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In *Oral Formulaic Language in the Biblical Psalms*, Robert C. Culley discusses dynamics involved in oral composition of poetry, particularly regarding Biblical poetry, including the characteristic of parallelism, both as a composition device and as a framework within which other compositional aids would be necessary for a poet "writing" orally. Formulas, together with such devices as standard word-pairs, aided poets in composing regular lines within a literary tradition whose primary characteristic was parallelism of ideas. "Poets use formulas to build lines," Culley explains; "the line and the colon, of which the line generally has two, are the most common formal divisions of Hebrew poetry to which possible formulas and formulaic phrases would conform."
