

Psalm 77—Logoprosodic Analysis

Translation, Analysis, and Textual Notes

Title	Psalm 77:1–21					
A. <i>Strophe One (77:1–4)</i>						[11.4]
77:1 To the maestro—according to Jeduthun / belonging to Asaph, a <i>Mizmor</i> //	11	1	3	3	0	
	8	1	2	2	0	
77:2 My voice (rises) to God / ^a and I cry aloud // my voice (rises) to God / that he would listen to me //	16	1	4	4	0	
	19	2	<u>5</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>5</u>	
	77:1–2		14	9	5	
77:3 In the day of my distress / I sought the Lord // my hands / in the night were stretched out / without respite /	20	2	4	4	0	
	18	3	<u>5</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>0</u>	
			23	18	5	
My soul / ^a refused to be comforted //	_13	2_	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>3</u>	
	77:1–3		26	18	8	
77:4 I remember God / ^a and I groan // I sigh / and my spirit grows faint, Selah //	16	2	3	3	0	
	18	2	<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>4</u>	
	77:2–4		28	16	12	
B. <i>Strophe Two (77:5–9)</i>						[12.9]
77:5 You hold open / my eyelids // I am so troubled / I cannot speak //	14	2	3	3	0	
	11	2	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>3</u>	
	77:2–5		34	19	15	
77:6 I recall the days / ^a of old // of years / long ago //	_11	2_	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	
	77:3–6a		28	18	10	
	9	2	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>2</u>	
	77:1–6		44	27	17	
77:7 I remember my songs / in the night // with my heart I meditate // and my spirit ponders //	15	2	3	3	0	
	12	1	3	3	0	
	9	1	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>2</u>	
	77:4–7		26	15	11	
	77:1–7		52	33	19	
77:8 Will the Lord / forever/ cast (me) off // and will he never / ^a be favorable again //	14	3	3	3	0	
	12	2	<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>4</u>	
	77:5–8		26	15	11	

	77:1-8	59	36	23
77:9	Has his covenant-love / ceased forever //	12	2	3 3 0
	will his word be muted / for all generations //	<u>13</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>4 0 4</u>
	77:3-9	52	30	22
	77:2-9	61	34	27
C. Strophe Three: Middle (77:10-12)				[3.4.3]
77:10	Has God (<i>EI</i>) forgotten to be gracious //	9	1	3 3 0
	or in anger has he stifled / his compassion, Selah //	<u>13</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>5 0 5</u>
	77:6-10	35	18	17
	77:1-10	74	42	32
77:11	And I said / "My sorrow is this //	12	2	3 3 0
	the changing / of the right hand of <i>Elyon</i> //	<u>9</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3 0 3</u>
	77:5-11	47	24	23
	77:1-11	80	45	35
77:12	I remember the deeds of YH(WH) //	<u>9</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>3 3 0</u>
	77:10-12a	17	9	8
	77:5-12a	50	27	23
	Yes, I remember / ^a your wonders of old //	<u>12</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>4 0 4</u>
	77:3-12	73	39	34
D. Strophe Four (77:13-18)				[9.12]
77:13	I reflect on all your work //	13	1	3 3 0
	and on your deeds / ^a I muse //	<u>17</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2 0 2</u>
	77:10-13	26	12	14
	77:1-13	92	51	41
77:14	O God / your way is in holiness //	<u>12</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3 3 0</u>
	77:6-14a	56	30	26
	Who is a god (<i>EI</i>) as great / as God (<i>Elohim</i>) //	14	2	4 0 4
77:15	you are the God / who works wonders //	13	2	4 4 0
	you make known your power among the peoples //	<u>13</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>3 0 3</u>
	77:12-15	26	13	13
	77:11-15	32	16	16
	77:4-15	80	40	40
	77:3-15	92	49	43
77:16	You redeemed your people with your arm //	12	1	3 3 0
	the sons of Jacob and Joseph, Selah //	<u>15</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>4 0 4</u>

