

Psalm 80:1–20

Translation, Logoprosodic Analysis, and Observations

The Ravaged Vineyard: Prayer for Israel's Restoration Psalm 80:1–20

A. *Shepherd of Israel, Hear Our Prayer* (80:1–2) [3.4]

80:1 For the music director *El Shoshannim* // 11 1 3 3 0
an *Eduth* belonging to Asaph (and) a psalm // 12 1_ 3 0 3
79:13–80:1 17 12 5

80:2 **O Shepherd of Israel** / 9 1_ 2 2 0
79:7–80:2a 80 52 28

Give ear / (you) who guides Joseph like a flock (of sheep) // 16 2 4 4 0
(you) who are enthroned upon the cherubim /^a shine forth // 16 2 3 0 3
79:13–80:2 26 18 8

B. *Let Your Face Shine Forth That We May Be Saved* (80:3–4) [5.4]

80:3 Before Ephraim / and Benjamin and Manasseh / 18 2 4 4 0
rouse your /^a power // 13 2_ 3 3 0
79:11–80:3b 51 36 15

And come to save us // 17 1_ 3 0 3
79:7–80:3 97 63 34

80:4 **O God** /^a **restore us** // 12 2 2 2 0
and let your face shine forth / and we shall be saved // 18 2 3 0 3
79:12–80:4 50 32 18

C. *O YHWH of Hosts, How Long Will You be Angry with Your People?* (80:5–6) [3.3]

80:5 **O YHWH, God of hosts** // 14 1 3 3 0
how long will you be angry / 9 1_ 3 0 3
79:13–80:5b 47 30 17

With the prayer of your people // 6 1_ 2 0 2
80:3–5 23 12 11

80:6 You fed them ^a the bread of tears // 10 1 3 3 0
and you made them drink / tears by the keg // 15 2 3 0 3
80:2–6 38 21 17

D. We Are an Object of Scorn So Let Your Face Shine Forth on Us (80:7–8) [3.3]

80:7	You made us a jest ^a to our neighbors // and our enemies / they laugh among themselves //	18 1 <u>16 2</u>	3 3 0 <u>3 0 3</u>
		80:3–7	35 18 17

80:8	O God of hosts / ^a restore us // and let your face shine forth / and we shall be saved ^b //	18 1 <u>18 2</u>	3 3 0 <u>3 0 3</u>
		80:2–8	50 27 23

E. God Transplanted a Vine from Egypt That Filled the Land (80:9–12) [6.6]

80:9	A vine ^a from Egypt you transplanted // you expelled the <i>goyim</i> / and you planted it //	10 1 <u>16 2</u>	3 3 0 <u>3 0 3</u>
		80:3–9	47 24 23

80:10	You cleared the ground for it // and it took root /	12 1 <u>12 1</u>	2 2 0 <u>2 0 2</u>
		80:5–10a	36 17 19

	And it filled the land //	<u>8 1</u>	<u>2 0 2</u>
		80:3–10	53 26 27

80:11	The mountains were covered by its shadow // and its branches / are divine cedars //	11 1 <u>13 2</u>	3 3 0 <u>3 0 3</u>
		80:6–11	36 17 19

80:12	It sent out its boughs to the Sea // and to the River / its shoots //	12 1 <u>15 2</u>	4 4 0 <u>3 0 3</u>
		80:5–12	51 24 27

F. Why Have You Allowed the Vine to be Destroyed? (80:13–14) [3.3]

80:13	Why ^a have you broken down its enclosing walls // and they pluck (its grapes) /	16 1 <u>7 1</u>	3 3 0 <u>1 0 1</u>
		80:11–13b	17 10 7

	All who pass by the way //	<u>9 1</u>	<u>3 0 3</u>
		80:10–13	26 12 14

80:14	And a boar from the forest / roots it up // and beasts of the field / ^a feed on it //	14 2 <u>11 1</u>	3 3 0 <u>3 0 3</u>
		80:11–14	26 13 13

