

5. The Song of David in 2 Samuel 22— Logotechnical Analysis

Guidelines

- Please read the [General Introduction](#) and the Introduction to the [Embedded Poetry](#).
- For common features found in the numerical analysis charts, see the "[Key to the charts](#)".

The Literary Context of the Song of David in 2 Samuel 22

- The Song of victory presented as sung by David “to YHWH on the day when YHWH delivered him from the power of all his enemies and from the power of Saul” is the poetic culmination of the story of the rise of David. In the Book(s) of Samuel it constitutes the counterpart of the Song of Hannah with which it shares similar features. The Song of Hannah about her elevation at the beginning, and the Song of David about his elevation and his deliverance from his enemies at the end frame the entire story.

The two songs respectively comment on the move towards the monarchy and its ultimate firm establishment. Both open with the expression of confidence and the joy over deliverance – compare 1 Sam. 2:1 with 2 Sam. 22:2-7. Note also the pairing of the divine names YHWH and Elyon and God’s ‘thundering from the heavens’ in 1 Sam. 2:10 and 2 Sam. 22:14. Both songs end with a clear reference to the establishment of the Davidic kingship: in 1 Sam. 2:10b it is said “May he (YHWH) endow *his king* with strength and raise high the horn of *his anointed*”, and in 2 Sam. 22:51 YHWH is called “the one who does great acts of salvation for *his king*, and shows steadfast love to *his anointed*”. In fact, the last verse in the Song of David (v. 51) expresses the fulfilment of the wish in the last verse of Hannah’s prayer.

Moreover, both songs explicitly refer to YHWH’s incomparability and uniqueness (1 Sam. 2:2 and 2 Sam 22:32). This also links them with the Song at the Reed Sea (Exod.15:10) and the Song of Moses (Deut. 32:39). Such portrayals presenting YHWH as supreme, displaying his anger as he rides to battle (2 Sam. 22:8-16), connects the Song of David to the description of YHWH going to battle in the Song of Deborah (Judg. 5:4-5).

The placing of the Song of David at this point in the Story of Ancient Israel (Genesis-Kings) clearly resembles the positioning of the Song of Moses in the Book of Deuteronomy. The similarity is highlighted by the fact that the Song of David is followed by his “Last Words” (2 Samuel 23:1-7) in the same way as the Song of Moses is followed by his last words, the Blessing of Moses (Deuteronomy 33). All this strongly suggests a unity of concept.

In its immediate context the Song looks back specifically on David’s victories and follows well after the decision of his officers that “he should never again go out with them to war, for fear that the *lamp* of Israel might be extinguished” in 21:17. The reference to “the lamp of Israel” may well prelude David’s words in 22:29 “You, YHWH, are my *lamp*”. It is certainly not a matter of coincidence, for there are more allusions in the Song to events or situations in the preceding story. At the very beginning of the Song (vs. 2-3) the author piles up no less than ten key-words to express YHWH’s power and protection: my Stronghold, my Fortress, my Champion, my God, my Rock, my Shield, the Horn of my salvation, my Strong Tower, my Refuge, my Deliverer who saves me from violence. One does not need any special imagination to come to the conclusion that all key-words refer to what David has experienced in his life as described in the story of his rise to power.

The metaphor of the hostile waters denoting the powers associated with death and *Sheol* is of course a widely used image in the book of Psalms, but here it specifically alludes to the perilous situations in which David found himself in his struggle with Saul. The word *sheol* in v. 6a may therefore be regarded as a subtle allusion to Saul, in much the same way as *sheol* in the Song of Hannah (1 Sam. 2:6).

Therefore, there is no reason to doubt that the Song of David was specifically composed to suit its place as the culmination in the story of David's rise to power. Neither is there any evidence for the prevalent supposition that it was transferred from a previous *Sitz im Leben* and inserted here as an inset hymn. In my view, the Song was composed along with its narrative context and integral to the story of the rise of David into which it was embedded as its poetic high point. See the context of the [Song at the Reed Sea](#) and the [Song of Hannah](#).