	77:13–16	26	13	13
	77:12–16	33	16	17
	77:7–16	69	34	35
	77:1–16	113	61	52
77:17	The waters saw you \ ^a O God / the waters saw you /	12	1	3 3 0
		<u>7</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2 2 0</u>
	77:14–17a	26	15	11
	77:12–17a	38	21	17
		<u>6</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1 1 0</u>
	77:13–17b	32	19	13
	77:12–17b	39	22	17
	77:1–17b	119	67	52
		<u>10</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3 0 3</u>
	77:15–17	23	13	10
	77:11–17	48	25	23
	77:9–17	63	31	32
	77:8–17	70	34	36
77:18	The clouds / poured out water / the heavens voiced / their thunderclaps // also your arrows / went hither and yon //	11	2	3 3 0
		12	1	3 3 0
		<u>13</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3 0 3</u>
	77:15–18	32	19	13
	77:14–18	39	22	17
	77:12–18	51	28	23
	77:11–18	57	31	26
	77:10–18	65	34	31
	77:6–18	92	49	43
	77:5–18	98	52	46
	77:1–18	131	73	58
E. <i>Strophe Five</i> (77:19–21)				[11.4]
77:19	A voice of your thunder / was in the storm / lightning flashes / illuminated the world // the earth / ^a trembled and shook //	8	2	3 3 0
		15	2	3 3 0
		<u>13</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3 0 3</u>
	77:16–19	34	21	13
	77:12–19	60	34	26
	77:10–19	74	40	34
77:20	In the sea was your way / and your paths / went through the mighty waters // but your footprints / may not be known //	20	3	5 5 0
		<u>16</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3 0 3</u>

77:19–20	17	11	6
77:18–20	26	17	9
77:17–20	35	23	12
77:16–20	42	26	16
77:14–20	56	33	23
77:12–20	68	39	29
77:11–20	74	42	32

77:21 You led like a flock /^a your people //
by the hand of Moses /^b and Aaron //

	12	2	3	3	0
	<u>10</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>3</u>
77:19–21	23	14	9		
77:18–21	32	20	12		
77:17–21	41	26	15		
77:14–21	62	36	26		
77:8–21	102	54	48		
77:1–21	154	87	67		

Scansion in Accentual Stress Units: (11.4).(12.9).(3.4.3).(9.12).(4.11)

$$(15+21) + 14 + (21+15) = 36 + 10 + 36 = 82$$

or: **46 // 46** [with pivot counted in each half]

$$\{46 = 23 \times 2\}$$

Concentric Compositional Formula: 154 = 77 + 0 + 77 [word-count—with heading]

Notes:

77:2^a Reading the sequence of two successive occurrences of *munaḥ* in BHS as disjunctive.

77:3^a Reading the sequence of *tarḥā* followed by *munaḥ* preceded by *gaʿyā* (= *meteg*) in Ginsburg and Letteris as disjunctive. BHS omits the *gaʿyā* (= *meteg*).

77:4^a Reading the sequence of two successive occurrences of *munaḥ* in BHS as disjunctive.

77:6^a Reading the sequence of two successive occurrences of *munaḥ* in BHS as disjunctive.

77:8^a Reading the *tarḥā* preceded by *gaʿyā* (= *meteg*) in BHS as disjunctive.

77:12^a Reading the sequence of *tarḥā* followed by *munaḥ* preceded by *gaʿyā* (= *meteg*) in Ginsburg and Letteris as disjunctive. BHS omits the *gaʿyā* (= *meteg*).

77:13^a Reading the sequence of *tarḥā* followed by *munaḥ* preceded by *gaʿyā* (= *meteg*) in Ginsburg and Letteris as disjunctive. BHS omits the *gaʿyā* (= *meteg*).

77:17^a Reading the *ʾazlā ləḡarmēh* here in BHS as conjunctive.

