

Psalm 130— 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 130

- The structure of Psalm 130, which is both lucid and regular, is similar to that of Psalm 129, with 2 cantos, 4 strophes, 8 verselines and **52** (2 x **26**) words. The canto structure is clearly determined by the direction of address: words addressed to God in Canto I (vs. 1-4, with 4 verselines and 8 cola) and words spoken about God in Canto II (vs. 5-8, with 4 verselines and 9 cola).
- As in Psalms 121, 126, and 127, the logotechnical centre of Psalm 130 constitutes the meaningful centre: **v. 5** (**52 = 23 + 6 + 23**).
- As in most psalms in this corpus, the total number of words, **52**, is defined by the numerical value of a key-word: **קִנְיָה**, ‘(my soul) waits in hope’, in v. 5a (19 + 6 + 22 + 5).

Strophic structure - Canto/Stanza boundary: ||

- Van der Lugt: 1-2, 3-4 || 5-6, 7-8 (2 cantos with 4 strophes, 8 verselines and 19 cola, taking verses 5 and 6 as tricola).
- Fokkelman: similarly, except that he finds 18 cola, taking v. 8 mistakenly as a monocolic verseline despite the division of the line by *atnach*.
- Labuschagne: as Van der Lugt.

Logotechnical analysis

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

		Total	a	b	c	d
1	שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת Heading	2 = 2 + 0				
	מִמַּעַמְקִים קָרָאתִיךָ יְהוָה:	1 3	3		3	
2	אֲדַנִּי שָׁמְעָה בְּקוֹלִי	3	3		3	
	תְּהַיִּינָה אָזְנוֹךָ קְשׁוּבוֹת־	2 3	3		3	
	לְקוֹל תְּחַנּוּנָי:	2		2	2	
	Total, v. 2	8 = 6 + 2 = 8 + 0				
	Strophe 1 Total, v. 1-2	11 = 9 + 2 = 11 + 0				
3	אִם-עֲוֹנוֹת תִּשְׁמַר-יְהוָה־	3 4	4		4	
	אֲדַנִּי מִיַּעֲמֹד:	3		3	3	
	Total, v. 3	7 = 4 + 3 = 7 + 0				
4	כִּי-עָמָד הִסְלִיחָה־	4 3	3		3	
	לְמַעַן תִּנְרָא:	2		2	2	
	Total, v. 4	5 = 3 + 2 = 5 + 0				
	Strophe 2 Total, v. 3-4	12 = 7 + 5 = 12 + 0				
	Canto I Total, v. 1-4	23 = 16 + 7 = 23 + 0				

5	קִוִּיתִי יְהוָה = 52 (19 + 6 + 22 + 5)	קִוִּיתִי יְהוָה	5	2	2	2
	Middle words: 52 = 23+6+23	קִוִּיתִי נַפְשִׁי		2	2	2
	Middle cola: 19 = 8+3+8	וְלִדְבָרוֹ הוֹחֵלְתִּי:		2	2	2
	Total, v. 5			6	= 4 + 2 = 0 + 6	
	Total, v. 2-5			26	= 17 + 9 = 20 + 6	
6	נַפְשִׁי לֵאדֹנָי	נַפְשִׁי לֵאדֹנָי	6	2	2	2
	מְשֻׁמְרִים לְבַקֵּר	מְשֻׁמְרִים לְבַקֵּר		2	2	2
	שְׁמֵרִים לְבַקֵּר:	שְׁמֵרִים לְבַקֵּר:		2	2	2
	Total, v. 6			6	= 2 + 4 = 0 + 6	
	Strophe 3 Total, v. 5-6			12	= 6 + 6 = 0 + 12	
	Total, v. 4-6			17	= 9 + 8 = 5 + 12	
7	יַחַל יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל־יְהוָה	יַחַל יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל־יְהוָה	7	4	4	4
	כִּי־עַם־יְהוָה תַּחֲסֹדֵר	כִּי־עַם־יְהוָה תַּחֲסֹדֵר		4	4	4
	וְתִרְבֶּה עַמּוֹ פְּדוּת:	וְתִרְבֶּה עַמּוֹ פְּדוּת:		3	3	3
	Total, v. 7			11	= 8 + 3 = 0 + 11	
	Total, v. 6-7			17	= 10 + 7 = 0 + 17	
8	וְהוּא יַפְדֶּה אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל	וְהוּא יַפְדֶּה אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל	8	4	4	4
	מִכָּל עֲוֹנוֹתָיו:	מִכָּל עֲוֹנוֹתָיו:		2	2	2
	Total, v. 8			6	= 4 + 2 = 0 + 6	
	Strophe 4 Total, v. 7-8			17	= 12 + 5 = 0 + 17	
	Canto II Total, v. 5-8			29	= 18 + 11 = 0 + 29	
	Total, v. 4-8			34	= 21 + 13 = 5 + 29	
	Total, v. 1-8			52	= 34 + 18 = 23 + 29	
	With the heading, v. 1-8			54	= 36 + 18	

