

# Psalm 108— Logotechnical Analysis

## Guidelines

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

## Specific features of Psalm 108

- The direction of address is used to give structure to the text: especially the two passages containing words spoken *about* God, vs. 8-10 (the middle canto) and v. 14 (the coda). They are made up of **34** (2 x 17) words. This number represents the numerical value of the word **כְּבוֹדְךָ**, 'your glory', in v. 6b.
- A feature this psalm shares with all psalms from Psalm 104 through 109 is the use of a coda: in this case, the statement in v. 14.

## Strophic structure - Canto/Stanza boundary: ||

- Van der Lugt: 2-3, 4-5, 6-7 || 8-10, 11-12, 13-14 (2 cantos, 6 strophes, 13 verselines and 30 cola, taking v. 2 as a tricolon).  
Fokkelman: 2-3, 4-5, 6-7 || 8-9, 10-11, 12-14 (2 stanzas, 6 strophes, 13 verselines and 29 cola, taking v. 2 as a bicolon).  
Labuschagne: 2-3, 4-5, 6-7 || 8-10 || 11-13, 14 (3 cantos with 6 strophes, 13 verselines and 30 cola, taking – with Van der Lugt - v. 2 as a tricolon).

## 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	שִׁיר מְזֻמָּר לְדָוִד: Heading, v. 1	3	= 3	+ 0		
2	נִכּוֹן לִבִּי אֱלֹהִים <sup>^</sup> 1	3	3		3	
	אֲשִׁירָה וְאֶזְמְרָה	2		2	2	
	אֶף־כְּבוֹדִי:	2		2	2	
	Total, v. 2	7	= 3	+ 4	= 7	+ 0
3	עוֹרָה הַגָּבֹל וְכִנּוֹר 2	3	3		3	
	אֲעִירָה שָׁחַר:	2	2		2	
	Total, v. 3	5	= 5	+ 0	= 5	+ 0
	<b>Strophe 1</b> Total, v. 2-3	12	= 8	+ 4	= 12	+ 0
4*	אוֹדֶה בְּעַמִּים יְהוָה <sup>^</sup> 3	3	3		3	
	וְאֶזְמְרָה בְּלִאֲמִים [בְּלִאֲמִים]:	2/3		2/3	2/3	
	Total, v. 4	5/6	= 3	+ 2/3	= 5/6	+ 0
5	כִּי־גָדוֹל מַעַל־שָׁמַיִם חִסְדְּךָ <sup>^</sup> 4	5	5		5	
	וְעַד־שְׁחָקִים אֲמַתְּךָ:	3		3	3	
	Total, v. 5	8	= 5	+ 3	= 8	+ 0
	<b>Strophe 2</b> Total, v. 4-5	13/14	= 8	+ 5/6	= 13/14	+ 0
6	רוּמָה עַל־שָׁמַיִם אֱלֹהִים <sup>^</sup> 5	4	4		4	
	וְעַל כָּל־הָאָרֶץ כְּבוֹדְךָ: (11 + 2 + 6 + 4 + 11)	4		4	4	
	Total, v. 3-6	26/27	= 17	+ 9/10	= 26/27	+ 0
	Total, v. 2-6	33/34	= 20	+ 3/14	= 33/34	+ 0

7		לְמַעַן יִחְלְצוּן יִרְדִּי־הָאֵל	6	3	3	3	
		הוֹשִׁיעָה יְמִינִךָ וְעַנְנִי:		3		3	3
	Strophe 3	Total, v. 6-7		14	= 7	+ 7 = 14	+ 0
		Total, v. 2-7		39/40	= 23+16/17 = 39/40	+ 0	
	Canto I	Total, v. 1-7		42/43	= 26+16/17 = 42/43	+ 0	
8	Middle verseline:	אֱלֹהִים דָּבַר בְּקִדְשׁוֹ	7	3	3	3	
	13 = 6 + 1 + 6	אֶעֱלֶזָה אַחְלָקָה שְׁכֵם־		3	3	3	
	Middle word:	וְעַמְּךָ סִכּוֹת אֲמַדְדֶּךָ:		3		3	3
		Total, v. 8		9	= 6	+ 3 = 0	+ 9
		Total, vs. 6-8		23	= 13	+ 10 = 14	+ 9
9		לִי גִלְעָד לִי מְנַשֶּׁה	8	4	4	4	
		וְאֶפְרַיִם מְעוֹז רֹאשֵׁי־		3	3	3	
		יְהוּדָה מְחַקְקֵי:		2		2	2
		Total, v. 9		9	= 7	+ 2 = 0	+ 9
		Total, v. 6-9		32	= 20	+ 12 = 14	+ 18
10		מִזֶּבֶד סִיר רַחֲצֵי	9	3	3	3	
		עַל־אֲדוֹם אֲשַׁלֵּךְ נְעֻלֵי־		4	4	4	
		עַל־פְּלִשְׁתִּים אֶתְרוּעֵעַ:		3		3	3
		Total, v. 10		10	= 7	+ 3 = 0	+ 10
	Canto II Strophe 4	Total, v. 8-10		28	= 20	+ 8 = 0	+ 28
11		מִי יִבְלְגֵנִי עִיר מְבֻצָּרָה	10	4	4	4	
		מִי נִחְנֵי עַד־אֲדוֹם:		4		4	4
12		הֲלֹא־אֱלֹהִים זָנְחָתְנוּ	11	3	3	3	
		וְלֹא־תִצָּא אֱלֹהִים בְּצַבָּאתֵינוּ:		4		4	4
		Total, v. 9-12		34	= 21	+ 13 = 15	+ 19
13		הֲבֵה־לָנוּ עֲזָרַת מְצָרָה	12	4	4	4	
		וְשׂוֹא תִשׁוּעַת אֲדָם:		3		3	3
	Strophe 5	Total, v. 11-13		22	= 11	+ 11 = 22	+ 0
14	Coda	בְּאֱלֹהִים נַעֲשֶׂה־תִּילָל	13	3	3	3	
		וְהוּא יְבוֹס צְרִינֵנוּ:		3		3	3
	Strophe 6	Total, v. 14		6	= 3	+ 3 = 0	+ 6
	Canto III	Total, v. 11-14		28	= 14	+ 14 = 22	+ 6
		Total, v. 8-14		56	= 34	+ 22 = 22	+ 34
		Total, v. 5-14		78	= 46	+ 32 = 44	+ 34
		Total, v. 2-14		95/96	= 57 + 38/39 = 61/62	+ 34	
		Total, with the heading, v. 1-14		98/99	= 60 + 38/39 = 64/65	+ 34	