77:19^a Reading the sequence of *tarḥā* followed by *munaḥ* preceded by *gaʿyā* (= *meteg*) in Ginsburg and Letteris as disjunctive. BHS omits the *gaʿyā* (= *meteg*).

77:21^a Reading the sequence of two successive occurrences of *munaḥ* in BHS as disjunctive.

77:21^b Reading the *tarḥā* preceded by *gaʿyā* (= *meteg*) in BHS as disjunctive.

Summary of the Logoprosodic Analysis

1. In terms of balance in mora-count, Psalm 77 has five strophes: 77:1–4, 5–9, 10–12, 13–18 and 19–23.

A	77:1–3	2 balanced triads:	$([11+8] + 16 + 19) + (20 + 18 + 13)$	= 54 + 51	morae
	77:4	balanced dyad:	$(16 + 18)$	= 16 + 18	morae
B	77:5–7	2 balanced triads + pivot:	$(14 + 11 + 11) + 9 + (15 + 12 + 9)$	= 36 + 9 + 36	morae
	77:8–9	balanced dyad + pivot:	$(14 + 12) + (12 + 13)$	= 26 + 25	morae
X	77:10–12	3 balanced dyads:	$(9 + 13) + (12 + 9) + (9 + 12)$	= 22 + 21 + 21	morae
B	77:13–15	2 balanced triads:	$(13 + 17 + 12) + (14 + 13 + 13)$	= 42 + 40	morae
	77:17–18	balanced quatrains + pivot:	$([12+15]+[12+7] + 6 + ([10+11]+[12+13]))$	= 46 + 6 + 46	morae
A	77:19–20	2 balanced triads:	$(8 + 15 + 13) + (6 + 14 + 16)$	= 36 + 36	morae
	77:21	balanced dyad:	$(12 + 10)$	= 12 + 10	morae

2. The first strophe (77:1–4) has two parts arranged in four subdivisions on the basis of word-count: 77:1–2, 3a, 3b and 4.

- 77:1–3a **23** words
- 77:1–3 **26** words
- 77:2–4 **28** words [28 = triangular seven]

3. The second strophe (77:5–9) has two parts arranged in six subdivisions on the basis of word-count: 77:5, 6a, 6b, 7, 8 and 9.

- 77:2–5 **34** (= **17** x 2) words
- 77:1–6 **17** words after *atnach*
- 77:4–7 **26** words
- 77:1–7 **52** (= **26** x 2) words
- 77:5–8 **26** words
- 77:1–8 **23** words after *atnach*
- 77:3–9 **52** (= **26** x 2) words
- 77:2–9 **34** (= **17** x 2) words before *atnach*

4. The third strophe (77:10–13) is a single part arranged in five subdivisions on the basis of word-count: 77:10, 11, 12 and 13.

- 77:6–10 **17** words after *atnach*
- 77:1–10 **32** (= 2x2x2x2x2) words after *atnach*
- 77:5–11 **23** words after *atnach*
- 77:1–11 **80** (= **40** x 2) words
- 77:10–12a **17** words
- 77:3–12 **23** words after *atnach*
- 77:3–12 **34** (= **17** x 2) words after *atnach*
- 77:10–13 **26** words
- 77:6–13 **26** words after *atnach*
- 77:1–13 **92** (= **23** x 4) words and **51** (= **17** x 3) words before *atnach*

5. The fourth strophe (77:14–18) has two parts arranged in six subdivisions on the basis of word-count: 77:14, 15a, 15b, 16, 17 and 18.

