‘Ashamed’, ‘consume’, ‘mouth’, ‘lieth’, ‘catch’, ‘poor’, and ‘compassed’ are the epanalepsis’ in the above passage.

Pleonasm is a repetition of synonymous words or phrases and these are found in the book of Psalms. Many descriptions on God, about David and his prayers, the evil deeds of the wicked and the goodness of the righteous are embedded with pleonasm. The Lord Almighty is the light, salvation and strength so David is emboldened to utter thus: “The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?” (Ps.27.1). ‘Fear and afraid’ is a pleonasm. With a grateful heart David sings, “I will be glad and rejoice in thy mercy: for thou hast considered my trouble; thou hast known my soul in adversities” (Ps.31.7). ‘Glad and rejoice’, ‘trouble and adversity’ can be traced as pleonasm here. Considering the awesome majesty of God, the psalmist says, “Let all the earth fear the LORD: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him” (Ps.33.8). He continues “The LORD looketh from heavens; he beholdeth all the sons of men” (Ps.33.13). With a holy awe the psalmist utters, “My flesh trembleth for fear of thee; and I am afraid of thy judgments” (Ps.119.120). The watchful protection of God is underscored by the psalmist in the verse, “Behold he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep” (Ps.121.4). ‘Fear and awe’, ‘looketh and beholdeth’, ‘fear and afraid’ and ‘slumber and sleep’ are other pleonasm.

Tasting the forgiveness of God, the relieved David utters, “Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered” (Ps.32.1). He also says, as the Lord is always before me, “my heart is glad and my glory rejoiceth” (Ps.16.9). He adds further, “I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my

sin” (Ps.32.5). David instructs himself thus: “Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil” (Ps. 37.8). The enemies surround him and David gives a realistic portrayal of his plight. He says, “Fearlessness and trembling are come upon me, and horror hath overwhelmed me” (Ps. 55.5). Out of fear David states that he would escape “from the windy storm and tempest” (Ps.55.8) if he had the wings of a dove. At one point he pleads to God not to forsake him, “Now also when I am old and grey-headed, O God, forsake me not: until I have shewed thy strength unto this generation, and thy power to everyone that is to come” (Ps.71.18). The psalmist’s burning desire to build a house for the Lord is evident in this pleonasm. He asserts, I will not give sleep to mine eyes, or slumber to mine eyelids” (Ps.132.4). His love for the law of God is expressed as “I hate and abhor lying: but thy law do I love” (Ps.119.163). ‘Transgression, sin’, ‘glad, rejoiceth’, ‘sin, iniquity, transgression’, ‘anger, wrath’, ‘fearfulness, trembling, horror’, ‘storm, tempest’, ‘old, grey-headed’, ‘strength, power’, ‘sleep, slumber’ and ‘hate, abhor’ are the pleonasms.

The heart of David is ever ready to change dangerous situations into fervent prayers. His confidence is seen in his utterance expressed through a pleonasm thus: “The LORD hath heard my supplication: the LORD will receive my prayer” (Ps.6.9). David’s reliance is on God so he prays, “Shew me thy ways, O LORD; teach me thy paths” (Ps.25.4). With a contrite heart he pleads, “Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity and cleanse me from my sin” (Ps.55.2). He makes an earnest petition, “Give ear, O LORD, unto my prayer; and attend to the voice of my supplication” (Ps.86.6). He cries out to the Lord so, “Deliver my soul O LORD, from lying lips and from a deceitful tongue” (Ps.120.2). ‘Supplication, prayer’, ‘ways, paths’, ‘wash, cleanse’, ‘iniquity, sin’, ‘give ear, attend to’, ‘prayer, supplication’, and ‘lying lips, deceitful tongue’ are the pleonasms in the above passage.

The wicked are full of mischief so sings David thus, “His mischief shall return upon his own head, and his violent dealing shall come down upon his own pate” (Ps.7.16). As for the wicked says David, “They are brought down and fallen: but we are risen, and stand upright” (Ps.20.8). He adds, “When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell” (Ps.27.2). The lot of the evil men who rose against David is depicted as, “There are the workers of iniquity fallen: they are cast down, and shall not be able to rise” (Ps.36.12). On the other hand he exhorts the righteous to, “Be glad in the LORD and rejoice, ye righteous: and shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart” (Ps.32.11). ‘Head, pate’, brought down, fallen’, ‘risen, stand upright’, ‘enemies, foes’, ‘fallen, cast down’, ‘glad, rejoice’ and ‘righteous, upright in heart’ are the pleonasms.