G. God of Hosts, Turn Again and Take Care of This Vine (80:15) [3.3]

80:15 O God of hosts / turn again now //	_14 2_	<u>4 4 0</u>	
	80:13-15a	17 10 7	
Look down from heaven / ^a	_8 1_	<u>2 2 0</u>	
	80:11-15b	32 19 13	
And see //	5 1	1 1 0	
and take care of / this vine //	<u>9 2</u>	<u>3 0 3</u>	
	80:13-15	23 13 10	

H. Extend Your Right Hand on the Son of Adam (80:16-18) [4.5]

80:16 And <establish> ^{a b} what you planted with your right hand //	18 1	4 4 0	
yea, in the matter of a son / you made strong for yourself //	_10 2_	<u>4 0 4</u>	
	80:13-16	31 17 14	
80:17 It is burned with fire (and) it is cut down //	_14 1_	<u>3 3 0</u>	
	80:14-17a	27 17 10	
At the rebuke of your countenance may they perish //	_14 1_	<u>3 0 3</u>	
	80:14-17	30 17 13	
80:18 Let your hand be / upon the man of your right hand //	15 2	5 5 0	
on the son of Adam / (whom) you made strong for yourself //	<u>12 2</u>	<u>5 0 5</u>	
	80:15-18	34 19 15	

I. Revive Us; Let Your Face Shine Forth That We May Be Saved (80:19-20) [4.3]

80:19 And we shall not depart from you //	10 1	3 3 0	
revive us / and we will invoke your name //	_14 2_	<u>3 0 3</u>	
	80:14-19	46 25 21	
80:20 O YHWH God of hosts / ^a	_14 1_	<u>3 3 0</u>	
	80:8-20a	87 46 41	
Restore us //	7 1	1 1 0	
let your face shine forth / and we shall be saved //	<u>17 2</u>	<u>3 0 3</u>	
	80:18-20	23 12 11	
	80:1-20	141 74 67	

Scansion in Accentual Stress Units: (3.4).(5.4) . (3.3).(3.3) . (6.6) . (3.3).(3.3) . (4.5).(4.3)
 (7+9) + (6+6) + 12 + (6+6) + (9+7) = 28 + 12 + 28 = **68**
 or: 40 // 40 [with pivot counted in each half]
{68 = 17 x 4 and 40 = 17 + 23}

Concentric Compositional Formula: 141 = 70 + 1 + 70 [word-count—with heading]
 or: 71 // 71 [with pivot counted in both halves]

Notes:

- 80:2^a Reading the sequence of *ṭarḥā* followed by *munaḥ* before *silluq* in BHS as disjunctive.
- 80:3^a Reading *mêrakâ* preceded immediately by *gaʿyā* (= *meteg*) with *maqqeph* in Letteris as disjunctive. BHS omits the *gaʿyā* (= *meteg*).
- 80:4^a Reading *mêrakâ* here in BHS is disjunctive.
- 80:6^a Reading *dəḥî* here in BHS is conjunctive.
- 80:7^a Reading *dəḥî* here in BHS is conjunctive.
- 86:8^a Reading the sequence of two successive occurrences of *munaḥ* here in BHS as disjunctive.
- 86:8^b LXX has the word *Selah* at the end of this verse, which Labuschagne interprets as a marker to delineate a major prosodic boundary. This is an interesting observation in light of the fact that the logoprosodic analysis also indicates a boundary here between the second strophe and the middle strophe of Psalm 86. It is not yet clear, however, if the translators of the LXX understood what this term meant so far as the numerical composition of the Psalm is concerned, nor how accurately they preserved the term. In some instances they appear to have introduced the word incorrectly along the lines of later (including contemporary) usage in Jewish liturgical works.
- 80:9^a Reading *dəḥî* here in BHS is conjunctive.
- 80:13^a Reading *dəḥî* here in BHS is conjunctive.
- 80:14^a Reading the sequence of *ṭarḥā* followed by *munaḥ* before *silluq* in BHS as disjunctive.
- 80:15^a Reading the sequence of two successive occurrences of *munaḥ* here in BHS as disjunctive.
- 80:16^a Reading *wəḵônənnāh* (“and establish it”) in place of *wəḵannāh* (“shoot [of vine]”) in MT with LXX (see BHS note) to achieve balance in terms of mora-count.
- 80:16^b Reading the *munaḥ* preceded immediately by *gaʿyā* (= *meteg*) with *maqqeph* in Ginsburg and Letteris as disjunctive. BHS omits the *gaʿyā* (= *meteg*).
- 80:20^a Reading the sequence of two successive occurrences of *munaḥ* here in BHS as disjunctive.

