

# Psalm 98— 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 98

- With regard to both form and content, Psalm 98 is a sister psalm of Psalm 97. Both have 12 verselines, and the direction of address determines the structure of the text:
  - Canto I (vs. 1-3) a call to praise, addressed to *a general public*
  - Canticle II.1 (vs. 4-6) a call to praise, addressed to *all the earth*
  - Canticle II.2 (vs. 7-9) a call addressed to *the sea, the world, streams, mountains*.

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

- Van der Lugt: 1-2, 3 || 4-6, 7-8, 9 (2 cantos, 5 strophes, with 12 verselines and 25 cola).
- Fokkelman: Similarly Fokkelman, except that he finds 24 cola, taking v. 2 as a bicolon.
- Labuschagne: 1-2, 3 || 4-6 | 7-8, 9 (2 cantos, 5 strophes, with 12 verselines and 25 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	מְזֹמֹר Heading	1 = 1				
	1 לְיִשְׂרָאֵל לִיהְדָּתָה שִׁיר חֲדָשׁ	4	4		4	
	כִּי־נִפְלְאוֹת עָשְׂהָ	3	3			3
	2 הוֹשִׁיעָה־לּוֹ יְמִינוֹ	3		3		3
	וְזָרַע קָדְשׁוֹ:	2		2		2
	Total, v. 1	12	= 7	+ 5	= 4	+ 8
2	3 הוֹדִיעַ יְהוָה יְשׁוּעָתוֹ	3	3		3	
	לְעֵינֵי הַגּוֹיִם	2		2	2	
	גְּלָה צְדָקָתוֹ:	2		2	2	
	Total, v. 2	7	= 3	+ 4	= 7	+ 0
	<b>Strophe 1 Total, v. 1-2</b>	19	= 10	+ 9	= 11	+ 8
3	4 זָכַר חֶסֶדּוֹ וְאַמּוֹנָתוֹ	3	3		3	
	לְבַיִת יִשְׂרָאֵל	2	2		2	
	5 רְאוּ כָל־אַפְסֵי־אָרֶץ	4	4		4	
	אֵת יְשׁוּעַת אֱלֹהֵינוּ:	3		3	3	
	<b>Strophe 2 Total, v. 3</b>	12	= 9	+ 3	= 12	+ 0
	Total, v. 2-3	19	= 12	+ 7	= 19	+ 0
	<b>Canto I Total, v. 1-3</b>	31	= 19	+ 12	= 23	+ 8

4	<sup>2</sup> לִיהֲנֶה כָּל־הָאָרֶץ Middle colon: <sup>3</sup> פָּצְחוּ <sup>4</sup> וְרִנְנוּ <sup>5</sup> וְזָמְרוּ: 25 = 12 + 1 + 12 Total, v. 4 Total, v. 2-4	6	<table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr><td style="text-align: right;">4</td><td style="text-align: center;">4</td><td style="text-align: left;">4</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: right;">3</td><td style="text-align: center;">3</td><td style="text-align: left;">3</td></tr> <tr><td colspan="3"><hr/></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: right;">7</td><td style="text-align: center;">= 4 + 3</td><td style="text-align: left;">= 7 + 0</td></tr> <tr><td colspan="3"><hr/></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: right;">26</td><td style="text-align: center;">= 16 + 10</td><td style="text-align: left;">= 26 + 0</td></tr> </table>	4	4	4	3	3	3	<hr/>			7	= 4 + 3	= 7 + 0	<hr/>			26	= 16 + 10	= 26 + 0																																							
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8	<sup>10</sup> יִחַד הָרִים וְרִנְנוּ: Total, v. 8 <b>Strophe 4 Total, v. 7-8</b>	10	<table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr><td style="text-align: right;">3</td><td style="text-align: center;">3</td><td style="text-align: left;">3</td></tr> <tr><td colspan="3"><hr/></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: right;">6</td><td style="text-align: center;">= 3 + 3</td><td style="text-align: left;">= 6 + 0</td></tr> <tr><td colspan="3"><hr/></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: right;">12</td><td style="text-align: center;">= 6 + 6</td><td style="text-align: left;">= 12 + 0</td></tr> </table>	3	3	3	<hr/>			6	= 3 + 3	= 6 + 0	<hr/>			12	= 6 + 6	= 12 + 0																																										
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## Observations

- In terms of its 74 words, the arithmetic centre of the psalm is constituted by the two last words in v. 4b (74 = 36 + 2 + 36):

**וְרִנְנוּ וְזָמְרוּ** 'and rejoice and sing praises'.

They cannot be regarded as the consciously designed meaningful centre, but they fall within the middle colon (25 = 12 + 1 + 12), v. 4b, which is a better candidate:

**פָּצְחוּ וְרִנְנוּ וְזָמְרוּ:** Break forth and exult and sing praises.

It is interesting to note that the three words constitute the centre of the 7 calls to praise (marked in blue in box and numbered). The cluster of three successive verbs precisely in the pivotal colon highlight the meaningful centre in a special way.

Note the 7 imperatives in [Psalm 100](#) and the 7 instances of the name יהוה in [Psalm 99](#)!

2. The numerical structure shows that Canto I and Canticle II.1 (vs. 1-3 and 4-6) are conjoined by **51** (3 x **17**) words, with **43** words in the main clauses (Column c).

The number **43** reappears in vs. 4-9, where they divide into **26** in vs. 4-7 and **17** in 8-9, with **34** (2 x **17**) in the main clauses. This is very reminiscent of the concluding verses of Psalm 97 (vs. 8-12) in which the **43** words divide into **26** before, and **17** after atnach. See Observation 3 in my Analysis of [Psalm 97](#).

Cognate texts seem to share similar compositional formulas. For this intriguing phenomenon, see Observation 3 in my Analysis of [Psalm 95](#).

3. The name יהוה occurs 6 times. Together with the 7 instances in Psalm 99 and the 4 in Psalm 100, Psalms 98-100 have altogether **17** occurrences of the divine name.

Compare Psalms 96 and 97, which have likewise altogether **17** occurrences – see Observation 4 in my Analysis of Psalm 97! For an overview of the occurrences of the name יהוה in the **17** psalms of Book IV, see Table XIII in the [Introduction to Book IV](#).

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