Epistrophe is a repetition of final words. Those who trust in the Lord are not shaken or forsaken, is underscored in this verse, “And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee: for thou, O LORD, hast not forsaken them that seek thee” (Ps.9.10). The use of ‘thee’ can be cited as an example of epistrophe. In his fury the Lord thundered and, “... sent out his arrow and scattered them: and he shot out lightnings, and discomfited them” (Ps.18.14). David, in a time of danger comforts himself in the Lord and says, “In God will I praise his word: in the LORD will I praise his word” (Ps.56.10). ‘Them’ and ‘Word’ are the epistrophes.

The psalmist asserts the omnipotence of God through the epistrophes like ‘LORD’, ‘thee’, ‘me’, and ‘O God’ in the following verses thus: “For who in the heaven can be compared unto the LORD? who among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the LORD?”/ “O LORD God of hosts, who is a strong LORD like unto thee? or to thy faithfulness round about thee? (Ps.89.6,8). David’s prayerful

complaint is seen in this verse which reads, “ LORD, how are they increased that trouble me! many are they that rise up against me” (Ps.3.1). He continues to pray thus: “ Keep not thou silence O God: hold not thy peace, and be not still, O God” (Ps.83.1).

Repetition of final consonant sounds is called as homoeteleuton and these can be traced in the book of Psalms. The excellent creation of God “thy heavens, the works of thy fingers, the moon and the stars” (Ps.8.3) remind David of the greatness of God. The Lord “shall judge the world in righteousness, he shall minister judgement to the people in uprightness” (Ps.9.8). The final consonant sound /s/ stands as a homoeteleuton. The Divine Shepherd “maketh me [David] to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters”/ “He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name’s sake” (Ps.23.2,3). The consonant /th/ is the homoeteleuton. The Lord sustaining the earth is depicted graphically in the succeeding verse thus: “Thou visitest the earth, and waterest it: thou greatly enrichest it with the river of God, which is full of water: thou preparest them corn; when thou hast so provided for it”/ “Thou waterest the ridges thereof abundantly: thou settlest the furrows thereof: thou makest it soft with showers: thou blessest the springing thereof”/ Thou crownest the year with thy goodness; and thy paths drop fatness” (Ps.65.9-11). That the Lord is concerned about the lonely is evident in the verse, “God setteth the solitary in families: he bringeth out those which are bound with chains” (Ps.68.6). And “The LORD openeth the eyes of the blind: the LORD raiseth them that are bowed down: the LORD loveth the righteous”/ “The LORD preserveth the strangers; he relieved the fatherless and widow: but the way of the wicked he turneth upside down” (Ps.146.8, 9). ‘The homoeteleutons /t/ and /th/ are evident in the passage.

The forgiving grace of God is found in this verse, which says, “who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases” / “Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with loving kindness and tender mercies” (Ps.103.3,4). The Lord also “knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust” (Ps.103.14). Here again the homoeteleuton /th/ is present. The Lord hears the cry of the people is seen in the verse, “In the day when I cried thou answerest me, and strengthenest me” (Ps.138.3). The psalmist continues his praise of the Almighty so, “He loveth righteousness and judgement: the earth is full of the goodness of the LORD”/ “The LORD looketh from heaven; he beholdeth all the sons of men” (Ps.33.5,13). The Almighty God, “gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap: he layeth up the depth in storehouses” (Ps.33.7). The Psalmist recalls “How thou [the Lord] didst drive out the heathen with thy hand, and plantedst them out” (Ps.44.2). The Lord puts an end to war is obvious in the verse, “He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire” (Ps.46.9). The final consonant sounds /th/ and/t/ can be found in all the above verses.