Summary of the Logoprosodic Analysis

1. Psalm 80 has nine strophes: 80:1–2, 3–4, 5–6, 7–8, 9–12, 13–14, 15, 16–18 and 19–20.

A 80:1–2	balanced triad & dyad:	[11 + 12 + 9] + [16 + 16]	= 32 + 32	morae
B 80:3–4	2 balanced dyads + pivot:	[18 + 13] + 17 + [12 + 18]	= 31 + 17 + 30	morae
C 80:5–6	2 balanced dyads:	[9 + 15] + [10 + 15]	= 24 + 25	morae
D 80:7–8	2 balanced dyads:	[18 + 16] + [18 + 18]	= 34 + 36	morae

X 80:9–12	2 quatrains + pivot:	[10+16]+[12+12]+8+[11+13]+[12+15]	= 50 + 8 + 51	morae
-----------	----------------------	-----------------------------------	---------------	-------

D' 80:13–14	2 balanced dyads + pivot:	[16 + 7] + 9 + [14 + 11]	= 23 + 9 + 25	morae
C' 80:15	balanced dyad + pivot:	[14 + 8 + 14]	= 14 + 8 + 14	morae
B' 80:16–18	2 balanced triads:	[18 + 10 + 14] + [14 + 15 + 12]	= 42 + 41	morae
A' 80:19–20	2 balanced dyads + pivot:	[10 + 14] + 14 + [7 + 17]	= 24 + 14 + 24	morae

2. The first strophe (80:1–2) is a single part arranged in three subdivisions on the basis of word-count: 80:1, 2a and 2bc.

- 79:13–80:1 **17** words
 - 79:13–80:2 **26** words
3. The second strophe (80:3–4) is a single part arranged in three subdivisions on the basis of word-count: 80:3ab, 3c and 4.
 - 79:7–80:3 **34** (= **17** x 2) words after *atnach*
 - 79:12–80:4 **32** words before *atnach*
 4. The third strophe (80:5–6) is a single part arranged in two subdivisions on the basis of word-count: 80:5 and 6.
 - 80:2–5 **32** (= 2x2x2x2x2) words
 - 80:3–6 **23** words
 - 80:2–6 **17** words after *atnach*
 5. The fourth strophe (80:7–8) is a single part arranged in three subdivisions on the basis of word-count: 80:5, 6, 7 and 8.
 - 80:3–7 **34 = 17 + 17** [compositional formula]
 - 80:1–7 **23** words after *atnach*
 - 80:4–8 **17** words after *atnach*
 - 80:2–8 **26** words and **23** words after *atnach*
 - 80:1–8 **26** words after *atnach*
 6. The fifth strophe (80:9–12), the structural center of Psalm 80, is a single part arranged in five subdivisions on the basis of word-count: 80:9, 10a, 10b, 11 and 12.
 - 80:5–9 **17** words after *atnach*
 - 80:3–9 **46 = 23 + 23** [compositional formula]
 - 80:1–10 **34** (= **17** x 2) words before *atnach*
 - 80:6–11 **17** words before *atnach*
 - 80:5–12 **23** words before *atnach*
 7. The sixth strophe (80:13–14) is a single part arranged in three subdivisions on the basis of word-count: 80:13ab, 13c and 14.
 - 80:10–13 **26** words
 - 80:9–13 **32** (= 2x2x2x2x2) words and **17** words after *atnach*
 - 80:7–13 **23** words after *atnach*
 - 80:6–13 **26** words after *atnach*
 - 80:11–14 **26 = 13 + 13** [compositional formula]
 - 80:10–14 **32** (= 2x2x2x2x2) words
 - 80:8–14 **23** words after *atnach*
 8. The seventh strophe (80:15) is a single part arranged in three subdivisions on the basis of word-count: 80:15a, 15b and 15cd.
 - 80:13–15 **23** words
 - 80:9–15 **23** words after *atnach*

