

# Psalm 114— 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 114

- Like the three preceding psalms, Psalm 114 has a strikingly regular structure. Another feature it shares with these psalms is that its core (comprising 26 words) is surrounded by a significant number: in this case, not by the YHWH-*echad* number 39, as in Psalms 11-113, but by the divine name number 26.
- Psalm 114 is the first psalm in the 4-psalm sub-group (114-117) concluding the first group of *eleven* psalms in Book V. There is evidence suggesting that the *hallelu-yah* at the end of Psalm 113 originally stood at the beginning of Psalm 114 - which is still witnessed by LXX – or perhaps at the end. In the latter case, all four psalms in this sub-group were originally marked by a *hallelu-yah*, analogous to the five psalms concluding the Psalter (146-150). See the Introduction to [Book V](#).

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

- Van der Lugt/Fokkelman: 1-2, 3-4 || 5-6, 7-8 (2 cantos, 4 strophes, 8 verselines 16 cola).
- Labuschagne: 1-2 || 3-4, 5-6 || 7-8 (3 cantos with 4 strophes, 8 verselines and 16 cola).

## Logotechnical analysis

- Columns **a** and **b** show the number of words before and after the atnach.
- Column **c**: the land of Israel God's domain; **d**: awe on the part of the environment.
- The numbering of the verselines is shown in **brown**.

		Total	a	b	c	d
1	בְּצֵאת יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמִּצְרַיִם <sup>1</sup>	3	3		3	
	בֵּית יַעֲקֹב מִעַם לֵעֹז:	4		4	4	
2	הִיָּתָה יְהוּדָה לְקָדְשׁוֹ <sup>2</sup>	3	3		3	
	יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמְּשֻׁלֹתָיו:	2		2	2	
	Total, v. 2	5	= 3	+ 2	= 5	+ 0
	<b>Canto I Strophe 1 Total, v. 1-2</b>	<b>12</b>	= 6	+ 6	= 12	+ 0
3	הַיָּם רָאָה וַיִּנְסֵ֥ <sup>3</sup>	3	3			3
	תִּירְדֵן יִסֹּב לְאַחֹרַיִ:	3		3		3
	Total, v. 3	6	= 3	+ 3	= 0	+ 6
4	הַתְּהִרִים רָקְדוּ כְּאֵילִים <sup>4</sup>	3	3			3
	וַיִּבְעוּת כְּבֹנֵי־צֹאן:	3		3		3
	Total, v. 4	6	= 3	+ 3	= 0	+ 6
	<b>Strophe 2 Total, v. 3-4</b>	<b>12</b>	= 6	+ 6	= 0	+ 12
	Total, v. 2-4	<b>17</b>	= 9	+ 8	= 5	+ 12
	Total, v. 1-4	24	= 12	+ 12	= 12	+ 12
5	מִה־לֶּךְ הַיָּם כִּי תִנּוּסֵ֥ <sup>5</sup>	5	5			5
	תִּירְדֵן תִּסֹּב לְאַחֹרַיִ: <b>Middle words of vs. 3-6:</b>	3		3		3
	<b>26 = 12 + 2 + 12</b>	8	= 5	+ 3	= 0	+ 8
	Total, v. 5	32	= 17	+ 15	= 12	+ 20
	Total, v. 1-5	56	= 32	+ 24	= 24	+ 20
6	הַתְּהִרִים תִּרְקְדוּ כְּאֵילִים <sup>6</sup>	3	3			3
	וַיִּבְעוּת כְּבֹנֵי־צֹאן:	3		3		3
	Total, v. 6	6	= 3	+ 3	= 0	+ 6
	<b>Strophe 3 Total, v. 5-6</b>	<b>14</b>	= 8	+ 6	= 0	+ 14
	<b>Core Canto II Total, v. 3-6</b>	<b>26</b>	= 14	+ 12	= 0	+ 26

7	מִלְפָּנֵי אֲדֹנָי חוּלֵי אֶרֶץ אֱ מִלְפָּנֵי אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב:	7	4	4	4	
	Total, v. 7		3	3	3	
	Total, v. 2-7		7	= 4 + 3	= 7 + 0	
			38	= 21 + 17	= 38 + 0	
8	הַהֶפְכִי הַצּוּר אֲנִים־מִים חֶלְמִישׁ לְמַעֲיֵנו־מִים:	8	4	4	4	
	Total, v. 8		3	3	3	
	Total, v. 7-8		7	= 4 + 3	= 7 + 0	
	<b>Canto III Strophe 4 Total, v. 7-8</b>		14	= 8 + 6	= 14 + 0	
	Numerical Total, v. 1-4		24	= 12 + 12	= 12 + 12	
	Chiasmus Total, v. 5-8		28	= 16 + 12	= 28 + 0	
	Total, v. 1-8		52	= 28 + 24	= 26 + 26	

## Observations

1. There is nothing significant about the arithmetic centre, the two middle words in v. 5a, לָךְ הַיָּם, 'with you, O sea' (52 = 25 + 2 + 25). On the level of words, in my judgement, there is no balanced meaningful centre. The only consciously designed meaningful centre on word level is clearly the 26-word, off-centre core, vs. 3-6 (52 = 12 + 26 + 14).
2. As in the three preceding psalms, the core of this poem is surrounded by a significant number of words. Here, a framework of 26 (12 + 14) words envelops the 26-word core. The poem has a perfectly balanced poetical structure, which divides in to 3 cantos, precisely as in the three preceding psalms:

vs. 1-2	Canto I	2 verselines	4 cola		12 words
vs. 3-4	Canto IIa	2 verselines	4 cola	12 words	
vs. 5-6	Canto IIb	2 verselines	4 cola	14 words	
vs. 7-8	Canto III	2 verselines	4 cola		14 words.

As a result of the balanced structure, there is a numerical chiasmus, which joins the two sections comprising 4 verselines and 8 cola each (vs. 1-4 and 5-8). This means that there is no strong caesura between vs. 4 || 5, which makes Van der Lugt's and Fokkelman's Canto structure highly improbable.

3. In terms of content, the central canto (Column d) contains a description of the reaction of the environment on the fact that Judah and Israel have become God's domain:
  - Canto I When God rescued Israel from Egypt, Judah and Israel became his *domain*
  - Canto II The awestruck reaction of the environment
  - Canto III Call to YHWH's *domain* to tremble in awe at his presence.
4. Significantly enough, the divine name itself does not feature in the psalm; instead, we find אֲדֹנָי, 'Lord', and אֱלֹהֵי, 'God', in v. 7.

The divine name numbers feature in the following instances:

vs. 2-4	17 words in total
vs. 1-5	17 words before atnach
vs. 3-6	26 words in total
vs. 2-7	17 words after atnach
vs. 1-2 + 7-8	26 words in total.

The 32 words in vs. 1-5 signify YHWH's radiant glory and may numerically buttress the idea of his presence in the land.

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