- 77:3–14 **85** (= **17** x 5) words
- 77:12–15a **23** words
- 77:8–15a **26** words after *atnach*
- 77:6–15a **64** (= **32** x 2) words and **34** (= **17** x 2) words before *atnach*
- 77:12–15 **26** words
- 77:11–15 **32** (= 2x2x2x2x2) words
- 77:6–15 **34** (= **17** x 2) words before *atnach*
- 77:4–15 **80** = **40** + **40** [compositional formula]
- 77:3–15 **92** = **49** + **43** [compositional formula]
- 77:13–16 **26** words
- 77:12–16 **17** words after *atnach*
- 77:7–16 **69** (= **23** x 3) words and **34** (= **17** x 2) words before *atnach*
- 77:1–16 **52** (= **26** x 2) words after *atnach*
- 77:1–17b **119** (= **17** x 7) words and **52** (= **26** x 2) words after *atnach*
- 77:15–17 **23** words
- 77:11–17 **23** words after *atnach*
- 77:9–17 **32** (= 2x2x2x2x2) words after *atnach*
- 77:8–17 **34** (= **17** x 2) words before *atnach*
- 77:15–18 **32** (= 2x2x2x2x2) words
- 77:14–18 **17** words after *atnach*
- 77:12–18 **51** = 28 + **23** [compositional formula]
- 77:11–18 **26** words after *atnach*
- 77:10–18 **34** (= **17** x 2) words before *atnach*
- 77:12–18 **92** = **49** + **43** [compositional formula]
- 77:12–18 **98** = **52** + **46** [compositional formula]

6. The fifth strophe (77:19–21) has two parts arranged in three subdivisions on the basis of word-count: 77:19, 20 and 21.

- 77:16–19 **34** (= **17** x 2) words
- 77:12–19 **60** = **34** + **26** [compositional formula]
- 77:10–19 **40** [= **17** + **23**] words before and **34** (= **17** x 2) words after *atnach*
- 77:19–20 **17** words
- 77:18–20 **26** words and **17** words before *atnach*
- 77:17–20 **23** words before *atnach*
- 77:16–20 **26** words before *atnach*
- 77:14–20 **23** words after *atnach*
- 77:12–20 **68** (= **17** x 4) words
- 77:12–20 **32** (= 2x2x2x2x2) words after *atnach*
- 77:19–21 **23** words

- 77:18–21 **32** (= 2x2x2x2x2) words
- 77:17–21 **26** words before *atnach*
- 77:14–21 **26** words after *atnach*
- 77:18–21 **102** (= 17 x 6) words

Observations

1. In terms of the 154 words in Psalm 77, the **arithmological center** falls between the words **היא שנות** (“it is changing”) in the middle of 77:11, with 77 words on either side. The initial *Concentric Compositional Formula* is:

$$154 = 77 + 0 + 77 \quad \text{[word count—with heading]}$$

If these two central words are taken as a **meaningful center**, the *Concentric Compositional Formula* becomes:

$$154 = 76 + 2 + 76 \quad \text{[word count—with heading]}$$

or: **78 // 78** [with pivot counted in each half]
 {78 = 26 x 3}

Another candidate for the **meaningful center** is found by adding three words on either side of the **arithmological center** as follows:

ואמר חלֹותי היא And I said, “My sorrow is this;

 שנות ימין עליון The changing of the right hand of *Elyon*.”

In this instance the *Concentric Compositional Formula* becomes:

$$154 = 74 + 6 + 74 \quad \text{[word count—with heading]}$$

or: **80 // 80** [with pivot counted in each half]
 {80 = 40 x 2; and 40 = 17 + 23}

The **meaningful center** may be expanded by adding eight words on either side of the **arithmological center** as follows:

10b אם קפץ באף רחמיו סלה Or in anger has he withdrawn his compassion, Selah?
 11 ואמר חלֹותי היא And I said, “My sorrow is this—

 שנות ימין עליון The changing of the right hand of *Elyon*.
 12 אזכור מעללי יה I remember the deeds of YH(WH);
 כי אזכרה Yes, I remember.