This settles, in my opinion, the problem of the relationship between 2 Samuel 22 and Psalm 18: the latter psalm is nothing but a copy of the Song of David, which had a transmission history of its own until it was incorporated into the Psalter as a key-poem in the First Book of Psalms. Compare the Introduction to [Book I](#) of the Psalter.

Special features of 2 Samuel 22:2b-51

In terms of numerical composition 2 Samuel 22 is far superior to Psalm 18 and certainly not in need of any emendation.¹ This is demonstrated by the opening verses with **17** words in the heading and introduction to the Song (vs. 1-2a), with **17** words in the first strophe (vs. 2b-3) and with **17** words concluding the Song. Additional evidence is the particularly beautiful centre of the Song: the middle word in [v. 26b](#) is flanked by **182 (7 x 26)** words on either side: $365 = 182 + 1 + 182$. Moreover, the **7**-word meaningful centre of the two middle cola, [v. 26](#) ($110 = 54 + 2 + 54$) may be regarded as expressing the gist of the Song:

“With the loyal you show yourself loyal; with the blameless you show yourself blameless.”

And finally, the compositional formula of the Song including the heading and introductory formula, $382 = 187a + 195b$, has **187** words before *atnach*, which is a multiple of the divine name number **17 (11 x 17)**. Any emendation would disturb such numerical features.

Psalm 18 lacks most of these significant features. The superiority of 2 Samuel 22 is also demonstrated by the state of the text. The text of 2 Samuel 22 can stand as it is in MT, but the text of Psalm 18 is in need of at least one emendation. See [Psalm 18](#).

It is important to keep in mind that we should be careful not to use the text of Psalm 18 to 'restore' 2 Samuel 22 (e.g., in v. 36, where Psalm 18 has an extra colon), or vice versa. The two texts must be studied with due respect for the two traditions they represent. The safest way is to be conservative in textual criticism.

Strophic structure - Canto/Stanza boundary: ||

- Labuschagne: 2-3 || 4-6, 7-9, 10-13, 14-16 || 17-20, 21-25, 26-30 || 31-35, 36-39, 40-43, 44-46 || 47-49, 50-51 (5 cantos, **14** strophes, with **52** verselines and 110 cola, with due regard for the conspicuous switches in the way God is referred to: vs. 3||4, 25||26, 30||31, 35||36, and 46||47. The transition between 49a||49b within v. Strophe 13 (vs. 47-49) functions as a device for drawing special attention to what is said in v. 49b. See Observation 2 below.
- Van der Lugt: 2-3 || 4-6, 7-9, 10-13, 14-16 || 17-20, 21-24, 25-28, 29-31 || 32-35, 36-39, 40-43, 44-46 || 47-49, 50-51 (5 cantos, 15 strophes, **52** verselines and 110 cola).
- Fokkelman: 2-4, 5-6, 7 || 8-9, 10-11, 12-13, 14-15, 16 || 17-18, 19-20 || 21-23, 24-25, 26-27, 28-30, 31 || 32-33, 34-35, 36-37, 38-39, 40-41, 42-43, 44-46 || 47-49, 50-51 (3 sections, 6 stanzas, 24 strophes with 53 verselines and 110 cola), taking v. 31c as a separate verseline. In his analysis of Psalm 18, in his book *Psalms in Form*, he rightly considers v. 31 as the third colon of its tricolonic verseline.
- For an overview of other divisions of the text, see Van der Lugt, *CAS*, Psalm 18, § 6.

¹ F. Stolz, *Das erste und zweite Buch Samuel* (Zürcher Bibelkommentare), Zürich 1981, p.287, claims “daß Ps. 18 eher weniger textliche Schwierigkeiten aufweist als 2.Sam.22”.

