

Habakkuk 1:1–11—Logoprosodic Analysis

Translation and Textual Notes

I. Habakkuk’s First Prayer and YHWH’s Response

Hab 1:1–11

A. Section One (1:1–3)

[10.4]

1:1	The burden ^{\a} that Habakkuk ^{\b} the prophet / saw /	<u> 19 3</u>	<u> 5 5 0</u>
		Nah 3:19–Hab 1:1	23 10 13
1:2	How long (will it be), YHWH? /	<u> 9 1</u>	<u> 3 3 0</u>
		Nah 3:19–Hab 1:2a	26 13 13
	I have called out ^{\a} and you did not listen //	<u> 10 1</u>	<u> 3 3 0</u>
		Nah 1:1–Hab 1:2b	570 310 260
	I protested to you / “Lawlessness!” /	<u> 11 2</u>	<u> 3 0 3</u>
		Nah 3:19–Hab 1:2c	32 16 16
	And you did not save (me) //	<u> 8 1</u>	<u> 2 0 2</u>
		Nah 3:19–Hab 1:2	34 16 18
1:3	Why did you make me see iniquity / and look at wretchedness? /	<u> 20 2</u>	<u> 5 5 0</u>
		Nah 3:19–Hab 1:3a	39 21 18
	Yea, devastation and lawlessness / indeed is before me //	12 2	3 3 0
	and there is disputation and contention / has risen //	<u> 14 2</u>	<u> 4 0 4</u>
		1:2–3	23 14 9
		Nah 3:19–Hab 1:3	46 24 22

B. Section Two (1:4–5a)

[9.6]

1:4	That is why / the Torah ^{/a} has become paralyzed /	11 3	4 4 0
	and justice / never ^{/b} came forth //	14 3	4 4 0
	in fact the wicked / restricted ^{/*} the righteous /	<u> 14 3</u>	<u> 5 0 5</u>
		Nah 3:19–Hab 1:4a	59 32 27
	That’s why / justice came forth / perverted //	<u> 14 3</u>	<u> 5 0 5</u>
		1:1–4	46 27 19
		Nah 3:19–Hab 1:4	64 32 32
1:5	Look among the nations ^{\a} and gaze /	13 1	3 3 0
	and be astonished / be astounded //	<u> 12 2</u>	<u> 2 2 0</u>
		1:4–5a	23 13 10
		1:1–5a	51 32 19

C. Section Three: Middle (1:5b–7)

[(4.4).(4.5)]

	For <I am> ^b doing / a deed in your days / you won't believe / when it is reported //	{+1b}? 17 2 _14 2_	5 0 5 4 0 4
		1:3–5	44 21 23
		1:1–5	60 32 28
		Nah 3:19–Hab 1:5	78 37 41
1:6	For behold I am raising up / the Chaldeans / the nation / (that is) bitter and impetuous //	14 2 _10 2_	5 5 0 3 3 0
		1:1–6a	68 40 28
	That marches / over the breadth of the earth / so as to seize / territories not its own //	12 2 _13 2_	3 0 3 4 0 4
		1:4–6	47 21 26
1:7	Dreadful and terrifying / is he // from himself / his justice and status / proceed ^b //	11 2 _20 3_	3 3 0 4 0 4
		1:3–7	66 32 34

D. Section Four (1:8–9)

[6.9]

1:8	And swifter than leopards / are his horses / and they are more savage / than evening wolves / and his horsemen / dash ahead //	14 2 12 2 _12 2_	3 3 0 3 3 0 2 2 0
		1:1–8a	90 51 39
	And his horsemen / come from afar / they swoop / like an eagle \ ^a hastening to devour //	20 2 _14 2_	3 0 3 4 0 4
		1:1–8	97 51 46
1:9	All of them / come for violence / the horde of their faces \ ^a moves forward // and he gathers prisoners / like sand //	12 2 13 1 _11 2_	3 3 0 3 3 0 3 0 3
		1:7–9	31 17 14
		1:2–9	101 52 49

E. Section Five (1:10–11)

[4.10]