In this instance the *Concentric Compositional Formula* becomes:

$$154 = 69 + 16 + 69 \quad \text{[word count—with heading]}$$

or: **85 // 85** [with pivot counted in each half]
 {69 = 23 x 3 and 85 = 17 x 5}

The **meaningful center** may be expanded further by adding thirteen words on either side of the **arithmological center** as follows:

9b	לדר ודר	To all generations,
10	השכח חנות אל	has God (<i>EI</i>) forgotten to be a gracious?
	אם קפץ באף רחמיו סלה	Or in anger has he withdrawn his compassion, Selah?
11	ואמר חליתי היא	And I said, "My sorrow is this—
<hr/>		
	שנות ימין עליון	The changing of the right hand of <i>Elyon</i> .
12	אזכור מעללי יה	I remember the deeds of YH(WH);
	כי אזכרה מקדם פלאך	Yes, I remember your wonders of old.
13	והגיתי בכל פעלך	I reflect on all your work;

In this instance the *Concentric Compositional Formula* becomes:

$$154 = 64 + 26 + 64 \quad \text{[word count—with heading]}$$

$$\text{or: } 90 // 90 \quad \text{[with pivot counted in each half]}$$

$$\{64 = 32 \times 2 = 2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2; \text{ and } 90 = 2 \times 3 \times 3 \times 5\}$$

The **meaningful center** may be expanded further still further by adding fifteen words on either side of the **arithmological center** as follows:

9b	גמר אמר לדר ודר	Will his word be muted for all generations?
10	השכח חנות אל	Has God (<i>EI</i>) forgotten to be a gracious?
	אם קפץ באף רחמיו סלה	Or in anger has he withdrawn his compassion, Selah?
11	ואמר חליתי היא	And I said, "My sorrow is this—
<hr/>		
	שנות ימין עליון	The changing of the right hand of <i>Elyon</i> .
12	אזכור מעללי יה	I remember the deeds of YH(WH);
	כי אזכרה מקדם פלאך	Yes, I remember your wonders of old.
13	והגיתי בכל פעלך	I reflect on all your work;
	ובעלילותיך אשיחה	And on your deeds I muse.

In this instance the *Concentric Compositional Formula* becomes:

$$154 = 62 + 30 + 62 \quad \text{[word count—with heading]}$$

$$\text{or: } 92 // 92 \quad \text{[with pivot counted in each half]}$$

$$\{92 = 23 \times 4 \text{ and } 30 = 2 \times 3 \times 5\}$$

- In the prosodic structure of Psalm 77 as a whole, the basic building blocks in each poetic "verseline" are the **briques** (primary syntactic accentual stress units). These sub-units are delineated by the Masoretes, who marked the boundaries with one of the following:

- **Soph Pasuq** A large colon following a word signifies the end of a verse, which does not always coincide with the end of a sentence.
- **Atnach** A small caret-like mark (like ^) beneath the consonantal text, pointing upward, is used to divide most verses. Its primary importance for our purposes concerns its use in the matter of numerical composition—i.e., the total word-count in each line is divided into the number of words before and after *atnach*.
- **Ole Weyored** A combination of two accentual signs: a caret-like mark above the consonantal text, pointing to the left, used together with the accent *merka* (an upright line beneath the consonantal text slanting to the right). These two marks usually appear on the same word, but when that word is monosyllabic the *merka* falls on the following word. This major divider is usually considered to be a stronger disjunctive accent than *atnach*.

In the prosodic analysis presented in the translation (above), the presence of these three markers is indicated with a double slash (/). Psalm 77 has 46 **briques**, 43 of which are marked by: *soph pasuq* (21 times, at the end of each verse), *atnach* (20 times, in each verse, except for verse 1), and *ole weyored* (2 times, in verses 3 and 7). The boundaries of the remaining three **briques** are marked by *revia mugrash* (once, in verse 2) and *revia* (twice, in verses 17 and 19).

