

Psalm 9:1–21

Translation, Logoprosodic Analysis, and Observations

Praise to YHWH Enthroned in Zion and Prayer for Justice

Ps 9:1–21

A. Section One (9:1–3)

[5.4]

9:1	To the <i>maestro</i> / <i>Mûṭ-labbēr^a</i> / a <i>Mizmor</i> of David //	14 2 <u>7 1</u>	3 3 0 <u>2 2 0</u>
		8:7–9:1	32 17 15
9:2	𐤍 I will praise YHWH / with all my heart //	_12 2_	<u>4 4 0</u>
		8:9–9:2a	23 15 8
	𐤍 I will recount / all your wonderful works //	_13 2_	<u>3 0 3</u>
		8:9–9:2	26 15 11
9:3	𐤍 I will rejoice and I will exult in you //	11 1	3 3 0
	𐤍 I will sing the praise of your name, O Most High //	<u>10 1</u>	<u>3 0 3</u>
		8:9–9:3	32 18 14

B. Section Two (9:4–6)

[4.8]

9:4	𐤎 When my enemies turn / ^a back // they will be thrown down and they will perish / before you //	11 2 <u>18 2</u>	3 3 0 <u>3 0 3</u>
		8:9–9:4	38 21 17
9:5	For you have undertaken / my judgment and my cause // you have sat upon the throne / judging righteously //	17 2 <u>14 2</u>	4 4 0 <u>4 0 4</u>
		8:9–9:5	46 25 21
9:6	𐤍 You have rebuked the nations / you have made the wicked perish // their name you have wiped out / forever and ever //	7 1 7 1 <u>16 2</u>	2 2 0 2 2 0 <u>4 0 4</u>
		9:1–6	40 23 17

C. Section Three (9:7–8)

[4.5]

9:7	𐤍 The enemy / are destroyed—a heap of ruins / forever // and (their) cities uprooted //	18 3 <u>9 1</u>	4 4 0 <u>2 2 0</u>
		9:4–7b	28 17 11

	May memory of them / perish //	9:6-7	<u> 10 1_</u>	<u> 3 0 3</u>	
				17 10 7	
9:8	י And may YHWH / reign forever //		14 2	3 3 0	
	his throne established / with righteousness //		<u> 11 2</u>	<u> 3 0 3</u>	
		9:4-8		37 20 17	
D. Section Four (9:9–10)					[5.4]
9:9	י And he / shall judge the world / ^a in righteousness //		13 3	4 4 0	
	he will adjudicate the peoples / with equity //		<u> 15 2_</u>	<u> 3 0 3</u>	
		9:1-9		62 36 26	
9:10	י And YHWH shall be / a refuge for the oppressed //		14 2	4 4 0	
	a refuge / for times of trouble //		<u> 12 2</u>	<u> 3 0 3</u>	
		9:4-10		51 28 23	
E. Middle: Section Five (9:11–12)					[4.4]
9:11	י And they will trust in you / the ones who know your name //		15 2	4 4 0	
	for you have not forsaken / those who seek you, O YHWH //		<u> 18 2_</u>	<u> 5 0 5</u>	
		9:1-11		78 44 34	
9:12	י Sing praises / to YHWH enthroned in Zion [//]		17 2	4 4 0	
	declare among the peoples / his deeds //		<u> 17 2</u>	<u> 3 0 3</u>	
		9:1-12		85 48 37	
F. Section Six (9:13–14)					[4.5]
9:13	For the Avenger of Blood / has remembered them //		18 2	5 5 0	
	he has not forgotten / the cry of the afflicted //		<u> 13 2_</u>	<u> 4 0 4</u>	
		9:10-13		32 17 15	
9:14	פ Be gracious to me / ^a		<u> 7 1_</u>	<u> 1 1 0</u>	
		9:12-14a		17 10 7	
	O YHWH / look upon my affliction / ^b from those who hate me //		16 2	4 4 0	
	my guardian / from the gates of death //		<u> 14 2</u>	<u> 3 0 3</u>	
		9:13-14		17 10 7	
G. Section Seven (9:15–16)					[5.4]
9:15	That I may recount / all your praise //		<u> 16 2_</u>	<u> 4 4 0</u>	
		9:10-15a		44 26 18	

