

Psalm 93— Logotechnical Analysis

Guidelines

- Please read the [General Introduction](#) as well as the Introduction to [Book I](#) and [Book IV](#).
- For common features found in the numerical analysis charts, see the [Key to the charts](#).

Specific features of Psalm 93

- The structure of the 45-word psalm is charmingly lucid and simple: a 9-word arithmetic centre (vs. 3) flanked by 18 words, which suggests that the number 9 has been used to structure the text.
- The numerical value of נִכּוֹן, 'established' ($45 = 5 \times 9$), which is apparently an important keyword, has been used to define the total number of words in the psalm.

Strophic structure

- Van der Lugt and Labuschagne: 1-2, 3-5 (2 strophes with 5 verselines and 14 cola).
- Fokkelman: similarly, but he finds 13 cola, taking vs. 1c-2 as a bicolon.

Logotechnical analysis

- Columns **a** and **b** show the number of words before and after the atnach.
- Column **c**: words addressed to God; **d**: words spoken about God.
- The numbering of the verselines is shown in **brown**.

		Total	a	b	c	d
1	יְהוָה מֶלֶךְ גָּאוֹת לְבַשׁ	1	4	4		4
	לְבַשׁ יְהוָה עֹז הַתְּאֲזָרָה		4	4		4
	אֶרֶץ-תְּכוּן תִּבְלַבְל בַּל-תִּמּוֹט:		5		5	5
2	נִכּוֹן = 45	2	3	3		3
	(14 + 11 + 6 + 14 = 45)		2	2	2	
	Strophe 1 Total, v. 1-2	18	= 11	+ 7	= 5	+ 13
3	Middle words: 45=18+9+18	3	3		3	
	Middle word: 45=22+1+22		3	3		3
	Middle verseline: 5=2+1+2,		3		3	3
	the meaningful centre.	Total, v. 3	9	= 6	+ 3	= 9 + 0
	Total, v. 1-3	27	= 17	+ 10	= 14	+ 13
4	מִקְלוֹת מַיִם רַבִּים	4	3	3		3
	אֲדִירִים מְשֻׁבְּרֵי-יָם		3	3		3
	אֲדִיר בְּמָרוֹם יְהוָה:		3		3	3
	Total, v. 4	9	= 6	+ 3	= 0	+ 9
	Total, v. 2-4	23	= 15	+ 8	= 14	+ 9
5	עֲדִיתֶךָ נְאֻמָּנוּ מְאֹד	5	3	3		3
	לְבֵיתֶךָ נְאֻמָּה-קִדְשׁ		3	3		3
	יְהוָה לְאֶרֶץ יָמִים:		3		3	3
	Total, v. 5	9	= 6	+ 3	= 9	+ 0
	Total, v. 4-5	18	= 12	+ 6	= 9	+ 9
	Strophe 2 Total, v. 3-5	27	= 18	+ 9	= 18	+ 9
	Total, v. 2-5	32	= 21	+ 11	= 23	+ 9
	Total, v. 1-5	45	= 29	+ 16	= 23	+ 22

Observations

1. In terms of the 45 words of the psalm, its arithmetic centre is the word נְהַרְוֹת, 'floods' in vs. 3b ($45 = 22 + 1 + 22$). Its pivotal positioning is strengthened by the fact that it is also the middle word of the larger 9-word arithmetic centre, vs. 3. This larger pivot on word level ($45 = 18 + 9 + 18$), happens to be the middle verseline, and is apparently the meaningful centre of the poem.

Having the middle poetic building block as the meaningful centre – in this case the middle verseline - Psalm 93 is perfectly in line with all psalms in Book III and Book IV, with Psalm 95 as the only exception. Here, the pivotal building block coincides precisely with the 9-word arithmetic centre, as in a considerable number of other psalms, e.g., in the preceding psalm, which is a real jewel of numerical compositional art. See Observation 1 in my Analysis of [Psalm 92](#).

יְהוָה	נְהַרְוֹת	נִשְׂאוּ	(13 letters)	The floods have lifted up, YHWH
קוֹלָם	נְהַרְוֹת	נִשְׂאוּ	(13 letters)	The floods have lifted up their voice
דְּכָמָם:	נְהַרְוֹת	נִשְׂאוּ	(13 letters)	The floods lift up their roaring.

The pivotal word נְהַרְוֹת is clearly a keyword of paramount importance, which is emphasized by its repetition in the preceding and following colon.

The meaningful centre is skilfully phrased in such a way that all three cola are made up of 13 letters. The number 13 symbolically refers to the uniqueness of YHWH – note that there are exactly 13 words spoken about God in vs. 1 (Column d). The meaningful centre is additionally highlighted by the fact that the middle instance of the 5 occurrence of the name YHWH falls in vs. 3a. See the General Introduction, "Special devices to highlight the meaningful centre".

2. The number of words, 45, seem to have been designed to reflect the numerical value of נִבְנוּן, 'established' in vs. 2a ($14 + 11 + 6 + 14 = 45$), which is obviously a key-word. Here in vs. 2a, it relates to God's throne, but in vs. 1c, where it appears as תִּבְנוּן, 'is established', preludeing the key-word, it relates to the world. The symbolism is clear: when Yahweh's throne stands firm, the world stands firm.
3. For some still unknown reason, the author apparently organized the text by means of the number 9 ($45 = 18 + 9 + 18$) = ($5 \times 9 = 2 \times 9 + 1 \times 9 + 2 \times 9$).
4. The only instance of a divine name number is the 17 words before atnach in vs. 1-3. The apparent use of both *kabod*-numbers is probably intentional: 32 words in vs. 2-5, and 23 words in vs. 2-4, and also 23 specifically words addressed to God (Column c). As always, these numbers symbolically denote the presence of God through his glory.

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Dr. C.J. Labuschagne	Senior Lecturer in Semitic Languages (retired),
Brinkhorst 44	University of Pretoria, South Africa
9751 AT Haren (Gron)	and
The Netherlands	Professor of Old Testament (retired),
labuschagne.cj@planet.nl	University of Groningen, The Netherlands