1:10	And as for him / he ridiculed kings / and rulers / were a laughingstock for him //	13 2 <u>11 2</u>	3 3 0 <u>3 3 0</u>
		1:6–10a	52 31 21
	He indeed / laughed at every fortress / and he heaped up earth / and he captured it //	10 2 <u>13 2</u>	4 0 4 <u>3 0 3</u>
		1:8–10	37 20 17
1:11	Then / ^a the spirit swept on /	<u>5 2</u>	<u>2 2 0</u>
		1:7–11a	46 25 21
	And it passed by / and he was guilty // he whose strength / is his god //	13 2 <u>14 2</u>	3 3 0 <u>3 0 3</u>
		1:9–11	30 17 13
		1:7–11	52 28 24
		1:1–11	127 68 59

Scansion in Accentual Stress Units: (10.4).(9.6).(8.9).(6.9).(4.10)

$$= (14+15) + 17 + (15+14) = 29 + 17 + 29 = 75$$

$$\text{or: } \mathbf{46 // 46} \quad \{\mathbf{46 = 23 \times 2}\}$$

Concentric Compositional Formula: 127 = 63 + 1 + 63 [word count]

$$\text{or: } \mathbf{64 // 64} \quad [\text{with pivot counted in each half}]$$

Notes:

- 1:1^a Reading *paš̄ta* followed by *zaqep̄ qaṭon* here as conjunctive.
- 1:1^b Reading *tīp̄hā* in BHS as conjunctive.
- 1:2^a Reading *tīp̄hā* in BHS as conjunctive.
- 1:4^a Reading the *munaḥ* here in BHS as disjunctive.
- 1:4^b Reading *mērəkā* preceded immediately by *gaʿyā* (= *meteḡ*) in BHS as disjunctive.
- 1:4^c Reading the *munaḥ* here in BHS as disjunctive.
- 1:5^a Reading *paš̄ta* followed by *zaqep̄ qaṭon* here as conjunctive.
- 1:5^b Adding the word ʾānī with LXX and Syriac, as suggested in BHS note.
- 1:7^a Reading *tīp̄hā* in BHS as conjunctive.
- 1:8^a Reading *tīp̄hā* in BHS as conjunctive.
- 1:9^a Reading *tīp̄hā* in BHS as conjunctive.
- 1:11^a Reading *munaḥ* followed by *mērəkā* and *teb̄ir* in BHS as disjunctive.

Summary of the Logoprosodic Analysis

1. In terms of balance in mora-count, Habakkuk 1:1–11 has 5 sections: 1:1–3, 4–5a, 5b–7, 8–9 and 10–11.

A	1:1–3a	2 balanced triads:	$([19 + 9 + 10] + [11 + 8 + 20])$	=	38 + 40	morae
	1:3b–c	balanced dyad:	$(12 + 15)$	=	12 + 15	morae
B	1:4–5a	balanced triad:	$(11 + 14 + 14) + (14 + 13 + 12)$	=	39 + 39	morae
X	1:5b–7	2 balanced quatrains:	$([17+14]+[14+10] + [12+13]+[11+20])$	=	55 + 56	morae
B	1:8a	balanced triad:	$(14 + 12 + 12)$	=	14 + 12 + 12	morae
	1:8b–9	balanced dyad & triad:	$(20+14) + (12+13+11)$	=	34 + 36	morae
A	1:10a	balanced dyad:	$(13 + 11)$	=	13 + 11	morae
	1:10b–11	balanced triad & dyad	$(10 + 13 + 5) + (13 + 14)$	=	28 + 27	morae

2. The first strophe (1:1–3) has two parts: 1:1–3a and 3b.

- Nah 3:19–Hab 1:1 **23** words
- Nah 3:19–Hab 1:2a **26** words
- Nah 1:1–Hab 1:2b $570 = 310 + \mathbf{260}$ [compositional formula]
- Nah 3:19–Hab 1:2c **32** ($= 2^5$) words
- Nah 3:19–Hab 1:2 **34** ($= 2 \times 17$) words
- Nah 3:19–Hab 1:3a **39** words in a pattern of **26 + 13** [see YHWH-*echad* Model]
- Nah 3:19–Hab 1:3 **46** ($= 23 \times 2$) words
- Hab 1:2–3 **23** words

3. The second section (1:4–5a) is a single part arranged in three subdivisions on the basis of word-count: 1:4a, 4b, 5a and 5b–c.