Notes:

- 9:1^a The meaning of the technical words *ʿalmût labbēn* is not known. The closest parallel appears in Ps 46:1, *ʿal ʿālāmôt* (the meaning there is also uncertain, though it is often rendered “according to maidens”). The LXX translation here, *υπερ των κυριων*, suggests the possibility of restoring the preposition *ʿal*, which may have been lost by simple haplography. The word *labbēn* may have something to do with the “moon,” as a poetic simile of female beauty—as in the phrase *ʾôr halləbānāh* (“the light of the moon”) in Isa 30:26 (cf. also Song of Songs 6:10).
- 9:4^a Reading the *munah* preceded immediately by *gaʿya* (= *meteg*) in Letteris as disjunctive (BHS has *mērəkā* alone).
- 9:9^a Reading the *mērəkā* preceded immediately by *gaʿya* (= *meteg*) in BHS as disjunctive.
- 9:14^a Reading the *dehî* in BHS as conjunctive.
- 9:14^b Reading the *illûy* preceded immediately by *gaʿya* (= *meteg*) in BHS as disjunctive.
- 9:17^a Reading the *ʿazlā ləġarmēh* on the word *גִּזְרָה* (“he has made known, revealed”) IN BHS as conjunctive.

Summary of the Logotechnical Prosodic Analysis

- Psalm 9 has nine strophes: 9:1–3, 4–6, 7–8, 9–10, 11–12, 13–14, 15–16, 17–19 and 20–21.

9:1–3	2 balanced triads:	[14 + 7 + 12] + [13 + 11 + 10]	= 33 + 34	morae
9:4–6	3 balanced dyads:	[11 + 18] + [17 + 14] + [(7 + 7) + 16]	= 29 + 31 + 30	morae
9:7–8	3 balanced dyads + pivot:	[18 + 9] + 10 + [14 + 11]	= 27 + 10 + 25	morae
9:9–10	2 balanced dyads:	[13 + 15] + [14 + 12]	= 28 + 26	morae
9:11–12	2 balanced dyads:	[15 + 18] + [17 + 17]	= 33 + 34	morae
9:13–14	2balance dyads + pivot:	[18 + 13] + 7 + [16 + 14]	= 31 + 7 + 30	morae
9:15–16	balanced dyad + pivot:	[16 + 10 + 15]	= 16 + 10 + 15	morae
	balanced dyad:	[16 + 18]	= 16 + 18	morae
9:17–19	2 balanced dyads + pivot:	[14 + 15] + 8 + [16 + 15]	= 29 + 8 + 31	morae
9:20–21	2 balanced dyads:	[15 + 16] + [15 +(9 + 8)]	= 31 + 32	morae

- The first strophe (9:1–3) is a single part arranged in four subdivisions on the basis of word-count: 9:1, 2a, 2b and 3.
 - 8:7–9:1 **32** words and **17** words before *atnach*
 - 8:9–9:2 **26** words
 - 8:9–9:3 **32** words
- The second strophe (9:4–6) is a single part arranged in three subdivisions on the basis of word-count: 9:4, 5 and 6.
 - 8:9–9:4 **17** words after *atnach*
 - 8:9–9:5 **46** (= **23 x 2**) words
 - 9:1–6 **40 = 23 + 17** [compositional formula]

4. The third strophe (9:7–8) is a single part arranged in three subdivisions on the basis of word-count: 9:7b, 7c and 8.
 - 9:6–7 **17** words
 - 9:4–8 **17** words after *atnach*
 - 9:1–8 **23** words after *atnach*

5. The fourth strophe (9:9–10) is a single part arranged in two subdivisions on the basis of word-count: 9:9 and 10.
 - 9:1–9 **26** words after *atnach*
 - 9:4–10 **51** (= **17** x 3) words and **23** words after *atnach*

6. The fifth strophe (9:11–12), which is the middle, is a single part arranged in two subdivisions on the basis of word-count: 9:11 and 12.
 - 9:1–11 **78** (= **26** x 3) words and **34** (= **17** x 2) words after *atnach*
 - 9:1–12 **85** (= **17** x 5) words