Logotechnical analysis

- Columns **a** and **b** show the number of words before and after the *atnach*.
- Column **c**: words spoken *to* God; **d**: words spoken *about* God.
- The numbering of the **verselines** is to be found to the right of the Hebrew text.

		Total	a	b	c	d
1	וַיְדַבֵּר דָּוִד לַיהוָה אֶת־דִּבְרֵי הַשִּׁירָה הַזֹּאתָ	7	7			
	בְּיוֹם הַצִּיל יְהוָה אֶת־	4		4		
	מִכַּף כָּל־אֵיבָיו וּמִכַּף שְׂאוֹל:	5		5		
2a	Introductory formula וַיֹּאמֶר [^]	1	= 1	+ 0		
	Heading and introduction, v. 1 + 2a	17	= 8	+ 9		
2b	*Note that יְהוָה סָלַעַי וּמִצְדָּתִי וּמִפְלִטָי־לִי:	1	5	0	5*	5
3	v. 2b is <i>after</i> atnach! אֱלֹהֵי צוּרֵי אַחְסֵה־בֹּוֹ	4	4		4	0
	מִנְּנִי וְקֶרֶן יְשָׁעֵי מִשְׁנֵבֵי	2	4		4	0
	וּמְנוֹסֵי מִשְׁעֵי מַחְמָס תִּשְׁעֵנִי:	4		4	4	0
	Canto I, Prelude Strophe 1 Total, v. 2b-3	17	= 4	+ 13	= 17	+ 0
4	מִהָלָל אֶקְרָא יְהוָה [^]	3	3			3
	וּמֵאֵיבֵי אֲנִשֶׁע:	2		2		2
	Total, v. 4	5	= 3	+ 2	= 0	+ 5
5	כִּי אֶפְגְּנִי מִשְׁבְּרֵי־מָוֶת	4	4			4
	נִחְלִי בְלִיעַל וּבַעֲתָנִי:	3		3		3
	Total, v. 5	7	= 4	+ 3	= 0	+ 7
6	חֲבִלִי שְׂאוֹל סִבְּנִי [^]	5	3	3		3
	קִדְמִנִי מִקְשֵׁי־מָוֶת:	3		3		3
	Total, v. 6	6	= 3	+ 3	= 0	+ 6
	Strophe 2 Total, v. 4-6	18	= 10	+ 8	= 0	+ 18
7	בְּצַר־לִי אֶקְרָא יְהוָה	6	4	4		4
	וְאֶל־אֱלֹהֵי אֶקְרָא [^]	3	3			3
	וַיִּשְׁמַע מִהִיכַל־קוֹלִי	7	3		3	3
	וַיִּשְׁעָתִי בְּאָזְנוֹ:	2		2		2
	Total, v. 7	12	= 7	+ 5	= 0	+ 12
	Total, v. 4-7	30	= 17	+ 13	= 0	+ 30
	Total, vs. 2b-7	47	= 21	+ 26	= 17	+ 30
8	וַיִּתְנַעַשׂ וַתִּרְעַשׂ הָאָרֶץ	8	3	3		3
	מִזִּסְדּוֹת הַשָּׁמַיִם יִרְגָזוּ [^]	3	3			3
	וַיִּתְנַעַשׂוּ כִּי־חָרָה לֹו:	4		4		4
	Total, v. 8	10	= 6	+ 4	= 0	+ 10
9	עָלָה עֵשֶׂן בְּאָפוֹ	9	3	3		3
	וְאֵשׁ מִפִּי־הָאֵכֵל [^]	3	3			3
	נִחְלִים בְּעֵרוֹ מִמְּנוֹ:	3		3		3
	Total, v. 9	9	= 6	+ 3	= 0	+ 9
	Strophe 3 Total, v. 7-9	31	= 19	+ 12	= 0	+ 31