- Nah 3:19–Hab 1:4a **32** ($= 2^5$) words before *atnach*
- Nah 3:19–Hab 1:4 **64** = **32 + 32** [compositional formula]
- Nah 3:19–Hab 1:5a **69** ($= 23 \times 3$) words and **32** words after *atnach*
- Hab 1:1–4 **46** words
- 1:1–5a **51** ($= 17 \times 3$) words and **32** words before *atnach*

4. The third section (1:5b–7) is a single part arranged in four subdivisions on the basis of word-count: 1:5b, 6a, 6b and 7.

- 1:3–5 **23** words after *atnach*
- 1:1–5 **32** ($= 2^5$) words before *atnach*
- Nah 3:19–Hab 1:5 **78** ($= 26 \times 3$) words
- 1:1–6a **68** = **40 + 28** [compositional formula]
- 1:3–6b **55** ($= 23+32$) words and **26** words after *atnach*
- 1:4–6 **26** words after *atnach*
- 1:3–7 **32** ($= 2^5$) words and **34** ($= 2 \times 17$) words after *atnach*

5. The fourth section (1:8–9) has two parts arranged in three subdivisions on the basis of word-count: 1:8a, 8b and 9.

- 1:1–8 **51** ($= 17 \times 3$) words before and **46** ($= 2 \times 23$) words after *atnach*

- 1:7–9 **17** words before *atnach*
 - 1:2–9 **52** (= **26** x 2) words before and **49** (= **17+32 = 23 + 26**) words after *atnach*
6. The fifth section (1:10–11) is a single part arranged in three subdivisions on the basis of word-count: 1:10ab, 10c and 11.
- 1:6–10a **52** (= **26** x 2) words
 - 1:8–10 **17** words after *atnach*
 - 1:7–11a **46** (= **23** x 2) words
 - 1:9–11 **17** words before *atnach*
 - 1:7–11 **52** (= **26** x 2) words
 - 1:1–11 **68** (**17** x 4) words before *atnach*

Observations

1. Word-count patterns in Hab 1:1–5 suggest rather strongly that the books of Nahum and Habakkuk are structurally tied together in a single literary unit from a prosodic point of view, in terms of the numerical composition of the Book of the Twelve (Minor Prophets). As one examines the word-count line by line, starting from Nah 3:19 (the last verse in that book), each prosodic subdivision is marked with various combinations of the four primary compositional numbers (**17**, **23**, **26** and **32**)—climaxed by the compositional formula for Nah 3:19–Hab 1:4 of **64 = 32 + 32**. The next verse (1:5) contains the **meaningful center** for the combined literary unit of Nahum plus Habakkuk (see Observation 4 below).
2. In terms of the 127 words in Habakkuk 1:1–11, the **arithmological center** falls on the word אַת (in the 3-word clause, “I am raising up the Chaldeans”) in 1:6a, with 63 words on either side. The initial **concentric compositional formula** is:

$$127 = 63 + 1 + 63 \quad [\text{word count—for Habakkuk 1:1–11}]$$

or: **64 // 64**

$$\{64 = 2^6 = 2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2\}$$

If the 3-word statement אַת הכּשְׁדִּים מִקִּים (“I am raising up the Chaldeans”) is taken as the **meaningful center**, the **concentric compositional formula** becomes:

$$127 = 62 + 3 + 61 \quad [\text{word count—for Habakkuk 1:1–11}]$$

or: 65 // 65

$$\{65 = 13 \times 5\}$$

This **meaningful center** may be expanded by adding four words on either side of the **arithmological center**, as follows:

יִסְפֵּר כִּי הִנְנִי It is reported that behold—
 אַת הכּשְׁדִּים מִקִּים I am raising up the Chaldeans,
 הַגּוֹי הַמָּר וְהַנְּמָהָר The nation (that is) bitter and impetuous.