7. The sixth strophe (9:13–14) is a single part arranged in three subdivisions on the basis of word-count: 9:13, 14a and 14bc.
 - 9:10–13 **32** words and **17** words before *atnach*
 - 9:13–14 **17** words

8. The seventh strophe (9:15–16) has two parts arranged in four subdivisions on the basis of word-count: 9:15a, 15b, 15c and 16.
 - 9:11–15 **17** words after *atnach*
 - 9:1–15 **46** (= **23** x 2) words after *atnach*
 - 9:12–16 **17** words after *atnach*
 - 9:1–16 **51** (= **17** x 3) words after *atnach*

9. The eighth strophe (9:17–19) has two parts arranged in four subdivisions on the basis of word-count: 9:17ab, 17c, 18 and 19.
 - 9:12–17 **52** (= **26** x 2) words
 - 9:1–17 **78** (= **26** x 3) words before *atnach*
 - 9:17–18 **17** words
 - 9:4–18 **119 = 68 + 51** [compositional formula—all 3 divisible by **17**]
 - 9:1–18 **138** (= **23** x 6) words
 - 9:17–19 **26** words
 - 9:15–19 **17** words after *atnach*

10. The ninth strophe (9:20–21) is a single part arranged in two subdivisions on the basis of word-count: 9:20 and 21.
 - 9:15–20 **32** words before *atnach*
 - 9:18–21 **34** (= **17** x 2) words
 - 9:12–21 **86 = 52 + 34** [compositional formula]
 - 9:1–21 **68** (= **17** x 4) words after *atnach*

Observations

1. It is possible to outline the nine strophes in Psalm 9:1–21 in a concentric structural pattern as follows:

A	Declaration: “I will sing the praise of your name”	ש	[5.4]	9:1–3
B	My enemies perish before you; their names are wiped out	ב	[4.8]	9:4–6
C	May YHWH’s throne be established forever	ה	[4.5]	9:7–8
D	YHWH will judge the world in righteousness	ו	[5.4]	9:9–10
X	Those who know your name, sing praise to YHWH	ז	[4.4]	9:11–12
D’	YHWH remembers the afflicted; be gracious to me	ח	[4.5]	9:13–14
C’	I rejoice in your deliverance as nations sink into the pit	ט	[5.4]	9:15–16
B’	YHWH executes judgment returning the wicked to Sheol	י	[8.4]	9:17–19
A’	Request: “Arise, O YHWH, let the nations be judged before you”	--	[4.5]	9:20–21

2. Terrien outlines Psalm 9 in two parallel structures, with five elements each and a central or “core” verse in the middle (*The Psalms* [2003], p. 139):

Celebration of Praises **9:2–11**

A	The psalmody of the name	ש	9:2–3
B	The throne of justice	ב	9:4–5
X	Effacing the names	ה ב	9:6–7
B’	Strengthening the throne	ו	9:8–9
A’	The knowing of the name	ו	9:10–11

The Mighty Deeds of Yahweh **9:12–21**

A	The proclamation of the Lord	ז	9:12–13
B	The gates of Sheol and Zion	ח	9:14–15
X	The judgment of the Lord	ט	9:16–17
B’	Death and hope	י	9:18–19
A’	The appeal of the Lord	--	9:20–21

3. There is something intriguing about the acrostic pattern, which encourages scholars (past and present) to change the text in order to restore a presumed original form in a more complete acrostic pattern. Thus for many years I assumed that I had successfully reconstructed the original poem in Nahum 1:1–10, the only example we have in the Tanakh other than Psalm 9 of an acrostic poem based on the first half of the Hebrew alphabet. See my articles “The Acrostic of Nahum Reconsidered,” *ZAW* 87 [1975], pp. 17–30; and “The Acrostic of Nahum Once Again: A Prosodic Analysis of Nahum 1,1–10,” *ZAW* 99 [1987], pp. 409–15. It was only gradually that I became aware of the fact that I had been focusing my attention on the literary source the poet was apparently using, and not on the completed composition as preserved in the received text, with all its subtlety. Bent acrostics are not to be restored to some presumed “original form” in the mind of modern interpreters. Psalms 9 and 10 are two individual poems, which together reflect an original acrostic “poetic source” that no doubt covered the entire alphabet (as with other alphabetical acrostics within the

Psalter). The interpretation of Psalms 9 and 10, however, must begin with the text we have in the Masoretic tradition, where they most certainly are **two separate psalms**, as the prosodic analysis here bears witness. It is easy to explain why these two psalms were combined in the Septuagint and even in some Hebrew manuscripts. Ancient scholars struggled with the same issues faced by modern scholars—and they resolved them in the same way. It is much more difficult, if not impossible, to explain how these two poems got separated into two separate psalms, if this is not the original intended form the composer of this text had in mind at the point of the numerical composition as we now have it.

