

Psalm 112— 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 112

- For the common features of this psalm and its sister poem Psalm 111, see “Specific features of [Psalm 111](#)”. Their intimate relationship is emphasized by the compositional formula of the two psalms taken together: 149 = 85 (5 x 17) + 64, and by their total number of words including *halleluyah* (2x): 153 (9 x 17).

Strophic structure - Canto/Stanza boundary: ||

- Van der Lugt: 1-2, 3-4 || 5-6, 7-8 || 9-10 (3 cantos, 5 strophes, 10 verselines, 22 cola).
- Fokkelman: similarly, except that he finds 2 stanzas: vs. 1-6 || 7-10.
- Labuschagne: 1, 2-3 || 4-5, 6, 7-8 || 9, 10 (3 cantos with 7 strophes in a menorah pattern, 10 verselines and 22 cola, exactly as in Psalm 111).

Logotechnical analysis

- Columns **a** and **b** show the number of words before and after the atnach.
- Column **c**: words about the God-fearing in his social setting
- Column **d**: words describing particularly his disposition to share.
- The numbering of the verselines is shown in **brown**.

		Total	a	b	c	d
1	הִלְלוּ יְהוָה	2	= 2	+ 2		
See Observation 4	אֲשֶׁר־אִישׁ יִרְאֵה אֶת־יְהוָה	א 1 5	5		5	
	בְּמַצּוֹתָיו חָפֵץ מְאֹד:	ב 3		3	3	
	Strophe 1 Total, v. 1	8	= 5	+ 3	= 8	+ 0
2	גִּבּוֹר בְּאָרְץ יְהוָה זְרַעוֹ	ג 2 4	4		4	
	דּוֹר יִשְׂרָאֵל יִבְרָךְ:	ד 3		3	3	
	Total, v. 2	7	= 4	+ 3	= 7	+ 0
3	הוֹן־וְעֶשֶׂר בְּבֵיתוֹ	ה 3 3	3		3	
	וַיִּצְדַּקְתוּ עַמְדַּת לְעַד:	ו 3		3	3	
	Total, v. 3	6	= 3	+ 3	= 6	+ 0
	Strophe 2 Total, v. 2-3	13	= 7	+ 6	= 13	+ 0
	Canto I Total, v. 1-3	21	= 12	+ 9	= 21	+ 0
4	זָרַח בַּחֲשֵׁךְ אֹר לְיִשְׂרָאֵל	ז 4 4	4		4	
	חֲנוּן וְרַחוּם וַיִּצְדִּיק:	ח 3		3	3	
	Total, v. 4	7	= 4	+ 3	= 7	+ 0
	Total, v. 3-4	13	= 7	+ 6	= 13	+ 0
	Total, v. 1-4	28	= 16	+ 12	= 28	+ 0
5	טוֹב־אִישׁ חוֹנֵן וּמְלֹוֹהֵא	ט 5 4	4		4	
	י יִכְלַל דְּבָרָיו בְּמִשְׁפָּט:	י 3		3	3	
	Total, v. 5	7	= 4	+ 3	= 7	+ 0
	Strophe 3 Total, v. 4-5	14	= 8	+ 6	= 14	+ 0

6 Middle cola: 10+2+10	כ	6	4	4	4
Middle word: 38+1+38	ל		4	4	4
Middle strophe: 3+1+3	Strophe 4	Total, v. 6	8	= 4 + 4	= 0 + 8
Note the alliterating <i>lamedh</i>		Total, v. 5-6	15	= 8 + 7	= 0 + 15
		Total, v. 4-6	22	= 12 + 10	= 0 + 22
		Total, v. 1-6	43	= 24 + 19	= 21 + 22
7	מ	7	4	4	4
	נ		4	4	4
		Total, v. 7	8	= 4 + 4	= 0 + 8
		Total, v. 5-7	23	= 12 + 11	= 0 + 23
8	ס	8	4	4	4
	ע		4	4	4
		Total, v. 8	8	= 4 + 4	= 0 + 8
		Strophe 5 Total, v. 7-8	16	= 8 + 8	= 0 + 16
The Core	Canto II	Total, v. 4-8	38	= 20 + 18	= 0 + 38
9	פ	9	3	3	3
	צ		3	3	3
	ק		3	3	3
		Strophe 6 Total, v. 9	9	= 6 + 3	= 9 + 0
		Total, v. 8-9	17	= 10 + 7	= 9 + 8
10 Coda	ר	10	3	3	3
	ש		3	3	3
See Observation 4	ת		3	3	3
		Strophe 7 Total, v. 10	9	= 6 + 3	= 9 + 0
		Canto III Total, v. 9-10	18	= 12 + 6	= 18 + 0
		Total, v. 8-10	26	= 16 + 10	= 18 + 8
		Total, v. 7-10	34	= 20 + 14	= 18 + 16
		Total, v. 1-10	77	= 44 + 33	= 39 + 38
		Including תָּלֵלוּ יְהוָה (1x)	79	= 46 + 33	
		Psalm 111, Total	72	= 41 + 31	
		Psalm 112, Total	77	= 44 + 33	
		Psalms 111-112, Total	149	= 85 + 64	
		Including תָּלֵלוּ יְהוָה (2x)	153	= 89 + 64	

