PSALM 18:
A LITURGICAL COUNTERPART TO 2 SAMUEL 22

2 Sam 22 and Ps 18 have been called double transmission texts. The texts contain parallel material to the extent which the texts are representations of one common text. However, in the case of 2 Sam 22 and Ps 18 significant variations between the two texts exist. An examination of these common types of variation, along with occasional evidence from less frequent types of variation, will provide insights into the sources the Masoretes used in their representation of the 2 Sam 22 and Ps 18.

Collation Analysis

A collation of 2 Samuel 22 and Psalm 18 reveals 129 variants between the two texts. This collation focused on orthographical, lexical, morphological, and syntactical variation; therefore, variation in Masoretic accent marks (the Maqqef and Dagesh excepted) was explicitly excluded from the collation. Table 1 provides a statistical synopsis of these variants.

The number of variants between the two texts can, itself, vary depending upon the collator’s principles of accountancy. For this study, the utmost care was taken to account for variation to the level of the letter to the extent practicable. At the same time, certain types of common variation were ignored in order to delimit the data in a manageable fashion for the scope of this study. For example, a comparison of 2 Sam 22:6 and Ps 18:6 yields the variant readings of סֶפֶנִּי (S) and סֶפֶנִי (P). The defective and plene spellings (א and ב) count as a variant, as do the Dagesh and double letters (א and ב). However, the difference regarding the
pointing of Samek is not considered a variant, since in all likelihood this difference stems from the other items of variation.

Table 1. Statistical Synopsis of Variant Readings in 2 Sam 22 and Ps 18

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Variation</th>
<th>Number of Occurrences</th>
<th>Percent of all Variation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Differences of Diction</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>19.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deflective versus Plene Spellings</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>18.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waw-related differences</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Material without Correspondence</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differences in Suffix</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difference regarding Maqqef</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differences in Verbal Pointing</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He-related differences</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nun-related differences</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differences regarding Dagesh</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous differences</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differences of Gender</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deletion for Metrical Concerns (dl m cs)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differences of Number</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differences in Word Order</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Variants</strong></td>
<td><strong>129</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A few additional exceptions apply to this letter-level analysis. Thirteen instances have been noted when either text contains “additional” material at the word-level. In these situations, the “additional” material of either source does not correspond to material in the other source. For example, Psalm 18:2 includes the expression יְהֹוָה יָדְנֵי (“I love you, O LORD, my strength”). This material has no clear counterpart in 2 Samuel 22; either the Masoretic sources for 2 Samuel 22 did not contain this expression or the Masoretes omitted the expression for reasons not readily apparent (e.g., metrical, theological, accidental). In this study, the entire expression is counted as one variant.

Nearly, eighty percent of the variation between the two texts consists of the following common types of variation. “Differences in diction” (18.8% of all variation) are variants in which 2 Samuel 22 and Psalm 18 have chosen different words, which, in the context and syntax of the text, are alternative readings to each other. “Defective versus plene spellings” comprise 18% of all variation and include instances in which one text utilizes a short vowel (e.g., Qibbus) and the other text utilizes a long vowel (e.g., Shureq). “Material without correspondence,” as described in the discussion of Ps 18:2 above, account for 10.9% of all variation, as do Waw-related differences (e.g., one text uses a conjunctive Waw, while the other does not). “Differences in suffix” comprise 9.4% of the variation between the two texts, and this category frequently includes readings for which one source includes a personal pronoun suffix and the other does not. The final frequent point of variation is the use of Maqqef (9.4% of variation).

**Differences of Diction**

In twenty-five instances of variation, 2 Samuel 22 (S) and Psalm 18 (P) have provided varying readings that are differences in word-choice. These differences of diction often stem from texts’ preference for familiarity.
In at least seven instances, the differences of diction between S and P are caused by one of the texts using a more familiar word. In v. 5, S recounts the “waves of death” encompassing the speaker, while P reads “chords of death.” The S reading of מְשַׁמְשַׁמְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁרְשַׁr

In the poetic parallels of verse 26-27, both texts describe God’s revelation of his character to “the blameless man.” However, each text utilizes a different rendering of “man”: S employs נְבֵר, while P makes use of נְבֵר. Neither reading has a particularly strong claim to external support: BHS notes that a paucity of manuscripts for each text adopts the alternative reading. The most compelling piece of evidence relates to the OT usage of the S reading. Over twenty of its OT occurrences are found in the Samuel corpus, and the term often indicates the “might men” of David. A plausible explanation is that the textual tradition which produced S resorted to familiar terminology.