Terrien assumes that the individual strophes in the prosodic structure of Psalm 9 (and 10) begin with successive letters in the acrostic pattern. He reaches the conclusion that “the strophic structure for the four parts [Psalms 9 and 10 combined] is quite amazingly symmetrical, with five elements each and a central or ‘core’ verse in the middle” (p. 139). Moreover, he says: “This strophic analysis respects the MT in every detail. Its form brings out a progressive movement of thought from the first to the fourth part. (1) The celebration of praises frames the disappearance of the enemies’ names within the symmetrical psalmody of the divine name and the double motif of the throne of justice. (2) The recital of Yahweh’s mighty deeds places in equilibrium the parallel notions of proclaiming, judgment, and appeal, while it opposes the gates of death to those of Zion on the one hand, as well as the death of the enemies and the hope of the oppressed on the other. (3) The enigma of the hidden God is exemplified by the impunity of the evildoer and by his concealment, the product of his arrogance, which in turn is inserted between blasphemy and the void. (4) The bold petition to God requires that he should arise, so that the evil-doer might be annihilated by justice, itself resting in God’s memory. This last consideration affirms his omniscience and makes inevitable his final intervention” (pp. 139–40).

Though Terrien is correct in his understanding of the “wheels within the wheels” in the concentric structure of Psalms 9 and 10, two things should have alerted him to the fact that his analysis is a step in the right direction, but not a final word on the subject. In the first place, both the ה-strophe in 9:7 and the ז-strophe in 9:19 are out of place so that the third and tenth strophes in his strophic analysis of Psalm 9 do not begin with the letter in question. In the second place, the acrostic pattern itself has been altered, as Terrien notes in passing: “Daleth is missing in Ps 9:5,6; Mem and Nun are reversed in Ps 10:3–6 as well as Ayin and Pe in vv. 7–9 (cf. Lam 3:46–51), while Samekh is absent” (p. 138). In short, the acrostic pattern has been “bent” to another purpose—and the strophic structure no longer matches the presumed original acrostic pattern, as shown in the logoprosodic analysis presented here. Note that in the second half of Psalm 9 four consecutive strophes have the acrostic letters at the beginning of the second part of the strophe rather than the first; and the final strophe (9:20–21) stands outside the acrostic pattern altogether.

4. The two occurrences of the word *Selah* in Ps 9:17 and 21 support our preliminary thesis that the word is essentially an emphatic note of some sort, calling attention in this instance to the significance of unusual achievements in the numerical composition at specific points in the text. Note in particular the use of *Selah* at the very end of this poem, much like the situation in Psalm 3. It makes little, if any, sense to talk about the word as indicating some sort of pause or break in the music in such circumstances. Note the **compositional formula** for Psalm 9:12–21.

$$86 = 52 (= 26 \times 2) + 34 (= 17 \times 2) = 43 \times 2 \{43 = 17 + 26\}$$

An achievement of this magnitude in the numerical composition of Psalm 9 is worth calling attention to—in the use of the word *Selah*. The composer has managed to include the two divine-name numbers in all three numbers of this **compositional formula**.

The situation in verse 17 is quite different—and much more impressive. Here the poet combines the word *selah* with another technical term, *higgāyôn*. Moreover, he sets the phrase itself off as an independent “colon” within the prosodic structure of the poem as indicated by the *ʾatnāh* before it. In poetic contexts the Hebrew root *hāgāh* often means to “muse” (so BDB, p. 211). In Psalm 49:4, we find the word *hāgūt* in the phrase “musing of my heart.” Modifying the word *selah* in the phrase *higgāyôn selāh* means something like—“take note of this, but this time it will require careful thought. Meditate on this!”