The psalmist depicts the evil man in the verse, “The wicked boasteth of his hearts desire, and blesseth the covetous, whom the LORD abhorreth” (Ps.10.3). His thoughts are wicked and “He deviseth mischief upon his bed; he setteth himself in a way that is not good; he abhorreth not evil” (Ps.36.4). That the wicked man is not true to his promise is evident in the verse, “The wicked borroweth, and payeth not again” (Ps.37.21a) and these men are haughty because they have no troubles, “Therefore pride compasseth them about s a chain; violence covereth them as a garment” (Ps.73.6). The psalmist prays to God to persecute the wicked, “As the fire burneth a wood, and as the flame setteth the mountains on fire” (Ps.83.14). He pleads

the Lord in a distressing situation thus: “LORD why castest thou off my soul? why hidest thou thy face from me?” (Ps. 88.14). Homoeteleutons like /th/, /s/, /d/, /f/, /m/ and /t/ can be traced here.

Polypotons are repetitions of words with the same root word. David sings in praise of God thus, “Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive” (Ps.68.18). Here, ‘captivity and captive’ stands as polypoton. The awesome glory of the Lord is evident in the verse, “The voice of thy thunder was in the heaven: the lightnings lightened the world: the earth trembled and shook” (Ps.77.18). He glorifies his mercy as, “The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy” (Ps.103.8). The Lord never ignores the cries of his people is underscored in the verse, “For he hath not despised nor abhorred the afflictions of the afflicted” (Ps.22.24) and David continues “In the day when I cried thou answeredst me, and strengthenedst me with strength in my soul” (Ps.138.3). The greatness of God is hailed as, “Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; and his greatness is unsearchable” (Ps.145.3) and “. . . his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of man” (Ps.11.4). Darkness encompasses the Lord who dazzles in his glory is seen in the verse, “He made darkness his secret place; his pavilion round about him were dark waters and thick clouds of the skies” (Ps.18.11). The Word of God is described by the psalmist as, “How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth” (Ps.119.103). ‘lightnings lightened’, ‘merciful mercy’, ‘afflictions afflicted’, ‘strengthenedst strength’, ‘greatly greatness’, ‘eyes eyelids’, ‘darkness dark’ and ‘sweet sweeter’ are the polypotons.

David prays to God to, “Consider mine enemies, for they are many; and they hate me with cruel hatred” (Ps.25.19). He prays for security thus: “Thou shalt hide

them in the secret of thy presence from the pride of man: thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues” (Ps.31.20). About the wicked David says “Lo, this is the man that made not God his strength; but trusted in the abundance of his riches, and strengthened himself in his wickedness” (Ps.52.7). The wicked are like the adder, “Which will not hearken to the voice of charmers, charming never so wisely” (Ps.58.5). David desires the curses to come on the wicked in the verse, “Let it [curse] be unto him as the garment which covereth him, and for a girdle wherewith he is girded continually” (Ps.109.19). ‘Hate hatred’, ‘secret secretly’, ‘strength strengthened’, ‘charmers charming’ and ‘girdle girded’ are the polyptotons evident in the passage.

A kind of repetition in which words or phrases are joined by conjunctions in a series is known as polysyndeton. Many descriptions of God are sprinkled with polysyndetons in the Book of Psalms. He says, “The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower” (Ps.18.2). The compassion of God is evident in the verse, “But thou O LORD art a God full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth” (Ps.86.15). David’s prayer life is seen in the verse, “Evening and morning, and at noon will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice” (Ps.55.17). The psalmist describes the wrath of God thus, “For in the hand of the LORD there is a cup, and the wine is red, it is full of mixture; and he poureth out of the same: but the dregs thereof, all the wicked of the earth shall wring them out, and drink them” (Ps.75.8). The way the Lord sent the plagues on Egypt is depicted in these verses,

He spake, and there came divers

sorts of flies, and lice in all their coasts

He gave them hail for rain, and flaming

fire in their land

He smote their vines and also their fig

trees: and brake the trees of their coasts

He spake and locusts came, and

caterpillars, and that without number.(Ps105. 31-34)

The psalmist speaks of Zion thus: “And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her: and the highest himself shall establish her” (Ps.87.5).

Epizeuxis is an immediate repetition of adjacent words. In the book of Psalms epizeuxis mark the plea of David and the greatness of God over Nature. “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” (Ps.22.1) and “Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me” (Ps.57.1) depict the cry of David in a moment of dereliction. “O LORD God, to whom vengeance belongeth; O God, to whom vengeance belongeth” (Ps.94.1) is also a plea to judge the wicked. “The floods have lifted up, O LORD, the floods have lifted up” (Ps.93.3) is an epizeuxis which shows the might of God which is above the waters.