In this instance the **concentric compositional formula** becomes:

$$127 = 59 + 9 + 59 \quad [\text{word count— for Habakkuk 1:1–11}]$$

$$\text{or: } \mathbf{68 // 68} \quad [\text{word count—with “pivot” included in each half}]$$

$$\{\mathbf{68} = \mathbf{17} \times \mathbf{4}\}$$

The **meaningful center** may be expanded still further by adding fourteen words on either side of the **arithmological center** in 1:6a, as follows:

5b	והתמהו תמהו	And be astonished, be astounded;
	כי <אני> פעל פעל בימיכם	For I am doing a deed in your days,
	לא תאמינו כי יספר	You won't believe when it is reported.
6	כי הנני מקים את הכשדם	For behold, I am raising up the Chaldeans,
	הגוי המר והנמהר	The nation (that is) bitter and impetuous,
	ההולך למרחבי ארץ	That marches over the breadth of the earth,
	לרשת משכנות לא לו	So as to seize territories not its own;
7	אים ונורא הוא	Dreadful and terrifying is he.

In this instance the **concentric compositional formula** becomes:

$$127 = \mathbf{49} + 29 + \mathbf{49} \quad [\text{word count— for Habakkuk 1:1–11}]$$

$$\text{or: } \mathbf{78 // 78} \quad [\text{word count—with “pivot” included in each half}]$$

$$\{\mathbf{78} = \mathbf{26} \times \mathbf{3}\}$$

3. When the books of Nahum and Habakkuk are taken together as a literary unit, another **meaningful center** is found by adding six words on either side of the **arithmological center** in 1:5b, as follows:

	<אני> פעל פעל בימיכם	<I am> doing a deed in your days,
	לא תאמינו כי יספר	You will not believe when it is reported
	כי הנני מקים את הכשדם	For behold I am raising up the Chaldeans

In this instance the **concentric compositional formula** becomes:

$$1235 = 611 + 13 + 611 \quad [\text{word count— for Nahum 1:1–Hab 3:19}]$$

$$\text{or: } \mathbf{624 // 624} \quad [\text{word count—with “pivot” included in each half}]$$

$$\{\mathbf{624} = \mathbf{26} \times \mathbf{24} \text{ and } 611 = 13 \times 47\}$$

4. In the prosodic structure of Habakkuk 1:1–11 as a whole, the basic building blocks (**briques**) in each poetic **verset** are the **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*.

In the prosodic analysis presented with the translation (above), the presence of these two primary disjunctive markers is indicated with a double slash (/). Habakkuk 1:1–11 has 28 **briques** (primary stress units), 21 of which are marked by *soph pasuq* (11 times, at the end of each verse) and *atnach* (10 times, in each verse except verse 1 [the heading]). The boundary of the other seven **briques** are marked by *zaqeph qaton* (6 times; in verses 3, 4, 5 [twice] and 10 [twice]) and *revia* (once, in verse 8).

5. The prosodic structure of Habakkuk 1:1–11, in terms of its **primary syntactic accentual stress units (briques)**, may be displayed as follows [^ represents *atnach*; ; represents *soph pasuq*; and † is any other such boundary marker].

A 1 *hammasāʾ ʾāšer ḥāzāh ḥāḇaqqûq hannāḇîʾ* :
 2 *ʿaḏ ʾānāh yhwḥ šiwwaʿtî wəlōʾ tišmāʿ ^ ʾezʿaq ʾēlēka ḥāmās wəlōʾ tōššaʿ :*
 3 *lāmmāh tarʾēnî ʾāwen wəʿāmāl tabbî† wəšōḏ wəḥāmās ləneḡdî ^*
wayəḥî rîḇ ūmāḏōn yiśśāʾ :

B 4 *ʿal kēn tāpûḡ tōrāh wəlōʾ yēšēʾ lāneṣaḥ mišpāt ^ kî rāšāʿ maqtîr ʾeṭ ḥaššaddîq †*
ʿal kēn yēšēʾ mišpāt məʿuqqāl :
 5 *rəʾû ḥaggōyīm wəhabbî† wəhittamməḥû tēmāḥû <wəšōmmû> ^*