This analysis of familiar-diction tendencies has included an example from both texts, so that neither text would be interpreted as more apt to choose the familiar lexical option. In fact, of the seven instances of this phenomenon, P is the revisionist text three times (18:5, 24, 33), and S is the revisionist text four times (22:7, 11, 26, 46).

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The texts’ provide several other interesting cases of differences in diction. Of particular interest are the instances in which the texts utilize different lexical options in representing the divine. At verse 29, P uses יְהֹוָה, while S employs יְהָיָה. A plausible explanation of this variation is that an older form in the transmission of the text applied the second masculine suffix to the tetragrammaton. An examination of the uses of the divine name in 2 Sam reveals that a pronominal suffix never affixes to the divine name in the historical book. Thus, S (or its source[s]), out of respect for the divine name, could have simply removed the suffix, and P (or its source[s]), for similar motive, could have chosen a different divine epithet.

At verse 32, S utilizes the divine marker אלה, and P reads חַגּוֹ. Critics have posited two explanations. Young considers the P reading an example of a “Northernism,” which introduces a dialect-based hypothesis. HALOT describes the P reading as a rare and late extended plural form that is frequent in Aramaic and Arabic. The relevant OT data with which to evaluate these claims is that the vast majority of the OT occurrences of חַגּוֹ are found in the book of Job. Archer explains that the provenance of Job has much to do with this point of lexical data:

“... foreign locale would also account for the comparative rarity of the name Yahweh in most chapters of the book. Job shows a distinct preference for the pan-Semitic term, אלה or אלהים, for God. ... Interestingly enough, the title Shaddai (“the Almighty”) occurs no less than thirty-one times in Job as against its sixteen occurrences in the rest of the Old

In twenty-nine instances in 2 Sam, the Masoretic text includes an affix before the tetragrammaton. A prima facie quality counter-argument would question why a devotional treatment of the divine name would preclude pronominal suffixes, but allow affixes in front of the noun. While this question is a legitimate concern, it does not offer an adequate explanation for the fact that in 2 Sam the tetragrammaton is never affixed with a pronominal suffix. Furthermore, major Hebrew lexicons fail to provide one example of a suffixed tetragrammaton. דְּמוֹ in The Dictionary of Classical Hebrew, ed. David J. A. Clines, vol. 4 (Sheffield: Sheffield, 1998), 122-50. יְרָדָה in The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament, ed. M. E. J. Richardson, vol. 1 (Boston: Brill, 2001), 394-5.

Testament. This evidence from the use of the divine names certainly tends to confirm the theory of a non-Israelite background.”

Archer also holds forth the possibility of a “North Arabian dialect” or Aramaic original for the book of Job. Thus, the identification of the P reading as a “Northernism” appears unlikely. On the other hand, HALOT’s description of the term as common in Arabic and Aramaic is appropriate, though the issue of dating the word needs further exploration.

The differences in diction between S and P are many and varied. The sheer volume of these differences argues for diversity in the textual traditions that gave rise to the Masoretic rescensions of S and P. While S and P obviously date back to a common textual ancestor, they are, nonetheless, products of traditions which interpreted and represented this textual ancestor differently. The variety of the differences in diction also requires an approach best described as eclectic rationalism. That is, each variant reading between the two texts should be analyzed on the basis of its internal and external evidence. No reading should be cavalierly dismissed.

**Deflective versus Plene Spellings**

P and S differ often on matters of orthography. The most common orthographical difference relates to the use of deflective and plene spellings. Eighteen such cases consist of simple deflection, in which Shureq and Qibbus correspond or Holem Vav and Holem correspond. The most common scenarios involving simple deflection are the Shureq in third person plural nouns (seven instances), the Holem in feminine plural nouns (three instances), and Holem in the first syllable. Overall, P has a dominant preference for plene spellings. Of the eighteen documented cases of simple deflection, P preserves the longer spelling seventeen times.

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The P preference for longer readings is a resilient tendency. In two instances of “Double Ayin” verbs (i.e., the second and third letters of the verbal root are identical), P maintains the double consonants, though S collapses the consonants. The most fascinating plene reading found in P occurs at verse 47, where P represents the divine name as הַיְהוָה. According to Barr, Psalm 18:47 is one of the few biblical instances in which “God” has the plene rendering of Holem Waw.\(^5\)

The highlighting of the plene preference of P by no means suggests that P is exclusively plene nor that S never prefers plene against a defective spelling in P. In fact, in one crucial instance, S utilizes the defective. At verse 30, the texts differ in their representation of the preposition-pronoun combination. Strikingly, it is S that employs הֲכָנַּס (P, כנס). Rather than serving as a counterexample to the plene preference of P, verse 30 indicates an older pattern of spelling preserved by S.\(^6\) The implications of defective versus plene spellings for the age of the texts will be examined in a later section.