Merismus or Merism is intertwined in the book of Psalms, which highlights the characteristics of God, the faith of the Psalmist, about Man, the prayer and sorrow of the psalmist and references about the wicked.

Nature exemplifies the greatness of God and utters speech and knowledge diurnally and nocturnally, as reflected in the verse, “Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge” (Ps. 19.2). The Lord’s forgiveness is vast and boundless, “For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him”/ “As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us” (Ps. 103.11, 12). The Lord Almighty’s blessing is seen on the land thus: “He sendeth the springs into the valleys, which run among the hills” (Ps. 104.10). The celestial bodies have been appointed by the Almighty as seen in the verse, “He appointed the moon for seasons: the sun knoweth his going down” (Ps. 104.19). The God of Israel knows every action of man, therefore utters David so, “Thou knowest my downsitting and ...” Psalmist expressed the closeness he felt toward God as he realized His infinite knowledge, including of the psalmist’s personal uniqueness and His constant presence. This psalm, in all its warmth, is a reminder of God’s all-seeing and all-protecting care of the believer. (54)

The gratefulness of the Psalmist towards God is seen in the verse, “Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing” (Ps. 30.11a). Day and night the loving kindness of God encompasses him as he utters, “Yet the LORD will command his loving kindness in the daytime, and in the night his song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life” (Ps. 42. 8). The speech of God is described so, “The mighty God, even the LORD, hath spoken and called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof” (Ps. 50.1). The Lord is judge over the heavens and the earth is explicit in the verse, “He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people” (Ps. 50.4).

The times belong to the Lord is evident in the verses, “the day is thine, the night is thine”/ “Thou hast made summer and winter” (Ps. 74. 16, 17). The Divine Arbiter, “...putteth down one, and setteth up another” (Ps. 75.7). The whole of creation is the Lord’s handiwork as reflected in the verse, “The north and the south thou hast created them” (Ps. 89.12). Therefore he is able to bring together the scattered multitude so sings the psalmist that he “gathered them out of the lands, from east, and from the west, from the north and from the south (Ps. 107.3). Such an incomparable God is worthy of praise therefore, “From the rising of the sun, unto the going down of the same, the LORD’S name is to be praised” (Ps. 113.3). The Lord is supreme over the heavens, and the earth has been leased out to man is echoed in the verse, “The heaven, even the heavens, are the LORD’S but the earth hath he given to the children of men” (Ps. 115.16).

Possessing such a thorough knowledge about the might, strength and unlimited power of the Almighty, it seems natural for David the psalmist to have unshakable faith in this sovereign Lord. Gallant pronouncement of faith soaked in unflinching elegance pours out of the psalmist’s mouth in the verse, “Through thee will we push down our enemies: through thy name will we tread them under that rise up against us” (Ps. 44.5). A man of God is never confounded or drowned in sorrow because, “.....weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning” (Ps. 30.5b). The Lord never forsakes the righteous man and his progeny is resounded in the verse, “I have been young, and now am old; yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken” (Ps. 37.25).

Undoubtedly, tearful labour culminates in a joyful reward is pronounced in the verses, “They that sow in tears shall reap in joy” (Ps. 126.5) and “He that goeth forth

and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him” (Ps. 126.6). When the favour of the Lord is on the city, “Truth shall spring out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from heaven” (Ps. 85.11). The righteous shall be blessed even in adverse situations is marked out in the verse, “Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness; (Ps. 112.4). Under the protection of the gracious God, “The sun shall not smite thee by day, not the moon by night” (Ps. 121.6) and “The LORD shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore” (Ps. 121.8). The psalmist diligently offers thanksgiving to God, “To shew forth thy loving kindness in the morning and thy faithfulness in the night” (Ps. 92.2). A man under the secure wings of the Almighty, “...shalt not be afraid for the terror by night, nor for the arrow that flieth by day” (Ps. 91.5), about which David and Sue Burnham opine thus: “It is a comfort during situations that entail physical danger and also provides strength for the ordinary circumstances of life” (42).

Merisms on Man could be detected in the verse, “Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie” (Ps. 62.9). the short span of man is likened to grass, In which, the morning it flourisheth, and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down and withereth” (Ps. 90.6). Tossed in the billows, men, “...mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths” (Ps. 107.26) and in their distress thy cry unto the Lord and witness his deliverance.