10	וַיִּט שָׁמַיִם וַיִּרְדָּ֣	10	3	3	3
	וַעֲרַפֵּל תַּחַת רַגְלָיו׃		3	3	3
	Total, v. 10		6	= 3 + 3 = 0 +	6
11	וַיִּרְכַּב עַל־כְּרוֹב וַיַּעֲרֵ֣	11	4	4	4
	וַיָּרָא עַל־פְּנֵי־רוּחַ׃		4	4	4
	Total, v. 11		8	= 4 + 4 = 0 +	8
12	וַיֵּשֶׁת חֹשֶׁךְ סָבִיב־תּוֹ סִפּוֹת־	12	4	4	4
	חֹשֶׁר־תַּמִּים עָבִי שְׁחָקִים׃		4	4	4
	Total, v. 12		8	= 4 + 4 = 0 +	8
13	מִנְּנֻה נִגְדוּ־	13	2	2	2
	בָּעָרוֹ נִחַל־אֵשׁ׃		3	3	3
	Total, v. 13		5	= 2 + 3 = 0 +	5
	Strophe 4 Total, v. 10-13		27	= 13 + 14 = 0 +	27
14	יָרַעַם מִן־שָׁמַיִם יְהוָה־	14	4	4	4
	וַעֲלִיזוֹן יִתֵּן קוֹלוֹ׃		3	3	3
	Total, v. 14		7	= 4 + 3 = 0 +	7
	Total, v. 10-14		34	= 17 + 17 = 0 +	34
15	וַיִּשְׁלַח חֲצִיִּים וַיְפִיֲצֵם־	15	3	3	3
	בָּרֶק וַיְהִים׃		2	2	2
	Total, v. 15		5	= 3 + 2 = 0 +	5
16	וַיִּרְאוּ אַפְקֵי יָם	16	3	3	3
	וַיִּגְלוּ מִסְדּוֹת תְּבֵל־		3	3	3
	בְּנֹעֶרֶת יְהוָה	17	2	2	2
	מִנְּשַׁמַּת רוּחַ אָפוֹ׃		3	3	3
	Total, v. 16		11	= 6 + 5 = 0 +	11
	Strophe 5 Total, v. 14-16		23	= 13 + 10 = 0 +	23
	Canto II Total, v. 4-16		99	= 55 + 44 = 0 +	99
	Total, v. 2b-16		116	= 59 + 57 = 17 +	99
17	וַיִּשְׁלַח מִמְרוֹם יִקְחֵנִי־	18	3	3	3
	וַיִּמְשְׁנֵי מַמִּים רַבִּים׃		3	3	3
	Total, v. 17		6	= 3 + 3 = 0 +	6
18	וַיְצִילֵנִי מֵאִיְבֵי עֲזִי	19	3	3	3
	מִשְׁנֵאֵי כִי אֶמְצֹו מִמְּנֵי׃		4	4	4
	Total, v. 18		7	= 3 + 4 = 0 +	7
19	וַיִּקְדַּמְנִי בַיּוֹם אִידִי־	20	3	3	3
	וַיְהִי יְהוָה מִשְׁעַן לִי׃		4	4	4
	Total, v. 19		7	= 3 + 4 = 0 +	7
20	וַיֵּצֵא לְמִרְחֵב אֲתִי־	21	3	3	3
	וַיַּחֲלֹצֵנִי כִי־חָפֵץ בִּי׃		4	4	4
	Total, v. 20		7	= 3 + 4 = 0 +	7
	Strophe 6 Total, v. 17-20		27	= 12 + 15 = 0 +	27

