Psalm 96— Logotechnical Analysis

Guidelines

- Please read the <u>General Introduction</u> as well as the Introduction to <u>Book I</u> and <u>Book IV</u>.
- For common features found in the numerical analysis charts, see the Key to the charts.

Specific features of Psalm 96

- Like Psalm 93, Psalm 96 has a charmingly lucid and simple structure. With Psalm 91 it shares two features: both are made up of **112** (16 x **7**) words, and both are apparently structured by the number **7**.
 - With Psalm 95 it shares two features: the use of syntax to structure the text and the absence of words directly addressed to God.
- The 11 occurrences of the name YHWH is a feature it shares with Psalm 94.

Strophic structure - Canto/Stanza boundary: | Sub-canto boundary: |

• Van der Lugt, Fokkelman and Labuschagne: 1-3, 4-6 | 7-8, 9-10 | 11-12, 13 (2 cantos with 6 strophes, 14 verselines and 29 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	а	b	С	d
1	יִרוּ <mark>לַיהוַה</mark> שִׁיר חַדָשׁ^	1	4	4		4	
	שִׁירוּ <mark>לַיהוָה</mark> כָּל־הָאָרֶץ:		4		4	4	
	Total, v. 1		8	= 4	+ 4	= 8	+ 0
2	שִׁירוּ <mark>לַידוָה</mark> בַּרֲכוּ שְׁמוֹי^	2	4	4		4	
	בַשָּׂרוּ מִיּוֹם־לִיוֹם יִשׁוּעַתוֹ:		4		4	4	
	Total, v. 2		8	= 4	+ 4	= 8	+ 0
3	סַפְּרוּ בַּגּוֹיִם כְּבוֹדוֹי	3	3	3		3	
	בְּכֶל־הָעַמִּים נִפְּלְאוֹתִיו:		3		3	3	
	Total, v. 3		6	= 3	+ 3	= 6	+ 0
	Strophe 1 Total, v. 1-3		22	= 11	+ 11	= 22	+ 0
4	פִי נָדוֹל יָהוָה וּמְהֻלְּל מְאֹד^	4	5	5			5
	נוֹרָא הוּא עַל־כָּלֹ־אֱלֹהִים:		<u>5</u>		5		5
	Total, v. 4		<u>10</u>	= 5	+ 5	= 0	+ 10
	Numerical v. 1-2		16	= 8	+ 8	= 16	+ 0
	Chiasmus v. 3-4		16	= 8	+ 8	= 6	+ 10
	Total, v. 1-4		32	= 16	+ 16	= 22	+ 10
5	פִּי בָּל־אֱלֹהֵי הָעַמִּים אֱלִילִים^	5	5	5			5
	וַיהוָה שָׁמַיִם עָשָׂה:		3		3		3
	Total, v. 5		8	= 5	+ 3	= 0	+ 8
	Total, v. 2-5		32	= 17	+ 15	= 22	+ 10
6	הוֹד־וְהָדָר לְפָּנָיוֹ^	6	3	3		3	
	עז וְתִפְּאֶרֶת בְּמִקְדָשׁוֹ:		3		3	3	
	Total, v. 6		<u>6</u>	= 3	+ 3	= 6	+ 0
	Numerical v. 1-3		22	= 11	+ 11	= 22	+ 0
	Strophe 2 Chiasmus v. 4-6		<u>24</u>	= 13	+ 11	= 6	+ 18
	Canto I Total, v. 1-6		46	= 24	+ 22	= 28	+ 18

```
7
                                                                         4
                                                                                           4
                        מְשַׁפַּחוֹת עַמִּים^
                               :כבוד ועו
                                                   הבו
          שבוד = 32 = 32
                                            Total, v. 7
                                                                 8
                                                                         4
                                                                                                    0
                                         Total, v. 4-7
                                                               32
                                                                     = 17
                                                                              + 15
                                                                                         14
                                                                                      =
                                                                                               + 18
                                                               54
                                                                     = 28
                                                                              + 26
                                                                                         36
                                         Total, v. 1-7
                                                                                      =
                                                                                               + 18
8 Middle words/colon:
                             הַבוּ <mark>לַיהוַה</mark> כָבוֹד שׁמוֹי
                                                                 4
                                                                         4
                                                                                           4
 שָׂאוּ־מִנְחָה וּבֹאוּ לְחַצְרוֹתִיו: 54 + 4 + 54 = 112
 29 = 14 + 1 + 14 \text{ cola}
                                            Total, v. 8
                                                                                           8
                                                                 8
                                                                         4
                                                                                                    0
                                                                         8
                      Strophe 3
                                         Total, v. 7-8
                                                               16
 9
                    ַרָּשָׁתַחַווּ <mark>לַיהוַה</mark> בָּהַרָרַת־לֹּרָשׁ^
                                                                 4
                                                                          4
                                                                                           4
                                       חִילוּ מִפַּנִיו כַּל
                                                                                           8
                                                                         4
                                            Total, v. 9
                                                                                                    0
                                                                        12
                      Sub-canto II.1 Total, v. 7-9
                                                                                                    0
                                         Total, v. 1-9
                                                               70
                                                                        36
                                                                                 34
                                                                                          52
10
                              אָמָרוּ בַגּוֹיִם יִהנָה מֶלֶך
                                                                 4
                                                                         4
                                                                                           4
                          אַף־תִּכּוֹן תֵבֵל בַּל־תִּמוֹט^
                                                                                           5
                                                                 5
                                                                         5
                                                                 3
                                                                                           3
                               יַדִין עַמִּים בַּמֵישַׁרִים:
                                                                                          12
                                          Total, v. 10
                                                                         9
                                                                                  3
                                                                                                    0
                      Strophe 4
                                        Total. v. 9-10
                                                               20
                                                                        13
                                                                                          20
                                                                                                    0
                                                                        17
                                                                                          28
                                        Total, v. 8-10
                                                                                                    0
                                        Total, v. 7-10
                                                                       21
                                                                                 15
                                                                                          36
                                                                                                    0
11
                        ישמחו השמים ותגל הארץ^
                                                                 4
                                                                          4
                                                                                           4
                                   יִרְעַם הַיָּם וּמָלֹאֵוֹ:
                                                                                           3
                                                                 3
                                          Total, v. 11
                                                                         4
                                                                                  3
                                                                                           7
                                                                                                    0
                                                               27
                                                                     = 17
                                                                                10
                                                                                          27
                                        Total, v. 9-11
                                                                                                    0
                                                                         5
12
                                        יעלז שבי וכל
                                                                 5
                                                                                           3
                                                                                                    2
                                                                                           5
                                                                 5
                                          אַז יִרַנִּנוּ כַּל־
                                                                         5
                                                                                  5
                                                                                           8
                                          Total, v. 12
                                                               10
                                                                                                    2
                      Strophe 5
                                                                         9
                                                                                  8
                                                                                          15
                                      Total, v. 11-12
                                            לפני יהנה
                                                                         2
13
                                                         13
                                                                 2
                                                                                           2
                         כִּי בַא כִּי בַא לְשַׁפַּט הַאַרַץ
                                                                 6
                                                                         6
                                                                                                    6
                                  ישׁפֹּט־תָבֵל בִצֵּדַק^
                                                                 3
                                                                          3
                                                                                           3
                                     וְעַמִּים בַּאֱמוּנַתוֹ:
                      Strophe 6
                                          Total, v. 13
                                                               13
                                                                        11
                                                                                  2
                                                                                                    6
                                                                              +
                                                                                                +
                    Sub-canto II.2 Total, v. 11-13
                                                                        20
                                                                                 10
                                                               30
                                                                                                    8
                                      Total, v. 10-13
                                                                        29
                                                                                 13
                                                                                          34
                                                                              +
                                                                                                    8
                                      Total. v. 8b-13
                                                                                 21
                                                                                          43
                                                                                                   11
                                                               54
                                                                        33
                                                                              +
                      Canto II
                                       Total, v. 7-13
                                                                        41
                                                                                 25
                                                                                          58
                                                                                                    8
                                                               66
                                                                              +
                                       Total, v. 4-13
                                                                                                   26
                                                               90
                                                                        54
                                                                                 36
                                                                                          61
                                        Total, v. 1-13
                                                                        65
                                                                                 47
                                                                                         86
```