The prayer and plea of David are recorded in various verses which mark the soul cry of David the psalmist in situations of despair and sorrow. The heart-rending cry of David reverberates in the verse, “O my God, I cry in the daytime, but thou hearest not; and in the night season, and am not silent” (Ps. 22.2). He laments, “For day and

night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer” (Ps. 32.4). He prays to God, to revert the curse of the wicked against him into blessing thus: “Let them curse but bless thou” (Ps. 109.28). The mockery and disdain of the wicked against the psalmist and the remoteness of God make him cry thus: “My tears have been my meat day and night, while they continually say unto me, where is thy God?” (Ps.42.3).

David rejoices over the fall of the wicked in the verse, “They are brought down and fallen: but we are risen, and stand upright” (Ps. 20.8). These evil ones, weep David, “have rewarded me evil for good, and hatred for my love” (Ps. 109.5) and these men are bereft of good intentions and so cries the psalmist thus: “I am for peace: but when I speak they are for war” (Ps. 120.7).

Hyperboles reflect the intensity of David’s sorrow and thereby reveals the psyche. Staggering under the heavy hand of God he agonises thus: I am weary with my groaning; all night make I my bed to swim; I water my couch with my tears” (Ps. 6.6). Persecution drains off his strength and in anguish he wails, “...my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels” (Ps. 22.14). Jeopardized by the enemies he cries, “For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet”/ “I may tell all my bones: they look and stare at me” (Ps. 22.16, 17). David complains that, “When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long” (Ps. 32.3). The multitudinous sufferings that crush him are explicit in the verse, “For innumerable evils have compassed me about: mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of mine head” (Ps. 40.12). The psalmist weeps in agony so, “My tears have been my meat day and night” (Ps. 42.3) He pours out his complaint to God

thus, “Thou holdest mine eyes waking: I am so troubled that I cannot speak”(Ps. 77.4). From his vale of tears the psalmist describes, thus: “By reason of the voice of my groaning my bones cleave to my skin” (Ps. 102.5).

Pleading the mercy of the Lord the verse describes the bitter lot of the Israelites under the wrath of God thus: “Thou feedest them with the bread of tears; and givest them tears to drink in great measure” (Ps. 80.5). The pain inflicted by the wicked ones, are picturesquely described in the verse: The plowers plowed upon my back: they made long their furrows” (Ps. 129.3). The enemies’ merciless persecution is brought out in the verse: “Many bulls have compassed me strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round” (Ps. 22.12).

Hendiadys is a technique employed by the Psalmist, which finds a remarkable place throughout the Book of Psalms. This technique defined as “two for one, the expression of one idea through two formally coordinate terms joined by “and” instead of a noun and an adjective, or a verb and an adverb” (“Interpreting Biblical Poetry 2”) is strewn in this poetic masterpiece. It gives a crystalline picture of the depths of the psalmist’s psyche by illuminating his reverence and knowledge about the God of Israel, the wicked men of the world, about himself, his prayers, sorrows, about the righteous and in general about the people.

The glorious magnificence of God is such that, “out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies” (Ps. 8.2). Here babes and sucklings is a hendiadys denoting ‘infants’. The Almighty forgives sinners but those who dabble in their wickedness and do not repent, singe in his wrath and so pronounces the psalmist, “Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone” (Ps. 11.6). In the awesome presence of the Lord the creations shudder. This is

picturesquely brought out in a hendiadys: “Thou art more glorious and excellent than the mountains of prey” (Ps. 76.4). “Honour and majesty, are before him” (96.6). With the power of his might the Lord has devastated the legions of the wicked and has emerged victorious and, “his right hand and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory” (Ps. 98.10). With his people he has made an everlasting covenant and his name is hallowed is underlined by the verse: “He hath commanded his covenant for ever: holy and revered is his name”(Ps.111.9). Such an all powerful God is also and all compassionate God who takes perfect care of his people without winking even his eye which is obvious in the verse, “Behold he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep” (Ps. 121.4).