- 80:8–15 **26** words after *atnach*
 - 80:6–15 **34** (= **17** x 2) words before and **32** words after *atnach*
9. The eighth strophe (80:16–18) is a single part arranged in four subdivisions on the basis of word-count: 80:16, 17a, 17b and 18.
- 80:13–16 **17** words before *atnach*
 - 80:12–16 **17** words after *atnach*
 - 80:10–16 **26** words before *atnach*
 - 80:14–17 **17** words before *atnach*
 - 80:13–17 **17** words after *atnach*
 - 80:11–17 **23** words after *atnach*
 - 80:15–18 **34** (= **17** x 2) words
 - 80:11–18 **32** (= 2x2x2x2x2) words before *atnach*
 - 80:10–18 **34** (= **17** x 2) words before and **32** words after *atnach*
10. The ninth strophe (80:19–20) is a single part arranged in three subdivisions on the basis of word-count: 80:19, 20a and 20bc.
- 80:14–19 **46** (= **23** x 2) words
 - 80:12–19 **32** (= 2x2x2x2x2) words before *atnach*
 - 80:18–20 **23** words
 - 80:13–20 **32** (= 2x2x2x2x2) words before *atnach*
 - 80:11–20 **34** (= **17** x 2) words after *atnach*
 - 80:9–20 **85** (= **17** x 5) words

Observations

1. The nine strophes of Psalm 80 may be outlined in a menorah pattern, which is determined primarily on prosodic grounds, as follows:

The Ravaged Vineyard: Prayer for Israel's Restoration (Psalm 80:1–20)

A	Shepherd of Israel, let your face shine forth that we may be saved	[7.9]	80:1–4
B	O YHWH of hosts, how long will you be angry with your people?	[3.3]	80:5–6
C	We are an object of scorn; let your face shine forth on us	[3.3]	80:7–8
X	God transplanted a vine from Egypt that filled the land	[6.6]	80:9–12
C'	Why have you allowed the vine to be destroyed?	[3.3]	80:13–14
B'	O God of hosts, turn again and take care of this vine	[3.3]	80:15
A'	Extend your hand; let your face shine forth that we may be saved	[9.7]	80:16–20

2. In terms of the 141 words, the **arithmological center** of Psalm 80 falls on the word צֶלֶה ("its shadow") in the middle of 80:11, with 70 words on either side. The initial *Concentric Compositional Formula* is:

$$141 = 70 + 1 + 70 \quad \text{[word count—with heading]}$$

$$\text{or: } 71 // 71 \quad \text{[with pivot counted in each half]}$$

The **meaningful center** is found by including two words on either side of the **arithmological center** as follows:

- 11 **צלה** כסו הרים The mountains were covered with its shadow;
 וענפיה ארזי And its branches are cedars.

In this instance the *Concentric Compositional Formula* becomes:

$$141 = 67 + 5 + 67 \quad \text{[word count—with heading]}$$

$$\text{or: } 72 // 72 \quad \text{[with pivot counted in each half]}$$

The **meaningful center** may be expanded by including 14 words on either side of the **arithmological center** as follows:

- 9 גפן ממצרים תסיע A vine from Egypt you transplanted
 תגרש גוים ותטעה You expelled the *goyim* and you planted it
- 10 פנית לפנייה You cleared the ground for it;
 ותשרש שרשיה ותמלא ארץ And it took root and it filled the land.
- 11 **צלה** כסו הרים The mountains were covered with its shadow;
 וענפיה ארזי אל And its branches are divine cedars.
- 12 תשלח קצירה ער ים It sent out its boughs to the Sea;
 ואל־נהר יונקותיה And to the River its shoots
 למה פרצת גדריה Why have you broken down its enclosing walls
 ואררה And they pluck (its grapes).