It is not the total word-count alone that the poet has in mind; for that is much too obvious. Nonetheless, in terms of total word-count we find significant numbers here:

9:1–17 **78** (= **26** x 3) words before *atnach*
 9:3–17 **68** (= **17** x 3) words before *atnach*
 9:4–17 **112** (= **14** x 8) words, where **14** is the numerical value of David’s name
 9:10–17 **68** (= **17** x 3) words
 9:12–17 **52** (= **26** x 2) words

All of these numbers are highlighted at this specific point in the text—namely at the conclusion of v 17 (and the following verse), which is marked by the words *higgāyôn selāh*. But the most remarkable numbers are found in a series of three **compositional formulas**, where the word-count is:

9:6–17 **98** = **58** + **40**
 9:11–18 **68** = **40** + **28**
 9:4–18 **119** = **68** + **51** {**119** = sum of the numbers one through seventeen}

The number **98** = **49** x 2 and the number **49** is special indeed. It is not only the square of the number **7**, but **49** = **17** + **32** = **26** + **23**. In short, this number includes both of the divine-name numbers and both of the *kabod*-numbers as well. The number **58** = **26** + **32**, which points to the “glory of YHWH.” And the number **40** = **17** + **23** = **26** + **14**; and, of course, the number **14** is the numerical value of David’s name. The poet underscores that fact by concluding the second of these formulas with a doubling of that number (**28** = **14** x 2). The third **compositional formula** on which the poet wants us to reflect appears in 9:4–18, namely: **119** = **68** + **51**. Note that the number **119** is also the triangular number **17** (i.e., the sum of the numbers one through seventeen). When the three numbers in this third **compositional formula** are divided by **17**, we find the primary building blocks for the numerical system as a whole: **7** = **4** + **3**. In short, the author is saying, in his own way: “Meditate on this! There’s much more here than you think.”

For an introduction to the subject of mathematics in antiquity, see “Mathematics, Algebra, and Geometry,” by Jens Høyrup in *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, vol. 4 (1992), pp. 602–612.

5. In terms of the 164 words in Psalm 9, the **arithmological center** falls between the words **צִיּוֹן הַגְּדֹר** (“Zion // declare”) in v 12, with 82 words on either side. The *Concentric Compositional Formula* is:

$$164 = 82 + 0 + 82 \quad [\text{word count—with heading}]$$

or: = 82 // 82 [word count with pivot in each half]

The **meaningful center** is found by adding three words on either side of the **arithmological center**, as follows:

לִיהוָה יֹשֵׁב צִיּוֹן To YHWH enthroned in Zion;

הַגִּידוּ בְעַמִּים עֲלֵי לִוְיָתָן Declare among the peoples his deeds.

In this instance, the *Concentric Compositional Formula* becomes:

164 = 79 + 6 + 79 [word count—with heading]
or: = **85 // 85** [word count with pivot in each half]
{**85 = 17 x 5**}

This 6-word statement presents the essence of the psalm as a whole: YHWH rules from Zion and his praise is to be proclaimed among the nations.

The **meaningful center** may be expanded by including eight words on either side of the **arithmological center**. In this instance, the *Concentric Compositional Formula* becomes:

164 = 74 + 16 + 74 [word count—with heading]
or: = 80 // 80 [word count with pivot in each half]
{80 = 2 x 40; and 40 = **17 + 23**}

6. Summary of the concentric compositional formulae:

164 = 79 + 6 + 79 or: **85 // 85** {**85 = 17 X 5**}

164 = 74 + 16 + 74 or: 80 // 80

{with others in between}

164 = 9 + 146 + 9 or: **153 // 153** {**153 = 17 x 9**}

164 = 5 + 154 + 5 or: 159 // 159

86 = 30 + **26** + 30 or: 56 // 56 SAS (syntactic accentual-stress) units
{86 = 43 x 2 and 43 = **17 + 26**}

46 = 17 + 12 + 17 or: 29 // 29 **briques** (primary SAS units)

7. In the prosodic structure of Psalm 9 as a whole, the basic building blocks in each poetic verset are the **briques** (primary SAS units). These sub-units are delineated by the Masoretes, who marked most of 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 carrot-like mark 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 carrot-like mark above the consonantal text, pointing to the left, used together with the accent *mêrəkâ* (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 *mêrəkâ* falls on the following word. This major divider is usually considered to be a stronger disjunctive accent than *atnach*.