His goodness is explicit in his concern towards the destitutes and the poor which is highlighted in the verse, “He shall spare the poor and needy and shall save the souls of the needy” (Ps.72.13). Though he punishes, still his forgiveness is extended to the transgressors. So he exonerates those who “...sit in darkness and in the shadow of death being bound in affliction and iron” (Ps. 107.10) and undoubtedly, “The LORD is merciful and gracious” (Ps. 103.8). When the Lord’s favour is on the land there is wholesome peace and calm which is described in the verse, “Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other” (Ps. 85.10). The Word of God is so sweet to the Psalmist and his desire for it is evident in the verse, “sweeter also than honey and honeycomb” (Ps. 19.10b). Richard W. DeHaan is justified in remarking that the psalms, “were designed to evoke praise to the Lord, they are replete with references to Him which emphasize His power, His greatness, His wisdom, His majesty, His love and His holiness (4).

The wicked are described explicitly in the verses like, “His mouth is full of cursing and deceit and fraud” (Ps. 10.7). The end of the wicked is never glorious. In contrast to the wicked who are brought down, the good and righteous rise above, so the psalmist rejoices thus: “They are brought down and fallen: but we are risen and stand upright” (Ps. 20.8). He describes the place of the wicked as, “wickedness is in the midst thereof: deceit and guile depart not from her streets” (Ps. 55.11). There is an end to the arrogant and soul-piercing talk of the wicked, so the psalmist has recourse to silence and questions, “How long shall they utter and speak hard things?” (Ps.94.4)

Hendiadys’ describing the character of the psalmist, his faith in the Lord of Israel can be found in the following verses. The psalmist underscores his virtue as, “let integrity and uprightness preserve me; for I wait on thee” (Ps. 25.21). To the psalmist the Lord is everything. This is beautifully described as, “The LORD is my light and my salvation” (Ps. 27.1) and “The LORD is my strength and shield” (Ps. 28.7). Tasting his goodness and mercy the psalmist emphasizes thus, “I will be glad and rejoice in thy mercy” (Ps.31.7). In a unique manner the psalmist describes his contentment at the presence of God, which is recorded as “My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness” (Ps. 63.5a). His detestation of lying is clearly described as, “I hate and abhor lying: but thy law do I love” (Ps. 119.163).

Encompassed by enemies on all sides, the psalmist seeks protection in the Lord and prays thus: “Take hold of shield and buckler, and stand up for mine help” (Ps. 35.2). Yet again he entreats God thus, “Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty” (Ps. 45.3). There is an earnest plea by the

psalmist during his senile stage thus: “Now also when I am old and grey headed, O God, forsake me not” (Ps. 71.18).

The afflicted psalmist gives vent to his sorrowful state in the verse, “all thy waves and billows are gone over me” (Ps.42.7b). He complains to God that, “thou makest us a reproach to our neighbours, a scorn and a derision to them that are round about us” (Ps. 44.13). The hardships and trials have battered him and he is silenced. So he says, “I was dumb with silence, I held my peace, even from good” (Ps. 39.2). Sensing danger from all spheres he utters, “I would hasten my escape from the windy storm and tempest” (Ps. 55.8). Weighed down by the burden of affliction he wails, “For all the day long have I been plagued and chastened every morning” (Ps. 73.14). Even the chivalrous David feels cold- footed and he describes, “Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, and horror hath overwhelmed me” (Ps 55.5). Righteous people merit mention in the verses, “They shall be fat and flourishing” (Ps. 92.14b) and “wealth and riches shall be his house” (Ps. 112.3).

The lyrical qualities such as the parallelism, dualism, metaphors, similes, figurative language, imagery, prosopopoeia, refrain, repetition of words like anadiplosis, anaphora, alliteration, epanalepsis, epizeuxis, epistrophe, pleonasm, homoeteleuton, polysyndeton, polyptoton succeed in emotions of the psalmist. Merisms, Hyperbole and Hendiadys are other poetic tools, which embellish this work of art. These poetic techniques, when carefully analysed, illumine the fact that the psalmist’s psychic disposition permeates the root and branch of this work

CHAPTER – IV

CONCLUSION

The Psalms lead the reader into new regions and open up new avenues in David's spiritual experiences. A religion without personal experience to which testimony can be borne is a poor thing. But the Psalms is the study of a true artist awakened to the consciousness of his gifts and to the joy of their dedications and use for the glorifications of God.