In this instance the *Concentric Compositional Formula* becomes:

$$141 = 56 + 29 + 56 \quad \text{[word count—with heading]}$$

$$\text{or: } 85 // 85 \quad \text{[with pivot counted in each half]}$$

It should be noted that there are exactly **119** (= **17 x 7**) letters in this **meaningful center** (see Observation 13 below). Labuschagne has reconstructed a plausible earlier version of Psalm 80 on the basis of his method of logotechnical analysis. But the text he proposes is not the text we have, nor is it the text at the point of the numerical composition of the canonical collection of Psalms as we now have them in the Psalter.

3. Summary of the concentric compositional formulae:

$$141 = 68 + 5 + 68 \quad \text{or: } 73 // 73$$

$$141 = 56 + 29 + 56 \quad \text{or: } 85 // 85 \quad \{85 = 17 \times 5\}$$

{with others in between}

$$141 = 15 + 111 + 15 \quad \text{or: } 126 // 126$$

$$141 = 6 + 129 + 6 \quad \text{or: } 135 // 135$$

$$141 = 3 + 135 + 3 \quad \text{or: } 138 // 138 \quad \{138 = 23 \times 6\}$$

68 = 28 + 12 + 28 or: 40 // 40 SAS (syntactic accentual-stress) units
 {68 = 17 x 4 and 40 = 17 + 23} {This is Psalm 80 = 40 x 2}

44 = 18 + 8 + 18 or: 26 // 26 *briques* (primary SAS units)

4. In the prosodic structure of Psalm 80, 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 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 80 has 44 *briques*, 41 of which are marked by the above three markers: *soph pasuq* (20 times, at the end of each verse), *atnach* (20 times, in each verse), and *ole weyored* (once, in v. 15). The remaining three boundaries are marked by: *rəḥîa* (v. 3) and *rəḥîa muğraš* (2 times, in vv. 5 and 18).

5. The details in the prosodic structure of Psalm 80 may be displayed as follows [^ represents *atnach*; : represents *soph pasuq*; † represents *ole weyored*, and † represents all other accent markers]:

- I A ¹ *lamnašēaḥ ʾel šōšannîm ^* *ʿēḏûṭ ləʾāsāp mizmôr :*
² *rōʿeh yiśrāʾel haʾāzînāh nōhēg kaššōʾn yôseḗp ^*
yôšēḅ hakkərûḅîm hōpîʿāh :
- B ³ *lipnē ʾeḗprayim ûḅinyāmin ûmənāššeh †* *ʿôrərāh ʾet gəḅûrāṭekā ^*
ûləkāh lîšûʿātāh lānû :
⁴ *ʾelōhîm ḥāšîbēnû ^* *wəhāʾēr pānēkā wəniwwāšēʿāh :*
- II C ⁵ *yhwḥ ʾelōhîm šəḅāʾôṭ ^* *ʿaḏ māṭay ʿāšantā †* *biṭṭillaṭ ʿammekā :*
⁶ *heʾēkaltām leḥem dimʿāh ^* *wattašqēmô biḏmāʿôṭ šālîš :*

D 7 *təšimēnū māḏōn lišḵēnēnū* ^ *wəʔyəḅēnū yilʿāḡū lāmō* :
 8 *ʔelōhīm šəḅāʔōt ḥššībēnū* ^ *wəḥāʔēr pānēḵā wəniwwāšēʿāh* :