21	יְגַמְלֵנִי יְהוָה כְּצַדִּיקֵי־ כָּבֵד יָדַי יָשִׁיב לִי: Total, v. 21 Total, v. 17-21	22	3	3	3	4	4	7 = 3 + 4 = 0 + 7	34 = 15 + 19 = 0 + 34
22	כִּי שָׁמַרְתִּי דְרָכֵי יְהוָה־ וְלֹא רָשַׁעְתִּי מֵאַלְהֵי: Total, v. 22	23	4	4	4	3	3	7 = 4 + 3 = 0 + 7	
23	כִּי כָל־מִשְׁפָּטָיו לִנְגִדֵי־ וְחִקְתִּיו לֹא־אָסוּר מִמֶּנָּה: Total, v. 23	24	4	4	4	4	4	8 = 4 + 4 = 0 + 8	
24	וְאַהֲבִיהַ תָּמִים לֹא־ וְאַשְׁתַּמְרָה מֵעוֹנֵי: Total, v. 24	25	3	3	3	2	2	5 = 3 + 2 = 0 + 5	
25	וַיָּשֶׁב יְהוָה לִי כְּצַדִּיקֵי־ כְּבָרֵי לִנְגִד עֵינָיו: Total, v. 25	26	4	4	4	3	3	7 = 4 + 3 = 0 + 7	34 = 18 + 16 = 0 + 34
Strophe 7		Total, v. 21-25	34	18	16	0	34		
26	Middle cola: עִם־חֹסֶד תִּתְחַסֵּד 110 = 54 + 2 + 54 : עִם־גִּבּוֹר תָּמִים תִּתְמַם: Middle word: 365=182+1+182 Total, v. 26	27	3	3	3	4	4	7 = 3 + 4 = 7 + 0	
27	54 (2x27) 182 (7x26) עִם־נֶבֶד תִּתְבָּרֵךְ־ וְעִם־עֶקֶשׁ תִּתְפַּלֵּל: Total, v. 27	28	3	3	3	3	3	6 = 3 + 3 = 6 + 0	
28	וְאַתָּעִם עֵנִי תוֹשִׁיעַ־ וְעֵינַיִךָ עַל־רַמִּים תִּשְׁפִּילֵל: Total, v. 28	29	4	4	4	4	4	8 = 4 + 4 = 8 + 0	
29	כִּי־אַתָּה גִּירֵי יְהוָה־ וַיִּתְּנָה יְגִיַת חֶשְׁכֵי: Total, v. 29	30	4	4	4	3	3	7 = 4 + 3 = 7 + 0	
30	כִּי בִכָּה אֲרוּץ גְּדוּדֵי־ בְּאַלְהֵי אֲדַלְגֵּ־שׁוּר: Total, v. 30	31	4	4	4	3	3	7 = 4 + 3 = 7 + 0	35 = 18 + 17 = 35 + 0
Strophe 8		Total, v. 26-30	35	18	17	35	0		
31	הָאֵל תָּמִים דְּרָכָיו־ אִמְרַת יְהוָה צְרוּפָה מִגֵּן הוֹסֵ־א לְכָל חַחֲסִים בּוֹ: Total, v. 31	32	3	3	3	5	5	11 = 3 + 8 = 0 + 11	
32	כִּי מִי־אֵל מִבְּלַעֲדֵי יְהוָה־ וּמִי צוּר מִבְּלַעֲדֵי אֱלֹהֵינוּ: Total, v. 32	33	5	5	5	4	4	9 = 5 + 4 = 0 + 9	
33	הָאֵל מְעוּזֵי חֵיל־ וַיִּתֵּר תָּמִים דְּרָכָיו־ Total, v. 33	34	3	3	3	3	3	6 = 3 + 3 = 0 + 6	
34	מִשׁוּנָה רְגְלֵי כְּאַיִלוֹת־ וְעַל בְּמוֹתָיו יַעֲמַדְנִי: Total, v. 34	35	3	3	3	3	3		