The first chapter is the preamble that introduces the Book of Psalms and its author, it also deals with the scope of the dissertation and explains the title, 'Technique as revelation of the psyche'. The Psalms are "a direct expression of the soul's consciousness of God" (Mears 117). The history of David is the history of a most excitable mind and is worth reading by one and all. A close and purposeful study of David's life through the Psalms offers a very successful way of overcoming life's several problems. C.G. Jung remarks that, "the experience that furnishes the material for artistic expression is something that derives its existence from the hinterland of man's mind that... evokes a superhuman world of contrasting light and darkness" (178). It is also apparently true that "a work of art ... might be tracked back to those knots in psychic life that we call complexed" (Jung 184).

The following chapter entitled, the psychology of the poet and poetic process as seen in the biography deals with David's life of conflicts, triumphs and the emotional passion and crises. The Psalms interpret and illuminate the poet's consciousness and the experiences with its recurrent sorrow and joy. Often it is, "a mournful dirge of sorrow and complaint or ... a happy song of victory ... a mixture of trial, trust and triumph" (Wiersbe 12). Undoubtedly, the "Psalter is a record of man's life with God and one seeks to find in it the description of the character of the man of God" (Carleton Introduction xi). It also throws light on David's capacity for faith, the ability to pray, the power to efface self through consecration, total surrender to His will, joyful submission with full acquiescence. Such an absolute losing of himself for

God's glory and an insatiable yearning and seeking after the fullness of God make him an exemplary spiritual leader.

David's start is slow, but with the faith and calm assurance he is willing to wait for the Lord to lead. He is humble in his success but when he reaches the zenith of his fame, he falls because of his, "pride and self-reliance, and by sharp chastisement ... learn(s) the grievousness of sin" (Kirkpatrick xlii). And so he repents and uses every talent of his for God's glory. His reign is hailed as the golden age of Israel. He also extends the boundaries of Israel and leaves a rich heritage, which includes power, wealth, honour, and songs and Psalms. Above all David never forgets that God is supreme.

In David's life and experiences, he lets God have his way with him so that the great and heavy trials have no power to move him from the peace that passeth understanding because he learns to rest only on God. When he is in the midst of the trial his soul, though calamities throng about it on all sides and roar like billows of the sea, yet there is a constant calm within, such a peace as the world can neither give nor take away.

The time of testing that marks life, and makes him willing to launch his capacities on a boundless service of God and his fellowmen. When sorrow comes under the power of Divine grace it works out a manifold ministry in his life. Sorrow reveals unknown depths in the soul and unknown capabilities of experience and service.

In David's life tribulation is the way to triumph. God permits trouble to pursue him as though He were indifferent to its overwhelming pressure that he may be brought to the end of himself when he says and leads to discover the treasure of darkness, the unfathomable pains of tribulation. Theodore Williams remarks that, "God polishes His children through chastening" (1:143). But the psalmist is sure that He who permits the suffering will also lead him out of it. He relies on faith in His unswerving fidelity, soon realizes that though His presence is veiled, there is an answering voice which shows that He is in the shadow, keeping watch upon him. Theodore Williams remarks that, "It is deeper faith that discovers God in the trials

and affiliations of life. God is still there even when we do not see Him.... He is still there. Faith realizes this fact and rests on it.” (1:46).

Storms of life, sweeping sorrows, bitter disappointments, and crushing defeats come suddenly in David’s life. It is the storm that God equips him for service. “Deeper spiritual lessons are learned in times of trial and darkness than at other times” (Williams 1:47). To make him a man, God puts him into storms and allows him to be swept by the blasts which critically leave him broken, weary, beaten in the valley, but later he is lifted to the sunlit summits of a richer, deeper and a more abiding manhood. Amidst great trials in his life, he does not own it as a defeat but continues by faith to claim the victory through Him who is able to make him more than a conqueror. In all the hard places God brings him to test. He is making opportunities for him to exercise such faith in Him as will bring about blessed results and greatly glorify His name. Most of his psalms testify the adverse situations and endangered moments of his life; the psalms exquisitely throw light on the mind and soul of the psalmist whilst facing such trials. Thus they reflect adequately the state of mind of the psalmist.

The succeeding chapter entitled “Psyche and Artistic Creation’ proves that the technique which the poet adopts reveals his Psyche. The various types of parallelism, dualism in theme, thoughts and feelings, tone and mood, metaphors, similes, the figurative language, imagery, prosopopoeia and refrain are the artistic expressions of the poet’s Psyche. The technique is the perfect embodiment of the subject and it gives that subject its astonishing largeness of effect and meaning. By giving attention to the virtues of technique the feelings and thoughts of the psalmist is revealed.