III X	9 <i>geḅen mimmišrayim tassīa</i> ^	<i>təḡārēš ḡōyīm wattittāʿehā</i> :
	10 <i>pimmîṭā ləpānēhā</i> ^	<i>wattašrēš šārāšēhā wattəmallēʔ ʔāreš</i> :
	11 <i>kāssû hārîm</i> šillāh ^	<i>waʿānāpēhā ʔarzê ʔēl</i> :
	12 <i>təšallah qəšîrehā ʿad yām</i> ^	<i>wəʔel nāḥār yônəqôṭēhā</i> :

IV D' 13 *lāmmāh pāraštā ḡəḏērēhā* ^ *wəʔārûhā kol ʿōḅərəḏ dāreḵ* :
 14 *yəḵarsəmənnāh ḥāzîr miyyāʿar* ^ *wəzîz sādāy yirʿennāh* :

C' 15 *ʔelōhīm šəḅāʔōt šûḅ nāʔ* † *habbēt miššāmayim ûrʿeh* ^
ûpəqōḏ geḅen zōʔt :
 16 *wəḵannāh ʔāšer nāṭəʿāh yəmîneḵā* ^ *wəʿal bēn ʔimmaštāh lāḵ* :

V B' 17 *šərupāh ḅāʔēš kəsûḥāh* ^ *miggaʿaraṭ pānēḵā yōʔḅēḏû* :
 18 *təḥî yādəḵā ʿal ʔiš ymîneḵā* ^ *ʿal ben ʔādām* † *ʔimmaḥtā lāḵ* :

A' 19 *wəlōʔ nāsôḡ mimmeḵā* ^ *təḥayyēnū ûḅəšimḵā niqrāʔ* :
 20 *yḥwh ʔelōhīm šəḅāʔōt ḥššībēnū* ^ *ḥāʔēr pānēḵā wəniwwāšēʿāh* :

6. The 44 **briques** (primary SAS units) are distributed in nine strophes in Psalm 80 as follows: 44 = (4 + 5) + (5 + 4) + 8 + (4 + 5) + (5 + 4) = 18 + 8 + 18. The **concentric compositional formula** (on the basis of primary SAS units) is **26 // 26**, with the central pivot (vv. 9–12) included in each half.

The **arithmological center** falls on the word šillāh (“its shadow”) in 80:11, with a total of 70 words on either side. Psalm 80 has 68 SAS units, 44 **briques**, 20 versets, 9 strophes and 5 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.

7. Terrien finds five strophes in Psalm 80, which are in fact “cantos” (*The Psalms: Strophic Structure and Theological Commentary* [Eerdmans, 2003], pp. 575–81). Van der Lugt and Labuschagne find 10 strophes; and Fokkelman has 9 strophes. The analysis presented here, which is based on the balance in mora-count and the concentric pattern in the distribution of SAS units, indicates that there are 9 strophes arranged concentrically in five cantos (80:1–4, 5–8, 9–12, 13–15 and 16–20).

Christensen	Terrien	Van der Lugt/Labuschagne
I A 80:1–2	Heading (v. 1)	Heading (v. 1)
B 80:3–4	I 80:2–4	I 1 80:2–3a
		2 80:3b–4
II C 80:5–6	II 80:5–8	3 80:5–6
D 80:7–8		4 80:7–8
III <u>X 80:9–12</u>	III 80:9–12	II 5 80:9–10
		6 80:11–12
IV D' 80:13–14	IV 80:13–15	7 80:13–14
C' 80:15		8 80:15–16a
V B' 80:16–18	V 80:16–20	III 9 80:17–18
A' 80:19–20		10 80:19–20