In the prosodic analysis presented here, the presence of these three markers is indicated with a double slash (//). Psalm 9 has 46 **briques**, 45 of which are marked by: *soph pasuq* (21 times, at the end of each verse), *atnach* (20 times, in each verse except v. 1), and *ole weyored* (4 times, in vv. 7, 15, 17 and 21). The boundary of the one remaining **brique** is marked by *revia mugrash* (v. 5).

8. The prosodic structure of Psalm 9, in terms of its **briques** (primary SAS units), may be displayed as follows: [: represents *soph pasuq*; ^ represents *atnach*; † represents *ole weyored* and † indicates any other such boundary marker]:

- I A ¹ *lamnaṣṣēah ʿalmûṭ labbēn mizmôr laḏāwid :*
² *ʾôdeh yhw̄h bəkol libbî ^ ʾāsappərāh kol nipləʾôtêkâ :*
³ *ʾešməḥāh wəʾeʾelšāh bāk ^ ʾāzammərāh šimkâ ʿelyôn :*
- B ⁴ *bəšûb ʾôyəḥay ʾāḥôr ^ yikkāšəlû wəyōʾbədû mippānêkâ :*
⁵ *kî ʿāsîṭā mišpāṭî wəḏînî ^ yāšabtā ləkissē† šôpēt sēdeq :*
⁶ *gāʿartā gōyim ʾibbadtā rāšāʿ ^ šəmām māḥîṭā ləʿôlām wāʿed :*
- C ⁷ *hāʾôyəḇ tammû ḥārāḇôṭ lāneṣah † wəʿarîm nātaštā ^*
ʾāḇad zikrām hēmmāh :
⁸ *wa-yhw̄h ləʿôlām yēšēḇ ^ kônēn lammišpāṭ kisʾô :*
- II D ⁹ *wəḥûʾ yišpōṭ tēbel bəsedeq ^ yādîṅ ləʾummîm bəmêšārîm :*
¹⁰ *wîḥî yhw̄h mišgāḇ laddāk ^ mišgāḇ ləʿittôt baššārāh :*
- X ¹¹ *wəyibṭəḥû bəkā yôḏəʿé šəmekā ^ kî lôʾ ʿazabtā ḏōrəšêkâ yhw̄h :*
¹² *zammərû la-yhw̄h yōšēḇ sîyôn ^ haggîḏû bāʿammîm ʿālîlôtāyw :*
- D' ¹³ *kî ḏōrēš dāmîm ʾôtām zākār ^ lôʾ šākah ṣaʿaqat ʿānāwîm :*
¹⁴ *ḥānənēnî yhw̄h rəʾēh ʿonyî miššōnəʾāy ^ mərôməmî miššaʿrê māweṭ :*

- III C' ¹⁵ *l̄ma^can ʔāsappārāh kol t̄hillāt̄ēk̄ā[‡] b̄ša^cārē bat̄ š̄yôn[^]*
ʔāḡîlāh bîšû^cāteḡk̄ā :
- ¹⁶ *t̄āb̄ə^cû ḡōyim b̄šaḡat̄^cāsû[^] b̄areset̄ zû t̄āmānû nilkədāh raḡlām :*
- B' ¹⁷ *nōda^c yhw̄h mišp̄at̄^cāsāh[‡] b̄p̄ō^cal kappāyw nōqēs rāsā^c^ higgāyôn selāh :*
¹⁸ *yāšûḡû rēsā^cim liš^cōlāh[^] kol ḡōyim š̄əḡēḡē ʔēlōhîm :*
- ¹⁹ *kî lō^c lāneḡah yiššāḡah ʔebyôn[^] tiqwat̄ ʔānîyîm tō^cbad̄ lā^cad :*
- A' ²⁰ *qûmāh yhw̄h^c al yā^cōz ʔēnōš[^] yiššāp̄əḡû ḡōyim^c al pānēḡā :*
²¹ *š̄it̄āh yhw̄h mōrāh lāhem[‡] yēḡə^cû ḡōyim[^] ʔēnōš hēm̄māh selāh :*

9. The **arithmological center** of Psalm 9 falls between the words *š̄yôn haggîḡû* in v 12 (in the box), with a total of 82 words on either side. There are 86 SAS units, 46 *briques* (primary SAS units), 22 versets, 9 strophes and 3 cantos. The **arithmological center** is in the middle canto, the middle strophe, the middle two versets, the middle two *briques* and the middle two SAS units.