Observations

- The logotechnical centre as such, v. 5, constitutes the meaningful centre of Psalm 130 in terms of both words and cola ($52 = 23 + 6 + 23$) and cola ($19 = 8 + 3 + 8$), a feature it shares with [Psalms 121](#) and [126](#). It contains the gist of the psalm: Israel's trusting in YHWH and waiting for him in hope:

קִוִּיתִי יְהוָה קִוִּיתִי נַפְשִׁי וְלִדְבָרוֹ הוֹחֵלְתִּי:

I wait for YHWH, my soul waits // and in his word I put my hope.

The meaningful centre is highlighted by being positioned at the point where the direction of address changes: at the beginning of the 3rd person section of Canto II. See the [General Introduction](#), "Special devices to highlight the meaningful centre".

Note that the meaningful centre is devised in such a way that the first and last word קִוִּיתִי, 'I wait in hope', and הוֹחֵלְתִּי, 'I put my hope', function as a device for inclusion.

- That the meaningful centre is flanked by 23 words (the *kabod* number) on either side may be a matter of conscious design to symbolize the presence of God. This is also the function of the divine name numbers, which feature as follows:

vs. 2-5	26 words in total, with 17 before atnach
vs. 4-6	17 words in total
vs. 6-7	17 words in total
vs. 7-8	17 words in total
vs. 1-8	52 (2 x 26) words in total, with 34 (2 x 17) before atnach.

3. The number **52** represents the numerical value of **קִוְיָה**, ‘she waits in hope’, in v. 5a, as well as that of the noun **תִּקְוָה**, ‘hope’, which has similar consonants (19 + 6 + 22 + 5). The root **קוה**, ‘to wait in hope’, is apparently a keyword of paramount importance. The importance of the keyword **יחל**, ‘to hope’, is demonstrated by the fact that the call **יְחַלְ יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל־יְהוָה**, ‘Israel, wait for YHWH in hope’ (130:7a) reverberates in the next psalm: 131:3a. To crown it all, the **30** words of Psalm 131 are determined by the numerical value of the keyword **יחל**, ‘to hope’ (10 + 8 + 12 = **30**). See Observation 4 in my Analysis of [Psalm 131](#).
4. The name **יְהוָה** appears 4 times (vs. 1, 5a, 7a and 7b). In v. 3a we find the name **יְהוָה** (lacking in some manuscripts and ancient versions – cf. *BHS*). It is interesting to note that in Psalms 130-134 **יְהוָה** appears **17** times and **יְהוָה** only once, which brings the total number of occurrences of **יְהוָה** here to **18** and in the 15 Songs of Ascents to altogether **51** (3 x 17). See Observation 5 in my Analysis of [Psalm 124](#).
- The appellative **אֲדֹנָי**, ‘my Lord’, occurs no less than 3 times in Codex L and the other major manuscripts (2a, 3b and 6a). Some manuscripts either lack it, or read **יְהוָה** instead – see *BHS*. Significantly, **אֲדֹנָי** appears only here in the Songs of Ascents. In my opinion, this has to do with the desire to have exactly **51** (3 x 17) occurrences of the name **יְהוָה**.

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