**Waw-related Differences**

The most perplexing of the major variant-types between the two texts are Waw-related differences. In fourteen instances, S and P differ on the use of conjunctive or consecutive Waw. Neither text shows a greater penchant for this use of Waw: S contains Waw against P seven times, as does P contain Waw against S seven times. No additional factor, including metrical concerns, explains these disagreements.\(^7\)

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\(^6\)Ibid., 125.

\(^7\)Cross and Freedman explain that “very sparingly” in Ugaritic and early Hebrew poetry does a conjunction begin a cola. This distinction bears little upon the evidence of S and P, since only three differences involve the beginning of a cola, and it is S—the generally recognized earlier text—that favors the conjunction in two
Young cautions that differences of conjunction should not be attributed merely to “scribal carelessness.” Indeed, at verse 41, the difference of conjunction is based upon the poetic analysis of the scribes. The latter part of S reads רַעְשָׂאֵל רֵעֲשָׂאֵל רֵעֲשָׂאֵל רֵעֲשָׂאֵל רֵעֲשָׂא. P differs from S by conjoining Waw to רֵעֲשָׂאֵל רֵעֲשָׂאֵל רֵעֲשָׂאֵל רֵעֲשָׂא. The ESV renderings are illustrative of the difference: “those who hated me, and I destroyed them” (2 Sam 22:41); “and those who hated me I destroyed” (Ps 18:40). Determining the lectio difficilior between the variants is no easy task. Both texts agree in affixing the third person plural to the verb as a direct object. The S use of the conjunction distances “those who hate me” from the verb. Perhaps, the purpose of this distance is a perceived duplicity of direct objects. Equally plausible, however, is that the original created an apposition of “those who hate me” with “enemies” in the preceding clause. In which case, P—or the sources that comprise its textual tradition—used the conjunction to repair a perceived flaw in the syntax. The original wording here in David’s royal song of praise evades the critic. A worthy consolation is the dissolution of the scribal carelessness hypothesis.

Material without Correspondence

In thirteen situations, S and P differ in the amount of material presented. Defining this type of variation requires utmost attention to distinction. Describing either text has containing “additional” material implies that the material in question is superfluous. To avoid “poisoning the well,” this study describes this type of variation as “material without correspondence.” A variant thusly described contains no equivalent material as its counterpart in the other text. Thirteen instances of material without correspondence occur in the collation of S and P. In nine of these three instances. Frank M. Cross and David N. Freedman, “A Royal Song of Thanksgiving: II Samuel 22 = Psalm 18,” in Journal of Biblical Literature 72 (1973), 19.

8Young, 64.

9In its translation of P, the ESV omits the third person plural suffix to avoid redundancy.
of these thirteen instances (approximately 70% of instances), P contains material without correspondence in S.

An analysis of these nine instances limns P as the more expansive text. After the superscription, P begins the song with the expression, “I love you, LORD, my strength.” No convincing reason for the deletion of this phrase on the part of S, or its textual tradition, is available. The parallel material of Psalm 116:1 could have inspired the P reading,\(^\text{10}\) a connection rendered probable by the importation of Psalm 116:3 by P at verse 5.

Though P often is the text containing material without correspondence, its readings of this nature should not be quickly dismissed, as if it were the more “expansive” text. This cautious stance toward the material of P without correspondence in S is necessitated by several pieces of evidence. First, some of these readings have legitimate claim to superiority. At verse 29, P reads \( \text{יהיה יוהי ירהインターナショナル} \), while S omits the verb \( \text{ירהインターナショナル} \). The P reading has support from the Septuagint, and an error of the eye easily explains the deletion on the part of S, or the textual tradition of its sources. Second, S includes material without correspondence in P, which after examination appears spurious. For example, the appearance of \( \text{זרה} \) in verse 47 of S is likely an importation of an earlier parallel. Third, many of the remaining readings have a variety of explanations in support of and in opposition to the material without correspondence. Therefore, as argued earlier, the readings of P should not be cavalierly dismissed; rather, an eclectic approach that weighs the evidence for each reading should be adopted.

**Differences in Suffix**

Of the differences in suffixes, seven instances involve personal pronouns. In five of these situations, P utilizes what could be called a “more personal” form than S. That is, S uses a

\(^{10}\)Young, 55. Young notes, however, lexical differences between the parallel passages.
third person pronoun, while P prefers a second person pronoun (v. 16). Additionally, P often employs a first person pronoun that is absent in S (v. 23, 34). Young sees in P a tendency “to increase the relationship between the implied author and the deity, especially by the use of second-person address in place of third-person.”