\* Note: For the enigmatic words בְּל־אֲמִים, 'non-nations', of the Leningrad Codex in v. 10b (occurring also in Psalms 44:15, 108:4 and 149:7), see the note at the end of the chart in my Analysis of [Psalm 44](#).

## Observations

1. In terms of the 95 words of the psalm, its arithmetic centre is constituted by the word אֲמַדְדֶּךָ, 'I will measure off', in v. 8c. It falls within the third colon of v. 8, which is obviously the meaningful centre on verseline level (13 = 6 + 1 + 6):

אֱלֹהִים דָּבַר בְּקִדְשׁוֹ אֶעֱלֶזָה אַחְלָקָה שְׁכֵם־ וְעַמְּךָ סִכּוֹת אֲמַדְדֶּךָ:  
 God has spoken in his sanctuary: "Exult I will! I will divide Shechem //  
 and the valley of Succoth I will measure off!"

However, we cannot exclude the possibility that the entire 28-word oracle, vs. 8-10, was intended to be the meaningful centre.

2. The parameters for the division of the text are set by the direction of address:

vs. 2-7	Canto I	words addressed to God
vs. 8-10	Canto II	words spoken about God, including the cited oracle
vs. 11-13	Strophe 5	words addressed to God
v. 14	Strophe 6	words spoken about God.

These literary units should unconditionally be taken into account, when we divide the psalm into strophes. Naturally, Canto I can be sub-divided into 3 strophes:

vs. 2-3	Strophe 1	I am ready to praise you and sing with harp and lyre
vs. 4-5	Strophe 2	I will give thanks to you among the nations for your love
vs. 6-7	Strophe 3	Be exalted, O God, save and deliver your beloved ones!
vs. 8-10	Strophe 4	God has spoken: he divides and measures out his land
vs. 11-13	Strophe 5	O God, we trust in you; grant us help from the foe
v. 14	Strophe 6	With God we shall prevail: he will trample our foes!

In much the same way as in Psalms 105-107 and 109, the final verseline is a coda containing a concluding statement. For the coda, see the [General Introduction](#), "The use of a coda as a device for conclusion".

3. The fact that the text divides into 61 words addressed to God and exactly **34** (2 x **17**) spoken about God, shows that the author deliberately used the direction of address to structure his text and to generate an extra divine name number. The fact that **34** represents the numerical value of **כְּבוֹדְךָ**, 'your glory' (11 + 2 + 6 + 4 + 11 = **34**), in v. 6b, strongly underscores this supposition. In fact, this is a keyword of paramount importance: the exhortation at the end of the prayer, "Let your glory be over all the earth!" (v. 6b), results in the solemn oracle in which God declares his resolve to divide the land (vs. 8-10) and the poet's confidence in God's rule expressed in the coda (v. 14).

Given this, I have also marked the occurrences of the *kabod* numbers **23** and **32** in the chart. See the [General Introduction](#), under "Special patterns".

4. The numbers **17** and **26** and the *kabod* numbers appear in the following instances:

vs. 3-6	<b>26</b> words in total, with <b>17</b> before atnach
vs. 1-7	<b>26</b> words before atnach
vs. 2-7	<b>23</b> words before atnach
vs. 6-8	<b>23</b> words in total
vs. 6-9	<b>32</b> words in total
vs. 9-12	<b>34</b> ( 2 x <b>17</b> ) words in total
vs. 8-14	<b>34</b> (2 x <b>17</b> ) words before atnach
vs. 5-14	<b>78</b> (3 x <b>26</b> ) words in total, with <b>46</b> before and <b>32</b> after atnach
vs. 2-14	<b>34</b> (2 x <b>17</b> ) words in Column d.

5. The name יהוה occurs only in v. 4a; the designation Elohim appears 6 times (2a, 6a, 8a, 12a, 12b and 14a).

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