According to the analysis presented here, the 46 *briques* are distributed within nine “strophes” in Psalm 9 as follows: **46** = (5 + 7 + 5) + (4 + 4 + 4) + (5 + 7 + 5) = **17** + 12 + **17**; or 29 // 29 with pivot counted in each half.

10. Samuel Terrien finds 10 strophes in Psalm 9, arranged in two parts plus a Heading (v. 1) (*The Psalms: Strophic Structure and Theological Commentary* [Eerdmans, 2003], pp. 134–45). Pieter van der Lugt and Casper Labuschagne find 10 strophes arranged in 3 parallel subcantos. The analysis presented here, which is based on balance in mora-count and the concentric pattern in the distribution of SAS units, indicates that there are 9 strophes arranged in 3 cantos.

Christensen	Terrien	Van der Lugt / Labuschagne
I A 9:1–3	Heading 9:1	Heading 9:1
B 9:4–6	I A 9:2–3	I A 9:2–3
C 9:7–8	B 9:4–5	B 9:4–5
II D 9:9–10	C 9:6–7	C 9:6–7
X 9:11–12	D 9:8–9	II A 9:8–9
D 9:13–14	E 9:10–11	B 9:10–11
III C 9:15–16	II A 9:12–13	C 9:12–13
B 9:17–19	B 9:14–15	III A 9:14–15
A' 9:20–21	C 9:16–17	B 9:16–17
	D 9:18–19	C 9:18–19
	E 9:20–21	D 9:20–21

The difference in terms of strophic structure in our respective analyses results from the fact that the others fail to observe the symmetrical inverse structural pattern of Psalm 9 as a whole.

11. Note the following list of compositional numbers at the boundaries of the verses counting from the beginning of Psalm 9 1:1–22

9:1–5 **32** = words
 9:1–6 **40** = **23** + **17** words [compositional formula]
 9:1–8 **55** = **32** + **23** words [compositional formula]
 9:1–9 **26** words after *atnach*
 9:1–16 **69** (= **23** x 3) words
 9:1–11 **78** words and **34** (= **17** x 2) words after *atnach*
 9:1–12 **85** (= **17** x 5) words
 9:1–14 **102** (= **17** x 6) words
 9:1–15 **46** (= **23** x 2) words after *atnach*
 9:1–16 **120** = **69** + **51** words [compositional formula]
 9:1–17 **130** (= **26** x 5) words
 9:1–19 **85** (= **17** x 5) words before *atnach*
 9:1–21 **96** words before and **68**(= **17** x 4) words after *atnach*

It is not possible to use one of the four compositional numbers (**17**, **23**, **26** and **32**) until the end of the third verse, which leaves 18 boundaries with which to work. In 13 out of 18 of these boundaries (or 72.2% of the time) a multiple of one of the four compositional numbers is present.

12. Note that the divine name YHWH appears nine times in this the ninth psalm, and that the middle occurrence of this name appears in the same *brique* as the word *šîyôn* (“Zion”), the **arithmological center**.
13. Determining further details of the musical and literary structures of Psalm 8 as a whole calls for input on the part of others in the BIBAL Forum, as we consider the rhetorical features in greater depth and further information contained in the *te’amim* of this particular text.

I am keenly interested in the musical interpretation at two specific points:

- the first half of verse 6. My question is whether it is possible to read the first two words *tāḇā’û gōyîm* as an independent “colon” giving a “tricolon” in v 6, to balance the “tricolon” in v 17.
- verse 17. My question is how the words *higgāyôn selāh* are interpreted musically in this context. As far as I know, the word *selah* is not separated elsewhere by means of a disjunctive accent at all, let alone by one of the three major disjunctive accents.

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 Dr. D.L. Christensen Professor of Old Testament
 845 Bodega Way Language and Literature,
 Rodeo, California 94572 Graduate Theological Union (retired)
 +1 510 799 0858 Berkeley, California
 dlc @ bibal.net