



Psalms 1-2: Gateway to the Psalter (Hebrew Bible Monographs)

Robert L. Cole

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As against the form-critical approach, which sees the first two psalms as more or less random examples of the torah and royal types, this study argues for a deliberate and cogent arrangement of the Psalms 1 and 2. A detailed linguistic analysis of and comparison between these two apparently disparate psalms at the outset of the book reveals the purpose for their juxtaposition. The principal characters in the first psalm are further described in the second. The man of Psalm 1 is portrayed in eschatological terms as an impeccable royal, sacerdotal, and all-conquering military figure. He appears again in Psalm 2 but as a heavenly-enthroned victorious priest and king. His opponents, the wicked in Psalm 1, are identified in Psalm 2 as recalcitrant rulers and peoples who reject his rule and seek to do away with him. However, the calculated divine response to their plotting assures their ultimate defeat unless they submit to him. This cohesive and coherent introductory pair of psalms sets a pattern at the beginning for reading all those that follow. Indeed, a thorough understanding of the first two psalms and their integrated message is a prerequisite for understanding the purpose of the entire book.

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