		Total, v. 34	6 = 3 + 3 = 0 + 6
35		מִלְמַד יָדַי לְמַלְחָמָה [^] 36	3 3 3
		וְנַחַת קִשְׁת־נְחוּשָׁה זָרְעֹתַי:	4 4 4
		Total, v. 35	7 = 3 + 4 = 0 + 7
	Strophe 9	Total, v. 31-35	39 = 17 + 22 = 0 + 39
36		וַתִּתֶּן-לִי מִגֵּן יִשְׁעָךָ [^] 37	4 4 4
		וַעֲנִתְךָ תִּרְבֵּנִי:	2 2 2
		Total, v. 36	6 = 4 + 2 = 6 + 0
37		תִּרְחִיב צַעְדֵי תַחְתְּנִי [^] 38	3 3 3
		וְלֹא מְעַדוּ קַרְסְלֵי:	3 3 3
		Total, v. 37	6 = 3 + 3 = 6 + 0
38		אֲרַדְפָּה אִיבֵי וְאֲשְׁמִידֵם [^] 39	3 3 3
		וְלֹא אָשׁוּב עַד-כְּלוֹתָם:	4 4 4
		Total, v. 38	7 = 3 + 4 = 7 + 0
39	* See note below the chart	וְאִכְלֵם וְאִמְחָצֵם וְלֹא יִקְוּמוּן [^] 40	4 4 4
		וַיִּפְּלוּ תַחַת רַגְלֵי:	3 3 3
		Total, v. 39	7 = 4 + 3 = 7 + 0
	Strophe 10	Total, v. 36-39	26 = 14 + 12 = 26 + 0
40		וַתִּזְרְנֵי חֵיל לְמַלְחָמָה [^] 41	3 3 3
		תִּכְרִיעַ קַמִּי תַחְתְּנִי:	3 3 3
		Total, v. 40	6 = 3 + 3 = 6 + 0
		Total, v. 36-40	32 = 17 + 15 = 32 + 0
		Total, v. 17-40	167 = 82 + 85 = 67 + 100
41		וְאִיבֵי תַתָּה לִי עֲרַף [^] 42	4 4 4
		מִשְׁנָאֵי וְאִצְמִיתֵם:	2 2 2
		Total, v. 41	6 = 4 + 2 = 6 + 0
		Total, v. 36-41	38 = 21 + 17 = 38 + 0
42		יִשְׁעוּ וְאִין מוֹשִׁיעַ [^] 43	3 3 3 0
		אֶל-יְהוָה וְלֹא עֵינָם:	4 4 4 0
		Total, v. 42	7 = 3 + 4 = 7 + 0
43		וְאֲשַׁחֲקֵם כַּעֲפַר-אֲרָץ [^] 44	3 3 3 0
		כְּטִיט-חוֹצוֹת אֲדָקֵם אֲרַקְעֵם:	4 4 4 0
		Total, v. 43	7 = 3 + 4 = 7 + 0
	Strophe 11	Total, v. 40-43	26 = 13 + 13 = 26 + 0
		Total, v. 17-43	187 = 91 + 96 = 87 + 100
44		וַתִּפְּלִטְנִי מִרִיבֵי עַמִּי [^] 45	3 3 3
		תִּשְׁמְרֵנִי לְרֹאשׁ גּוֹיִם	3 3 3
		עִם לֹא-יִדְעֵתִי יַעֲבֹדְנִי:	4 4 4
		Total, v. 44	10 = 3 + 7 = 10 + 0
45		בְּנִי נִכְרַ וַתִּכְבַּח-שׁוֹן-לִי [^] 46	4 4 4
		לְשִׁמוּעַ אֶזֶן יִשְׁמְעוּ לִי:	4 4 4
		Total, v. 45	8 = 4 + 4 = 8 + 0
46		בְּנִי נִכְרַ יִבְלוּ [^] 47	3 3 3
		וַיַּחֲזְרוּ מִמִּסְגָּרוֹתָם:	2 2 2
		Total, v. 46	5 = 3 + 2 = 5 + 0
	Strophe 12	Total, v. 44-46	23 = 10 + 13 = 23 + 0
	Canto IV	Total, v. 31-46	114 = 54 + 60 = 61 + 53

