

Psalm 64— Logotechnical Analysis

Guidelines

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

Specific features of Psalm 64

- Psalm 64 shares several numerical features with Psalm 63, e.g., the use of the numerical value of a keyword, and the significant fact that the main clauses are made up of altogether **68** (4 x 17) words.

Strophic structure - Canto/Stanza boundary: ||

- Van der Lugt, Labuschagne and Fokkelman: 2-3 || 4-5, 6-7 || 8-9, 10-11 (2 cantos with 5 strophes, 10 verselines and 24 cola).

Logotechnical analysis

- Columns **a** and **b** show the number of words before and after the atnach.
- Column **c**: words in the main clauses; **d**: words in the subordinate clauses.
- The numbering of the verselines is shown in **brown**.

| | | Total | a | b | c | d |
|--|--|-------------------|-----------|-----------|-------------------|-----------|
| 1 | לְמִנְצַחַת מְזִמּוֹר לְדָוִד: Heading, v. 1 | 3 | 3 | 0 | | |
| 2 | שָׁמַע-אֱלֹהִים קוֹלִי בְּשִׁיחִי 1 מִפֶּתַח אָזְיִב תִּצַּר תְּנִי: Total, v. 2 | 4 4 8 | 4 | | 4 4 8 | 0 |
| 3 | תִּסְתִּירֵנִי מִסּוּד מְרַעִים 2 מִרְגֵּשֶׁת פֶּעֲלֵי אָוֶן: מִרְגֵּשֶׁת = 79 (13 + 20 + 3 + 21 + 22 = 79) Total, v. 3 | 3 3 6 | 3 | | 3 3 6 | 0 |
| Canto I Strophe 1 Total, v. 2-3 | | 14 | 7 | 7 | 14 | 0 |
| 4 | אֲשֶׁר שָׁנְנוּ כִּחְרָב לְשׁוֹנֵם^ 3 דְּרָכָו חֲצֵם דְּבַר מָר: Total, v. 4 | 4 4 8 | 4 | | 0 4 8 | 4 |
| 5 | לִירוֹת בְּמִסְתָּרִים תֵּם^ 4 פִּתְאֵם יִרְהוּ וְלֹא יִירָאוּ: Total, v. 5 | 3 4 7 | 3 | | 4 4 8 | 3 |
| Strophe 2 Total, v. 4-5 | | 15 | 7 | 8 | 11 | 4 |
| 6 | יִחְזְקוּ-לְמוֹ דְּבַר רַע 5 יִסְפְּרוּ לְטִמּוֹן מִזְקָשִׁים^ אֶמְרוּ מִי יִרְאֶה לְמוֹ: Middle word: (79 = 39 + 1 + 39) Total, v. 6 | 4 3 4 11 | 4 | | 4 3 4 11 | 0 |
| Total, v. 4-6 | | 26 | 14 | 12 | 15 | 11 |
| 7 | יִחְפְּשׁוּ-עוֹלֹת 6 תִּמְנוּ חֲפֵשׁ מִחְפְּשֵׁי^ וְקָרַב אִישׁ וְלֵב עִמּוֹק: Two middle cola: 24 = 11 + 2 + 11 Total, v. 7 | 2 3 4 9 | 2 | | 2 3 4 9 | 0 |
| Strophe 3 Total, v. 6-7 | | 20 | 12 | 8 | 20 | 0 |
| Canto II Total, v. 4-7 | | 35 | 19 | 16 | 24 | 11 |
| Total, v. 2-7 | | 49 | 26 | 23 | 38 | 11 |