**Differences Regarding Maqqef**

Twelve instances of variation consist of a difference in the implementation of Maqqef. Neither text is particularly more preferential of Maqqef, with P preferring the marker seven times, and S preferring the marker five times. Some instances of variation involve the preposition  ה and whether or not the final consonant is assimilated. Otherwise no meaningful pattern of variation exists.

**Implications for the Dates of Composition for S and P**

The data above, related to the six major types of variation between S and P, provide a relevant starting point for a discussion of the age of the two texts. Scholars have utilized S and P for a variety of linguistic arguments. Würthwein offers double transmission texts, such as 2 Sam 22 and Ps 18, as a rejoinder to the appearance of age and reliability in the Masoretic textual tradition. 

Barr uses the royal thanksgiving psalm as an example to the contrary that “shorts spellings and early sources go together.” Both lines of argument presuppose that S and P share a relatively close date of composition. The evidence from variation explored above calls into question this presupposition.

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11Ibid., 67.


13Barr, 36.
In the final assessment of the evidence from variation, P is suggestive of a younger text type than S. Würthwein outlines features of later, popularized texts. These features include greater use of *matres lectionis*, assimilation to contemporary forms such Aramaisms, and frequent supplementing with parallel passages. As evidenced in defective versus plene spellings, P is resiliently plene, employing *matres lectionis*, where S prefers the defective spelling. Regarding Aramaisms, HALOT has detected an Aramaic influence at verse 2 (the pointing of רָפַה, the only Qal usage of the verb in the Old Testament) and at verse 32 (לָאָל). The reliance of P on Psalm 116, noted above, evidences the popularizing tendency of parallel supplement, identified by Würthwein. Of course, these features of later texts occur in moderation in P, since its variability is limited by a common textual ancestor with S.

Contemporary linguistic research has refined and sharpened the application of Würthwein’s criteria to Psalm 18. Barr has explored an often unaccounted for variable in the frequency of defective spellings. In what he calls the “affix-effect,” “the presences of affixes may often reduce the proportion of plene spellings, and this is so whether the affixes themselves contain a vowel letter or not.” As noted previously, S prefers defective spellings against the plene in P in seventeen instances. For thirteen of these occurrences, S concurs with Barr’s affix-effect. This phenomenon implies that critics must consider nondiachronic explanations of the S-and-P variations.

The two-volume work of Young, Rezetko, and Ehrensvärd, *Linguistic Dating of Biblical Texts*, is an important corrective to any merely diachronic explanation for S-and-P variations. After reviewing twentieth-century scholarship on the tripartite division of Archaic

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14 Würthwein, 16-7.

15 Barr, 30.
Biblical Hebrew (ABH), Early Biblical Hebrew (EBH), and Late Biblical Hebrew (LBH), the authors challenge the over-generalized distinction between EBH and LBH. For too long, scholars have drawn hasty conclusions from the presence of generally recognized late Hebrew linguistic features. Instead, “the principal difference between EBH and LBH is the frequency of certain features.”\(^{16}\) Furthermore, the absolute dating of biblical texts on the basis of linguistics is an impossibility, though linguistics can be helpful for dating texts relative to each other.\(^{17}\) Young, Rezetko, and Ehrensvärd call for a dating technique in which critics “work uniformly with linguistic and literary and textual data” to date the extant literary revisions of text, not necessarily “original compositions.”\(^{18}\)

### Alternative Hypotheses

Scholars have posited several hypotheses in reaction to the phenomenon of variation between S and P. In the analysis of Young, Rezetko, and Ehrensvärd, 2 Sam 22 and Ps 18 include the same frequency of distinctively LBH features, with both texts exhibiting six LBH features.\(^{19}\) Their description of these tendencies evokes a hypothesis apart from the age of the texts: “It is important to observe that each chapter has its own unique set of LBH features. This is strong evidence that significant clusterings of LBH features could be added (or subtracted) to texts during the course of their scribal transmission.”\(^{20}\) Thus, the variation between S and P has more to do with the history of the texts’ transmission than the date of composition for either text.


\(^{17}\)Ibid., 58.

\(^{18}\)Ibid., 64.