47	חַי־יְהוָה וּבְרוּךְ צוּרֵי־ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵי צוּר יִשְׂרָאֵל: Total, v. 47	48	4	4	4	4	4	8 = 4 + 4 = 0 + 8
48	הָאֵל הַנִּתֵּן נִקְמַת לִי וּמוֹרֵיד עַמִּים תַּחְתָּנִי: Total, v. 48	49	4	4	3	3	3	7 = 4 + 3 = 0 + 7
49	וּמוֹצִיאֵי מַאֲבִי־ וּמִקְמֵי תְרוּמָמִנִי מֵאִישׁ חֲמָסִים תַּצִּילֵנִי: Total, v. 49	50	2	2	2	2	2	7 = 2 + 5 = 5 + 2
50	Strophe 13 Total, v. 47-49 עַל־כֵּן אֹדֶךָ יְהוָה בְּגוֹיִם וּלְשֹׁמְדֵי אֲזַמְרָה: Total, v. 50 Total, v. 36-43 Total, v. 44-50 Numerical chiasmus, v. 36-50	51	5	5	2	2	2	22 = 10 + 12 = 5 + 17 7 = 5 + 2 = 7 + 0 52 = 27 + 25 = 38 + 14 52 = 25 + 27 = 35 + 17 104 = 52 + 52 = 73 + 31
51	Coda * See below Coda Total, v. 51 Strophe 14 Total, v. 50-51 Canto V Total, v. 47-51 Total, v. 31-51 Total, v. 2b-51 With the heading and וַיֹּאמֶר, v. 1-51	52	3	3	3	3	3	10 = 3 + 7 = 0 + 10 17 = 8 + 9 = 7 + 10 39 = 18 + 21 = 12 + 27 153 = 72 + 81 = 73 + 80 365 = 179 + 186 = 139 + 226 382 = 187 + 195

* V. 39a: Deleting this word (see e.g., Fokkelman, p. 334, note 7) would give a most tempting total of **364** words (**14x26**), but would wreak havoc with the **26** words in vs. 36-39, the **187** (11 x **17**) words in vs. 17-43, and the carefully designed numerical structure of vs. 36-50 with their **104** (4x**26**) words divided into **52** before and **52** after *atnach*, as well as the significant centre of the Song in v. 26 – see below.

* V. 51a: Read with MT's Ketib מְגַדֵּיל, 'the one who makes great the victories of his king'.

Observations

1. The arithmetic centre in terms of the 365 words of the Song is the word תָּמִים, 'blameless', in v. 26b, with **182** (7 x **26**) words on either side: 365 = **182** + **1** + **182**.

The pivotal word falls within the 2 middle cola in v. 26: 110 = **54** + **2** + **54**. These **7** words of the two pivotal cola constitute a very meaningful centre, which has certainly been consciously designed, for it is an eloquent expression of the gist of the poem:

עַם־חֲסִיד תִּתְחַסֵּד ^ עַם־גִּבּוֹר תָּמִים תִּתְמַם

With the loyal you show yourself loyal; with the blameless you show yourself blameless.

The number **54** is a multiple of **27** and underlines the deliberate use of **27** in Strophes 4 and 6 as the numerical value of the key-root חֲסֵד, 'loyal', in v. 26, which is the **27th** verseline.

2. The words spoken *to* God and the words spoken *about* him are in accordance with Psalm 18, except v. 16, where Ps. 18:16c-d is spoken *to* God.

This brings us to the strophic structure of the text, which is, in my opinion, to a great extent determined by the direction of address: the transition from words directly spoken *to* God (Column c) to words spoken *about* him (Column d). Therefore, the transitions should seriously be taken into account when we try to identify the structure of the text. They are to be found between vs. 3||4, 25||26, 30||31, 35||36, 46||47, (and 49a||49b). The transition within v. 49 is an

exception: it clearly functions as a device for drawing special attention, as in Ps. 23,4. On the basis of its content, v. 51 may be regarded as a coda.