Parallelism is of different kinds. The various types of parallelism, serve to the comprehension of the richness and subtlety of the Psalms and project the Psalmist’s state of mind. They are Synonymous, Antithetical and Cumulative Parallelisms which bring out the thoughts and feelings, emotions and experiences of the psalmist. The lyrical feature of the psalms throw light on the personal experiences, emotions and feelings of the psalmist in a concrete and picturesque manner.

Dualism is one of the fundamental virtues of David’s psalms. The spiritual conflicts and progresses are exquisitely portrayed in the dualism, in the themes, ideas,

moods, tones, paradoxes, thoughts and feelings, plaintive questions and reasoned arguments. There is a shift from despair to delight, from anxiety to hope, agitation to quietude, melancholy to marvel from the prison of engulfing struggles, to praise. Sometimes the cry of dereliction gives way to praise in the great congregation. Thereby the dualistic technique adopted, lucidly reflects the deep movement of the moods and thoughts and emotions of the psalmist.

Metaphors used in the Psalms are important feature of the technique which is lucent with the poet's spiritual experiences in all its exuberance and fruition. David's conception of God and his experiences with Him, the bitter persecutors and their malicious nature are effectively presented by the metaphors he has adopted. The mind, heart and soul of the psalmist are effectively portrayed.

Similes bring out the deep-seated emotions and inmost feelings of the psalmist. His heart leaps within him when he beholds the magnificent deeds of the Lord and His mercy. His love and devotion towards God and his relationship with the Lord of Israel is portrayed graphically. The similes also highlight the psalmist's heart's desire which is to abide by the Word of God which is to him like a great spoil.

The Figurative language is another effective device of the psalmist which reveals his psyche. The images also play a vital role in delving through the depths of the heart of the psalmist and bringing out his ecstatic and agonizing feelings, thereby highlighting his rich experiences.

The psalmist's excitement on realizing the power of God is expressed effectively in the usage of prosopopoeia, yet another poetic device. And the refrain and incremental repetitions are poetic techniques which adorn the psalms greatly.

They excellently depict the psalmist's love for God and His eternal mercy. .

Repetition of words and phrases is another striking feature, which includes Anaphora, Anadiplosis, Alliteration, Epanalepsis, Pleonasm, Epistrophe, Homoteleuton, Polypoton, Polysyndeton and Epizeuxis.

Merisms highlight the characteristics of God and the faith of the Psalmist.

Hyperboles reflect the intensity of David's sorrow. The psalmist's reverence to God, his aversion towards the wicked and his agonies are illuminated through the Hendiadys.

Ultimately, the fact is that the poetic technique, inspite of embellishing the Psalms also reveals the psyche of the psalmist. Kirkpatrick remarks that, "Inspired words are 'springing and germinant' in their very nature: they grow with the growing mind of man. They are ... enlarged, expanded, ennobled... and the eternal truth shines forth in its inexhaustible freshness and grandeur (Introduction lxxxiii).

David possesses the power of winning immediate attention and of sustaining it, by certain ingenious sincerity and by the force of a style at once simple and graceful. There is real genius shown in every page of the Psalms, a delicate taste and quick perception, which creates the finest touches of feeling and wonder and a beautiful simplicity and elegance of style.

G.W. Anderson comments on the universality of the Psalms saying that the poetry of devotion is related to the day-to-day situations in the believer's life. And the "Psalms continue to be relevant to modern life, expressing emotions and describing experiences that belong to us today" (Wiersbe Preface 9). Yet the Psalms have a warmth and urgency and this book especially conveys "divine life and power, and holy warmth, into our affections" (Church 577). Ringgren writes that distress is expressed in typical and universal terms. Indeed, the Psalms were written for the heart to adore God from the pit of despair and also under the open heavens.

David exemplifies the life of being in tune with God, which is the ultimate aim of man. The Psalms reveal great psychological insight into the working of human mind and the blending of religion and psychology which has made the Book of Psalms useful effective and thought provoking. It is moulded in such a manner, to "grow and expand with the growth of revelation and greater wealth in the course of ages." (Kirkpatrick, Introduction xii). And it is no wonder that the Psalms have won an honoured and everlasting place in the World Literature.

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