X	<i>kî <ʾānî> pōʿal pōʿel bîmēkem †</i>	<i>lōʾ taʾāmînu kî yəsuppār :</i>
6	<i>kî hinnî mēqîm ʾeṭ ḥakkašdim ḥaggōy ḥamar wəhannimḥār ^</i> <i>ḥahôlēk ləmerḥāḇē ʾereṣ lārešet miškānôt lōʾ lô :</i>	
7	<i>ʾāyōm wənôrāʾ ḥûʾ ^</i>	<i>mimmennû mišpātô ūsəʾēto yēšēʾ :</i>

B 8 *wəqallû minnəmērîm sūsāyw † wəḥaddû mizzəʾēḇē ʿereḇ ūpāšû pārāšāyw ^*
ūpārāšāyw mērāḥôq yāḇōʾû yāʿūpû kənešer ḥāš leʾēkôl :

9 *kullôh ləḥāmās yāḇōʾ mənammat pənêhem qāḏîmāh ^ wayyeʾəsōp kaḥôl šēḇî :*

A 10 *wəḥûʾ bammələkîm yiṭqallās † wərozənîm mišḥāq lô ^*
ḥûʾ ləkôl miḇsār yišḥāq † wayyišbōr ʿāpār wayyilkəḏāh :

11 *ʾāz ḥālaḇ rūaḥ wayyaʿāḇōr wəʾāšēm ^ zû kôḥô lēʾlôḥô :*

6. The **arithmological center** of Hab 1:1–11 falls between the words mēqîm ʾeṭ (“raising up the”) in the first half of verse 6, with a total of 64 words on either side. Habakkuk 1:1–11 has 28 **briques** (primary accentual stress units), 11 **versets**, and 5 **strophes**. The

arithmological center is in the middle **strophe**, the middle **verset**, and the two middle **briques**.

According to the analysis presented here, the 28 **briques** are distributed within 5 **strophes** in Hab 1:1–11 as follows: **28** = (6 + 5) + 6 + (5 + 6) = 11 + 6 + 11; or **17 // 17** with the central pivot (verses 5b–7) included in each half.

7. The concentric structure in the distribution of the **syntactic accentual stress units** does not correspond exactly to the sequence of thought units in the five prosodic sections of Habakkuk 1:1–11, which is arranged in an inverted concentric structural pattern.

Scansion in Accentual Stress Units: (10.4).(9.6).(8.9).(6.9).(4.10)

Position of verses: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11

The boundaries of the major musical subdivisions (syntactic accentual stress units) overlap somewhat the boundaries of the sense-units. This is closely related to the phenomenon of enjambment [running on of the thought from one line, couplet, or stanza to the next].

It is not yet clear what the relationship is between the **briques** (major **syntactic accentual stress units**) and the subordinate syntactic accentual stress units. When boundaries of individual **briques** are present beyond that of *soph pasuq* (end of verse marker) and *atnach* (major divider within a verse), they appear to be marked primarily by *zaqeph qaton*, and secondarily by *revia*. The **briques** appear to be arranged in an inverted concentric pattern of their own. There is no discernible pattern in terms of the length of each **brique**, which differ here in terms of word-count ranging from 3 words (1:7a, 11b) to 8 words (1:6a).

8. According to the “Word-Count in the Book of the Twelve—Progress Report” [written April 16, 2002], a net total of five words have been subtracted from the original text in the book of Habakkuk in Codex L (and BHS)—one word before and four words after *atnach*. One of the proposed corrections to restore the Hebrew text of Habakkuk to its original form, as a numerical composition, is:

1:5b adding the words *ʔānî* (“I”) before the sequence of the two verbal forms so as to read *<ʔānî> pōʿal pōʿel* (“I am doing a deed”) with LXX and Syriac.

The others will be added to this list as we proceed through the rest of the book of Habakkuk.

9. Determining the details of the musical and literary structures in the book of Habakkuk calls for input on the part of others in the Word Count Project, as we consider the rhetorical features in greater depth and further information contained in the *teʿamim* of this particular text.

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 Dr. D.L. Christensen Professor of Biblical Studies
 845 Bodega Way and Near Eastern History,
 Rodeo, California 94572 William Carey International University
 Pasadena, California
 +1 510 799 0858
 dlc@bibal.net