See in the [General Introduction](#), “The use of a coda as a device for conclusion”.

In this respect it is significant that the main body of the Song between the Prelude and the Coda consists of **338** (13x**26**) words: **17** (Prelude) + **338** + **10** (Coda) = 382.

This is how the text of the Song is organized in terms of its cantos and strophes:

Strophe 1 (2-3)	Spoken <i>to</i> God: affirmation of trust in YHWH as a refuge.
Strophe 2 (4-6)	Spoken <i>about</i> God: praise to YHWH for deliverance from enemies.
Strophe 3 (7-9)	Spoken <i>about</i> God: YHWH’s anger was evident on the earth.
Strophe 4 (10-13)	Spoken <i>about</i> God: YHWH displayed his power in nature.
Strophe 5 (14-16)	Spoken <i>about</i> God: he thundered from heaven and shot arrows.
Strophe 6 (17-20)	Spoken <i>about</i> God: reaching from on high, YHWH delivered me.
Strophe 7 (21-25)	Spoken <i>about</i> God: he treated me according to my righteousness.
Strophe 8 (26-30)	Spoken <i>to</i> God: YHWH, you reward the just with your loyalty.
Strophe 9 (31-35)	Spoken <i>about</i> God: YHWH is my help in times of war.
Strophe 10 (36-39)	Spoken <i>to</i> God: your help made me prevail over my enemies.
Strophe 11 (40-43)	Spoken <i>to</i> God: you helped me to destroy my assailants.
Strophe 12 (44-46)	Spoken <i>to</i> God: you delivered me from strife among the nations.
Strophe 13 (47-49)	Spoken <i>about</i> God: I praise YHWH for his steadfast love.
Strophe 14 (50-51)	Spoken <i>to</i> God: for this I will extol you among the nations.

3. The two divine name numbers and their multiples figure many times in 2 Samuel 22:

vs. 1-2a	17 words in total
vs. 2b-3	17 words in total
vs. 4-7	17 words before <i>atnach</i>
vs. 2b-7	26 words after <i>atnach</i>
vs. 10-14	34 words in total, with 17 before and 17 after <i>atnach</i>
vs. 10-16	26 words before <i>atnach</i>
vs. 17-21	34 (2 X 17) words in total
vs. 21-25	34 (2 x 17) words in total
vs. 4-25	85 (5 x 17) words before <i>atnach</i>
vs. 26-30	17 words after <i>atnach</i>
vs. 31-35	17 words before <i>atnach</i>
vs. 36-39	26 words in total
vs. 36-40	17 words before <i>atnach</i>
vs. 17-40	85 (5 x 17) words after <i>atnach</i>
vs. 36-41	17 words after <i>atnach</i>
vs. 40-43	26 words in total
vs. 36-43	52 (2 x 26) words in total
vs. 17-43	187 (11 x 17) words in total
vs. 32-46	51 (3 x 17) words before and 52 (2 x 26) after <i>atnach</i>
vs. 44-50	52 (2 x 26) words in total
vs. 36-50	104 (4 x 26) words in total, with 52 before and 52 after <i>atnach</i>
vs. 50-51	17 words in total
vs. 31-51	153 (9 x 17) words in total.
vs. 1-51	187 (11 x 17) words before <i>atnach</i> .

See now also the overview of the other intriguing numerical features of the Song of David on page 17 in my analysis of the book of [1 Samuel](#).

4. The name יהוה occurs 18 times (16x in the poem and 2x in the heading); in Psalm 18 there are 19 occurrences (16 in the poem and 3 in the heading).

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Dr. C.J. Labuschagne
Brinkhorst 44
9751 AT Haren (Gron)
The Netherlands
labuschagne.cj@gmail.com

Senior Lecturer in Semitic Languages (retired),
University of Pretoria, South Africa
and
Professor of Old Testament (retired),
University of Groningen, The Netherlands