3. The details in the prosodic structure of Psalm 77 may be displayed as follows [^ represents *atnach*; : represents *soph pasuq*; † represents *ole weyored*, and † represents all other accent markers]:

- I A ¹ *lamnaṣēaḥ ʿal yəḏūṭūn ləʾāsāp mizmôr :*
² *qôlî ʾel ʾelôhîm wəʾeṣʿāqāh ^ qôlî ʾel ʾelôhîm † wəhaʾāzîn ʾēlāy :*
³ *bəyôm ṣārāṭî ʾăḏōnāy dārāstî † yādî laylāh niggarāh wəlōʾ tāpûg ^*
mēʾānāh hinnāḥēm napšî :
⁴ *ʾezkārāh ʾelôhîm wəʾehēmāyāh ^ ʾāsîḥāh wəṭîṭʿaṭṭēp rūḥî **selāh** :*
- B ⁵ *ʾāḥaztā ṣəmūrôṭ ʿēnāy ^ nîpʿamtî wəlōʾ ʾăḏabbēr :*
⁶ *ḥîšṣabṭî yāmîm miqqeḏem ^ ṣənôṭ ʿôlāmîm :*
⁷ *ʾezkārāh nəḡînāṭî ballāylāh † ʿim ləḥābî ʾāsîḥāh ^*
wayəḥappēš rūḥî :
⁸ *halʿôlāmîm yiznaḥ ʾăḏōnāy ^ wəlōʾ yōsîp liršôṭ ʿôḏ :*
⁹ *heʾāpēs lāneṣaḥ ḥasdo ^ gāmar ʾōmer ləḏôr wāḏôr :*
- II X ¹⁰ *ḥāšākaḥ ḥannôṭ ʾēl ^ ʾim qāpaṣ bəʾap raḥāmāyw **selah** :*
¹¹ *wāʾōmar ḥallôṭî ḥîʾ ^ ṣənôṭ yəmîn ʿelyôn :*
¹² *ʾezkôr maʿalələ yāh ^ kî ʾezkārāh miqqeḏem pilʿekā :*

III B	¹³ <i>wəhāgîṭū bəkol poʿolekâ</i> ^	<i>ûbʿălîlôṭêkâ ʾāsîhāh</i> :
	¹⁴ <i>ʾəlôhîm baqqōdeš darkekâ</i> ^	<i>mî ʾel gādôl kēʾlôhîm</i> :
	¹⁵ <i>ʾattāh hāʾel ʿosēh pēleʾ</i> ^	<i>hōdaʿtā bāʿammîm ʿuzzekâ</i> :
	¹⁶ <i>gāʾaltā bizrôaʿ ʿammekâ</i> ^	<i>bənê yaʿăqōb wəyôsēp selāh</i> :
	¹⁷ <i>rāʾūkâ mayim ʾəlôhîm</i> †	<i>rāʾūkâ mayim yāhîkû</i> ^
	<i>ʾap yirgəzû təhômôt</i> :	
A	¹⁸ <i>zōrəmû mayim ʿābôt qôl nātənû šəhāqîm</i> ^	<i>ʾap həšārêkâ yîthallākû</i> :
	¹⁹ <i>qôl raʿamkâ baggalgal</i> †	<i>hēʾrû bəraqîm tēbēl</i> ^
	<i>rāgzāh wattirʿas hāʾāreš</i> :	
	²⁰ <i>bayyām darkekâ ûšəbîlêkâ bəmayim rabbîm</i> ^	<i>wəʿiqqəbôṭêkâ lôʾ nōdāʿû</i> :
	²¹ <i>nāhîṭā kaššōʾn ʿammekâ</i> ^	<i>bəyaḍ mōšeh wəʾahārôn</i> :

4. The 46 **briques** (primary accentual stress units) are distributed within seven strophes in Psalm 77 as follows: **46** = (9 + 11) + 6 + (11 + 9) = 20 + 6 + 20. The **concentric compositional formula** (on the basis of primary stress units) is **26 // 26**, with the central pivot (vv 10–12) included in each half.
5. The **arithmological center** of Psalm 77 falls between the words *hîʾ šənôt* (“it / it changed”) in the middle of 77:11, with a total of 77 words on either side. Psalm 77 has 46 **briques**, 21 “verselines,” 5 “strophes” and 3 “cantos.” The **arithmological center** is in the middle “canto,” the middle “strophe,” the middle “verseline,” and the middle two **briques**.
6. There is divergence of opinion in regards the number of “cola” in Psalm 77:

Christensen	46	<i>briques</i> (including the heading)
Dahood	50	cola (excluding the heading)
Fokkelman	??	cola (excluding the heading)
Labuschagne	46	cola (excluding the heading)
Tate	46	cola (excluding the heading)
Terrien	44	cola (excluding the heading)
Van der Lugt	46	cola (excluding the heading)

7. **Compositional formulae** by word-count counting from the beginning of Psalm 77:

77:1–3	26	words
77:1–6	17	after <i>atnach</i>
77:1–7	52	(= 26 x 2) words
77:1–8	23	words after <i>atnach</i>
77:1–10	32	(= 2x2x2x2x2) words after <i>atnach</i>
77:1–11	80	(= 40 x 2) words [40 = 17 + 23]
77:1–13	92	(= 26 x 2) words and 51 (= 17 x 3) words before <i>atnach</i>

77:1–16 **52** (= **26** x 2) words after *atnach*
~~77:1–17 **55** [= **23** + **32**] words after *atnach*~~
~~77:1–18 **58** [= **26** + **32**] words after *atnach*~~

There are a total of 14 words in Psalm 77:1–2, and so it is not possible to use even the first of the four primary compositional numbers (**17**, **23**, **26** and **32**) in terms of total word-count until the end of verse 3. This leaves 18 verses to work with (vv. 3–21) and 7 of these have significant numbers in terms of total word count (i.e., more than 38% of the time). If the numbers 40, 55 and 58 are included the percentage increases to more than 55% of the time.

Other noteworthy **compositional formulae** include:

77:12–15 **32** = 16 + 16
77:3–15 **92** = **49** + **43**
77:5–16 **80** = **40** + **40**
77:12–18 **51** = **28** + **23**
77:6–18 **92** = **49** + **43**
77:5–18 **98** = **52** + **46**
77:12–19 **60** = **34** + **26**

Note that all of the above numbers are based on the Hebrew text as it stands in Codex L (BHS), including the 5-word heading (verse 1) and the three occurrences of *Selah*.

8. Psalm 77 has the following **concentric compositional formulae**:

154 = 77 + 0 + 77 or: 77 // 77 words
154 = 76 + 2 + 76 or: **78** // **78** {**78** = **26** x 3}
154 = 74 + 6 + 74 or: **80** // **80** {**80** = **40** x 2; and **40** = **17** + **23**}
154 = **69** + 16 + **69** or: **85** // **85** {**85** = **17** x 5}
154 = **64** + **26** + **64** or: 90 // 90 {**64** = **32** x 2}
154 = 62 + 30 + 62 or: **92** // **92** {**92** = **23** x 4}

82 = 36 + 10 + 36 or: **46** // **46** syntactic accentual stress units
46 = 20 + 6 + 20 or: **26** // **26** *briques*
{**46** = **23** x 2}

9. The three occurrences of the word *Selah* in Psalm 77 appear to be calling attention to unusual features in the numerical and prosodic composition. The first occurrence marks the end of the first strophe (77:4), which is the only major boundary in the entire psalm that is not marked by one of the four primary compositional numbers (**17**, **23**, **26** and **32**). The second occurrence of *Selah* (77:10) marks the center of the poem, which has three parts from a prosodic point of view, with the dyad following the *Selah* longer by one syntactic accentual stress unit than those on either side: scanning (3.4.3). The third occurrence of *Selah* (77:16) appears also at a point of ambiguity in terms of prosodic structure, with the following verse is broken up into smaller staccato-like subunits, with two balanced quatrains connected by a pivot—a single word, which translates: “And they writhe” (77:17b).

10. Determining the details of the musical and literary structures of Psalm 77 as a whole calls for input on the part of others in the Psalms Group, as we consider the rhetorical features in greater depth and further information contained in the *te'amim* of this particular text.

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