Observations

- The middle word is לְזָכֵר, 'for memory', in v. 6b (77 = 38 + 1 + 38), but the meaningful is to be found – as in Psalm 111 - on colon level: the two middle cola in v. 6, corresponding with the two middle letters of the alphabet (22 = 10 + 2 + 10):

כִּי־לְעוֹלָם לֹא־יִמוּט אֱלֹהֵי צְדִיק:

For never shall he be moved // in eternal memory shall be the just person.

The 5 alliterating *lamedhs* draw extra attention to the meaningful centre, precisely as the 4 alliterating *lamedhs* in Psalm 111. See Observation 1 in my Analysis of [Psalm 111](#).

- On strophic level, the meaningful centre coincides with the middle strophe of the menorah pattern: vs. 1, 2-3, 4-5, 6, 7-8, 9, 10. As in the case of Psalm 111, my menorah pattern is based on the consideration that the syntax should be taken into account. Therefore, syntactically, v. 2a and 2b belong together. In this respect my strophic structure differs from the one proposed by Christensen, who splits vs. 2a and 2b and

divides the text as follows: 1-2a, 2b-3, 4-5, **6**, 7-8, 9, 10. However, in terms of the 22 letters of the alphabet, Christensen's menorah gives a perfectly concentric pattern:

$$22 = 3 + 3 + 4 + 2 + 4 + 3 + 3.$$

3. Like Psalm 111, its sister poem, Psalm 112 has a distinct larger core (**Canto II, vs. 4-8**), in this case, consisting of 38 words (column **d**).

vs. 1-3, Canto I 6 cola, 6 initial letters, 21 words: blessings of the God-fearing

vs. 4-8, Canto II 10 cola, 10 initial letters, 38 words: his disposition to share

vs. 7-10, Canto III 6 cola, 6 initial letters, 18 words: his secure social position.

The **39**-word framework (21 + 18 in Column c) depicts the God-fearing in his social setting: his descendants and his wealth (vs. 2-3), and his charity towards the poor in the presence of the teeth gnashing wicked (v. 10). The core (Column **d**), on the other hand, deals particularly with his disposition to be gracious, compassionate, righteous, generous in his lending, not afraid of bad tidings, trusting in God and therefore confident.

Note that the central sections of both psalms are enveloped by a **39**-word framework, which is, in my view, certainly not a matter of coincidence – consult Observation 2 in my Analysis of Psalm 111. This particular canto structure definitely rules out other canto divisions, such as Van der Lugt's 1-4, 5-8 and 9-10, Fokkelman's 1-6 and 7-10, Schildenberger's 1-4 and 5-10 and the popular division advocated by Terrien, Girard and Aufret: 1-5 and 6-10. The more so, because Psalms 111 and 112 share this significant canto structure also with [Psalm 113](#)! Three successive psalms cannot possibly have a similar structure by chance.

4. The concluding strophe, v. 10, stands apart in a certain sense: it deals with the reaction of the *wicked* to the disposition of the God-fearing to compassion and charity. However, it is difficult to decide whether it was consciously designed as a coda. For the coda, see the [General Introduction](#), "The use of a coda as a device for conclusion".

Like Psalm 1, Psalm 112 has אֱשֶׁרִי as its first word and תֵּאבֹד as the final word. For this intriguing device, which I call the 'Aleph-Taw device for inclusion', see Observation 3 in my analysis of Psalm 1.

5. The final compositional formula of the poem, **77 = 44 + 33**, appears to be determined by the number of fulfilment, **11**. See my book *Numerical Secrets of the Bible* (BIBAL Press, 2000), pp. 70-73.
6. The divine name numbers appear only in Canto III, significantly in a concatenation:
- | | |
|----------|------------------------------------|
| vs. 8-9 | 17 words in total |
| vs. 8-10 | 26 words in total |
| vs. 7-10 | 34 (2 x 17) words in total. |

Taken together, the two sister psalms show the following logotechnical features:

Psalms 111-112 **85** (5 x **17**) words before atnach

Including *hallelu-yah* (2x) **153** (9 x **17**) words altogether.

See the Introduction to [Book V](#).

7. The name יהוה occurs only in vs. 1a and 7b.

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