| | | | | | | | |
|----|---|---------------------------|----|------|------|------|------|
| 8 | וַיִּרְם אֱלֹהִים חֵץ פְּתָאוֹם־ הָיוּ מִכּוֹתָם: Total, v. 8 | 7 | 4 | 4 | 4 | | |
| | | | 2 | | 2 | 2 | |
| | | | 6 | = 4 | + 2 | = 6 | + 0 |
| 9 | וַיִּכְשִׁילוּהוּ עָלֵימוֹ לְשׁוֹנֵם־ יִתְגַּדְרוּ כָּל־רֵאָה בָּם: Total, v. 9 | 8 | 3 | 3 | | 3 | |
| | | | 4 | | 4 | 4 | |
| | | | 7 | = 3 | + 4 | = 7 | + 0 |
| | Strophe 4 | Total, v. 8-9 | 13 | = 7 | + 6 | = 13 | + 0 |
| | | Total, v. 4-9 | 48 | = 26 | + 22 | = 37 | + 11 |
| | | Total, v. 2-9 | 62 | = 33 | + 29 | = 51 | + 11 |
| 10 | וַיִּירָאוּ כָּל־אָדָם וַיִּגִּדּוּ פֶּעַל אֱלֹהִים וַיַּעֲשֶׂהוּ הַשְּׂכִילִי: Total, v. 10 | 9 | 3 | 3 | | 3 | |
| | | | 3 | 3 | | 3 | |
| | | | 2 | 2 | | 2 | |
| | | | 8 | = 8 | + 0 | = 8 | + 0 |
| 11 | יִשְׂמַח צְדִיק בִּיהִנָּה וְחֶסֶת בּוֹ וַיִּתְתְּלֵלוּ כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל־לֵב: Total, v. 11 | 10 | 2 | 2 | | 2 | |
| | | | 3 | 3 | | 3 | |
| | | | 4 | | 4 | 4 | |
| | | | 9 | = 5 | + 4 | = 9 | + 0 |
| | Strophe 5 | Total, v. 10-11 | 17 | = 13 | + 4 | = 17 | + 0 |
| | Canto III | Total, v. 8-11 | 30 | = 20 | + 10 | = 30 | + 0 |
| | | Total, v. 4-11 | 65 | = 39 | + 26 | = 54 | + 11 |
| | | Total, v. 2-11 | 79 | = 46 | + 33 | = 68 | + 11 |
| | | With the heading, v. 1-11 | 82 | = 49 | + 33 | | |

Observations

- The arithmetic centre of the poem in terms of its 79 words is the last word in v. 6, **לָמוֹ**, which cannot be regarded as a meaningful centre. However, the two middle cola, **v. 7a-b**, focusing on the scheming of the evil-doers, appear to be a likely candidate ($24 = 11 + 2 + 11$):

וַיִּחַפְּשׁוּ־עוֹלֹת תַּמְנוּ חֶפֶשׁ מִחֶפֶשׁ

They confirm their wicked resolves; they talk of hiding snares.

- Syntax is employed to achieve **68** (4×17) words in the main clauses (Column c), precisely as in the preceding psalm!
- The total number of words in the poem, **79**, represents the numerical value of the word **מִרְגֵּשֶׁת**, 'from the scheming of (the evil-doers)' in v. 3b. For the use of this device, see Observation 2 in my Analysis of [Psalm 63](#).
- The two forms of address, 2nd person (vs. 2-7) and 3rd person (vs. 8-11) give structure to the text since they show that there is a caesura between v. 7 and v. 8. More precisely, the caesura is between vs. 4-7, describing the plotting of the evil-doers (Canto II), and vs. 8-11, describing God's response and its effects (Canto III).

5. The divine name numbers feature in the following instances:
- vs. 4-6 **26** words, with **15** (YH) in Column c and **11** (WH) in Column d
 - vs. 2-7 **26** words before atnach
 - vs. 4-9 **26** words before atnach
 - vs. 2-9 **51** (3 x **17**) words in the main clauses
 - vs. 10-11 **17** words in total
 - vs. 4-11 **26** words after atnach
 - vs. 2-11 **68** (4 x **17**) words in the main clauses.
6. As Pieter van der Lugt has noticed (private communication), the two concluding verses are made up of **17** words, which is also the case in Ps. 62:12-13, while Psalm 63 is concluded by vs. 10-12 with **26** words; so is Psalm 56, vs. 12-14, with **26** words.
7. In v. 11b we find the first occurrence of the name יהוה since Psalm 59. The next occurrence is to be found in Psalm 68. The designation אֱלֹהִים, 'God', appears 3x (vs. 2a, 8a and 10a).

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