Psalm 99— 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 99

- The 2-word call קָדוֹשׁ הוּא, 'Holy is he!', appears to be a structuring device, occurring at the end of Strophe 1 (v. 3b), at the end of Strophe 2 and Canto I (v. 5c, the meaningful centre), and partly reverberating at the end of the psalm in v. 9c.
- A feature Psalm 99 shares with Psalm 76 is the use of the numerical value of the keyword נוֹרָא, 'awesome', **41**, as a structuring device surrounding the middle word.
- The **7** occurrences of the name YHWH expresses the fullness of the holy name.

Strophic structure - Canto/Stanza boundary: ||

- Van der Lugt: 1-3, 4-5 || 6-7, 8-9 (2 cantos with 4 strophes, 10 verselines and 24 cola).
- Fokkelman: 1-3, 4-5, 6-7, 8-9 (similarly, except that he finds **11** verselines with **25** cola, taking vs. 6-7 as three bicola).
- Labuschagne: 1-3, 4-5 || 6-7, 8-9 (2 cantos and 4 strophes, finding, with Fokkelman, **11** verselines and **25** cola).

• Logotechnical analysis

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

			Total	a	b	c	d
1	יְהוָה מָלָךְ יִרְגְּזוּ עַמִּים^	¹1	4	4		4	
	יֹשֵׁב כְּרוּבִים תָּנוּט הָאָרֶץ:		4		4	4	
2	יְהוָה בְּצִיּוֹן גָּדוֹל^	²2	3	3		3	
	וְרָם הוּא עַל־כָּל־הָעַמִּים:		5		5	5	
3 **41** = נוֹרָא	יוֹדוּ שִׁמְךָ גָּדוֹל וְנוֹרָא	3	4	4			4
(14 + 6 + 20 + 1)	קָדוֹשׁ הוּא:		2	2		2	
	Strophe 1 Total, v. 1-3		22	= 13	+ 9	= 18	+ 4
4	וְעֹז מֶלֶךְ מִשְׁפָּט אָהֵב	4	4	4			4
	אַתָּה כּוֹנַנְתָּ מֵישָׁרִים^		3	3			3
	מִשְׁפָּט וּצְדָקָה בְּיַעֲקֹב	5	3		3		3
	אַתָּה עָשִׂיתָ:		2		2		2
	Total, v. 4		12	= 7	+ 5	= 0	+ 12
	Total, v. 2-4		**26**	= 16	+ 10	= 10	+ 16
	Total, v. 1-4		**34**	= 20	+ 14	= 18	+ 16
5 Middle verseline (v. 5):	רוֹמְמוּ ³יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ	6	3	3		3	
11 = 5 + **1** + 5	וְהִשְׁתַּחֲווּ לַהֲדֹם רַגְלָיו		3	3		3	
Middle word: 83 = **41** + 1 + **41**	קָדוֹשׁ הוּא:		2	2		2	
Middle colon (5c): 25 = 12+1+12 Total, v. 5			8	= 8	+ 0	= 8	+ 0
	Strophe 2 Total, v. 4-5		20	= 15	+ 5	= 8	+ 12
	Total, v. 3-5		**26**	= 21	+ 5	= 10	+ 16
	Total, v. 2-5		**34**	= 24	+ 10	= 18	+ 16
	Canto I **Total, v. 1-5**		**42**	= 28	+ 14	= **26**	+ 16

			Total				
6	מֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן בְּכֹהֲנָיו	7	3	3		3	
	וּשְׁמוּאֵל בְּקֹרְאֵי שְׁמוֹ^		3	3		3	
	קֹרְאִים אֶל־יְהוָה⁴ וְהוּא יַעֲנֵם:	8	5		5	5	
7	בְּעַמּוּד עָנָן יְדַבֵּר אֲלֵיהֶם^		4	4		4	
	שָׁמְרוּ עֵדֹתָיו	9	2		2	2	
	וְחֹק נָתַן־לָמוֹ:		3		3	3	
	Strophe 3 Total, v. 6-7		20	= 10	+ 10	= 20	+ 0
	Total, v. 1-6		53	= **34**	+ 19	= 37	+ 16
8	יְהוָה⁵ אֱלֹהֵינוּ אַתָּה עֲנִיתָם	10	4	4			4
	אֵל נֹשֵׂא הָיִיתָ לָהֶם^		4	4			4
	וְנֹקֵם עַל־עֲלִילוֹתָם:		3		3		3
9	רוֹמְמוּ יְהוָה⁶ אֱלֹהֵינוּ	11	3	3		3	
	וְהִשְׁתַּחֲווּ לְהַר קָדְשׁוֹ^		3	3		3	
	כִּי־קָדוֹשׁ יְהוָה⁷ אֱלֹהֵינוּ:		4		4	4	
	Strophe 4 Total, v. 8-9		21	= 14	+ 7	= 10	+ 11
	Canto II Total, v. 6-9		41	= 24	+ **17**	= 30	+ 11
	Total, v. 5-9		49	= 32	+ **17**	= 38	+ 11
	Total, v. 1-9		83	= **52**	+ 31	= 56	+ 27

Observations

1. In terms of the 83 words of the psalm, the word הוּא in v. 5c constitutes the arithmetic middle (83 = **41** + 1 + **41**). As in Psalm 76, the middle word is flanked by **41** words on either side, representing the keyword נוֹרָא, 'awesome', occurring in v. 3a (14+6+20+1). The middle word is situated in the middle verseline (11 = 5 + 1 + 5) as well as in the pivotal colon (25 = 12 + 1 + 12), which is obviously the meaningful centre: namely, the proclamation of the *great*, *awesome*, and *holy* name of YHWH (v. 3):

   קָדוֹשׁ הוּא   'Holy is he!'.

   The fact that this solemn proclamation occurs exactly 3 times: in 3b, 5c and 9c, clearly highlights the meaningful centre. It also recalls the threefold call קָדוֹשׁ, 'holy', of the Seraphim in Isaiah 6.

2. Since it primarily concerns the holiness of the *name* of God, it is not a matter of chance that יהוה occurs **7** times (the number of fullness). See also Observation 3 in my Analysis of Psalm 98. The word אֱלֹהֵינוּ occurs 4 times (vs. 5a, 8a, 9a and c), and אֵל once (8b).

3. The numbers representing the divine name occur in the following instances:

vs. 2-4	**26** words in total	vs. 1-4	**34** (2 x **17**) words
vs. 1-6	**34** (2 x **17**) words before atnach	vs. 6-9	**17** words after atnach
vs. 1-9	**52** (2 x **26**) words before atnach	vs.1-9	**26** words in Column c.