Observations

1. In terms of its 112 words, the arithmetic centre of the psalm is v. 8a (112 = 54 + 4 + 54), which coincides with the middle colon (29 = 14 + 1 + 14):

```
Ascribe to YHWH the glory due to his name. הָבוּ לַיהוָה כְּבוֹר שְׁמוֹ
```

This urgent call is undoubtedly the deliberately designed meaningful centre. It expresses the quintessence of what this hymn of praise is all about: a call to celebrate and proclaim YHWH's universal rule.

Moreover, the phrase forms the climax of the 3 anaphoras at the beginning of Canto II.

The meaningful centre is flanked by 54 words, which means that it is embraced by **58** words (54 + 4 + 54), the numerical value of *kebod*-YHWH, representing the glory of YHWH's name (58 = 32 + 26). See the General Introduction, "Special Patterns".

The glory of YHWH (signifying his presence!) is additionally emphasized by the *kabod* numbers elswhere in the text: the **58** words in the main clauses of Canto II (Column c), and the **46** (2 x **23**) words in total in Canto I. Special mention deserves the occurrence of **32** words in vs. 1-4, the numerical value of the keyword (20 + 2 + 6 + 4 = 32) in vs. 7b and 8a. It also features in vs. 2-5 and 4-7, in both cases as **32** = **17** + 15.

Additional emphasis is provided by the **7** occurrences of ליהוה, 'to YHWH' (out of altogether **11** instances of the name YHWH) precisely in the anaphora at the beginning of Canto I (in vs. 1-2a), and Canto II (in vs. 7-8a and 9a).

The idea of fullness is expressed by the fact that the psalm is made up of **112** (16 x **7**) words – which is also the case in Psalm 91 and 92. The **70** words in vs. 1-9 may perhaps also have been chosen deliberately.

- 2. The device of the numerical chiasmus is used twice, of which the function is to tie sections of the text in Canto I together: 1-2 + 3-4, as well as 1-3 + 4-6 (Strophes I and 2).
- 3. A feature shared with Psalm 95 is the apparent use of syntax to structure the text: 86 words in the main clauses (column c) and **26** in the subordinate clauses, generating still another divine name number (Column d).
- 4. The divine name numbers woven into the text are to be found in:

vs. 2-5	17 words before atnach
vs. 4-7	17 words before atnach
vs. 1-7	26 words after atnach
vs. 1-9	34 (2 x 17) words after atnach
vs. 1-9	52 (2 x 26) words in the main clauses
vs. 8-10	17 words before atnach
vs. 9-11	17 words before atnach
vs. 11-12	17 words in total
vs. 10-13	34 (2 x 17) words in the main clauses
vs. 1-13	26 words in the subordinate clauses.

5. As is the case in Psalm 94, there are no less than 11 occurrences of the name הוה: Compare Observation 1 above, and also Observation 5 in my Analysis of Psalm 95. The two occurrences of the word מֵלֹהִים refer to the gods of the nations (vs. 4b and 5a).

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