\(^{19}\)Ibid., 135.
An additional alternative hypothesis rejects a diachronic explanation and identifies dialectal differences between the two texts. Craige denies “certainty” pertaining to the comparative age and authenticity of S and P; rather, he describes S and P as representatives of two variant traditions, “perhaps northern and southern.” Cross and Freedman, much less cautiously than Craige, resort to dialectical explanations for variant readings. For instance, the defective spellings of S “reflect a text written in the dialect of Israel, the Northern Kingdom.” Young considers a locale-based, community-driven explanation as “the model that corresponds most naturally to the data introduced in the earliest (oral) stage.” However, he stops short of a divided kingdom explanation, since the frequency of Northern expressions is limited in P.

On the other hand, Barr expresses skepticism toward dialectical explanations, particular those endorsed by Cross and Freedman. The trend he detects in the variation relates more to idiolect and genre than age and dialect: “In very general terms we find that a passage follows the tendency of the book in which it is found: for example, Ps 18 follows the general tendencies of the Psalter, while 2 Samuel 22 agrees with those found elsewhere in the book of Samuel.” Barr balances this explanation with the concession that “. . . the spelling of the Psalm reflects a later style than that of Samuel in most respects.”

Barr’s view provides a transition to the most compelling explanation of the variation between S and P. The stylistic coherence of P to the Psalter is a reminder of the obvious fact that

20 Ibid., 137.
21 Craige, 171.
22 Cross and Freedman, 16.
23 Young, 69.
24 Barr, 169.
25 Ibid., 174.
the “Psalter is a collection of the songs, prayers, and wisdom teachings of the Old Testament people of God, which for the most part were sung or spoken in the sanctuary in Jerusalem.”

Psalm 18 is clearly the praise song of royalty. However, as a member of the Psalter, the song has a role in the vibrant worship of the people of God: “this royal personage stands within the Israelite cult that is witness to the present narration of Yahweh’s saving deed and to individual thankful response.”

In light of this context, Craig posits perhaps the most compelling explanation for the variation data between the two texts. The variability of Ps 18 could be due in part to the use of the Psalm in Israel’s worship. Historical data confirm that Ps 18 was “part of the lectionary cycle for Pesach.”

In addition, evidence from the collation of the two texts coheres well with this theory. First, Ps 18 is the text that most often incorporates parallel material. Often, Psalm 18 duplicates material from other portions of the song; in other instances, Ps 18 clearly evinces a connection with Ps 116. A liturgical setting provides the appropriate context for such importation. As generations of Israelites recited the royal song, these parallels could have unconsciously appeared or consciously repaired metrical concerns.

Second, Ps 18 bears the marks of devotional liturgy to a greater extent than 2 Samuel 22. As previously noted, Young sees in Ps 18 a tendency “to increase the relationship between the implied author and the deity, especially by the use of second-person address in place of third-


This study’s collation of the two texts confirmed Young’s conclusion by identifying seven instances of personal pronoun-related variation, five of which involved a preference for “more personal” forms on the part of P.

Third, a liturgical explanation for S-and-P variations provides a helpful framework for discussing a relative dating of the two texts. P exhibits two traits of later texts in its preference for plene spellings and its frequent incorporation of parallel material. S has the markings of a relatively older text in its preference for defective spellings and its use of נִשְׁפָּר (v. 30). Scholars have maintained reservations concerning the comparative, relative dating of S and P, mostly because of the limited data (i.e., instances of late linguistic features are too infrequent for a conclusive verdict). This hesitance fails to account for the fixed-nature of the texts. Since S and P clearly share a common textual ancestor, a high frequency of variation is practically eliminated. Nonetheless, the instances of variation demand an explanation, the most likely of which involves the age of the textual sources of S and P and the liturgical use of P as the mechanism for textual variation.

**Conclusion**

The double transmission texts of 2 Sam 22 and Ps 18 make for a fascinating exploration of linguistic, literary, and textual analyses. These analyses indicate much about the sources in use by the Masoretes in their production of S and P. Though S and P share a common

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29 Young, 67.

textual ancestor, the sources that comprise their more immediate textual tradition differ in several respects. The weight of the evidence suggests that 2 Sam 22, as represented by the Masoretes, relies upon older sources. Ps 18, on the other hand, relies upon sources influenced by the liturgical use of the royal thanksgiving song in the worship of Israel. This collation underscores an important textual critical cannon. Though 2 Sam 22 is indicative of older age, in several instances Ps 18 provides readings which have greater external or internal validity. Thus, greater age is not a conclusive argument for textual superiority. Rather, as this collation has demonstrated, each variant reading deserves a thorough consideration, regardless of the condition of its source. In this way, 2 Sam 22 and Ps 18 demonstrate the need for an eclectic, rational approach to Old Testament textual criticism.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