8. BHS has an instance of a suspended *ʿayin* in 80:14a (in the third word), with a Masoretic marginal note. Ginsburg also has an enlarged letter *kaph* in 80:16a (in the first word). Labuschagne suggests that the “elevated” *ʿayin* in 80:14a denotes the middle letter of the Psalter (see his file of Psalm 80, page 4). On this matter, he cites Emmanuel Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* (Fortress Press: Minneapolis), p. 57. Preliminary study of letter-count in the Book of the Twelve suggests that the data on the issue of letter-count is more accurately preserved than that of the word-count, because the letter-count appears to be adjusted to put various combinations of the divine-name numbers back into an already corrupted textual tradition in terms of word-count (see my file on Zephaniah 3:14–20 [Observation 8]). This adjustment in the letter-count appears to have been done in the Talmudic era. My guess is that the center of the Psalter in terms of letter-count includes all the headings and the 71 (or more, depending on the validity of LXX evidence) occurrences of *Selah* in 39 Psalms. It would be interesting to know how close that center in Codex L comes to the letter in question in 80:14a (and 80:16a).
9. Terrien’s proposed transposition of v. 17, placing it between vv. 14 and 15, is not necessary, nor is there any reason to conclude with him that Psalm 80 contains “compositional errors or manipulation” [*Psalms* (2003), p. 577]. There is no reason to make any textual emendation at all in Psalm 80, so far as the number of words is concerned; nor is there any compelling reason to relocate or remove any part of it. The concentric arrangement presented here of nine carefully constructed strophes in five cantos is plausible and in line with the prosodic structure of other psalms studied by logoprosodic analysis.

Labuschagne deletes the name “Benjamin” in 80:3a as a secondary addition to the text. The omission of the word, however, is easier to explain than is its addition as a secondary gloss. The principle of *lectio difficilior* (preferring the more difficult reading to explain as the more probable original reading) suggests the retention of the MT as it stands. The balance in terms of mora-count with the word Benjamin included is: 31 + 17 + 30 mora, which is a typical example of two balanced dyads connected with a pivot (or monocolon). Without the word Benjamin we have:

$$(11 + 13) + 17 + (12 + 18) = 24 + 17 + 30 \text{ mora-count}$$

This unbalanced situation could be corrected by scanning the text as a balanced dyad followed by a balanced dyad plus a pivot, as follows:

(11 + 13)	Before Ephraim and Manasseh / rouse your power
(17 + 12 + 17)	And come to save us / O God restore us /
	and let your face shine forth and we shall be saved.

This is possible but unlikely in terms of the musical reading of the *te'amim* in this verse, and the reading of the omitted word "Benjamin" in particular. We need John Wheeler's input here to understand the function of the *tsinnorit* followed by *mehuppak* on the word Benjamin within its immediate context.

10. Labuschagne has chosen to remove four words in v. 16b, along with Van der Lugt and Fokkelman, as "an instance of dittography." I was inclined to do the same at an earlier point in my own study. But there is no easy way to see the four words in question as a dittography in this context. The problem is an a priori assumption on our part that we know the nature of the prosodic balance within the strophic structure at the outset in terms of the regular and predictable flow of similar elements (bicola and/or tricola). Terrien resorts to even more radical alteration of the text here to show his assumed regular sequence of bicola by transposing verse 17 to appear before verse 14, which illustrates the problem rather well. The text as it stands in the MT scans almost perfectly without any such changes. The addition of the clause "and on the son you made strong for yourself" in v. 16b is difficult to explain as a secondary gloss (or dittography), and it is needed to achieve balance in the two pairs of balanced dyads in verses 16 and 17 (see my translation and the logoprosodic analysis above).

The removal of four words in 80:16b as a "dittography" from 80:18b is unlikely. Psalm 80 contains other repetitions, which are certainly not to be removed as "dittography"—i.e., the clause "and let your face shine forth and we shall be saved" appears three times: 80:4b, 8b and 20b. The clause in question in 80:16b functions as an inclusion in the eighth strophe (80:16–20) with the similar, but not identical, half-line in 80:18b. Whether or not it was present in some earlier edition of this psalm can neither be proved nor disproved.

11. The current dispute in matters of terminology to describe the formation of the Psalms remains a problem to be resolved. Labuschagne claims that the "five poetic building blocks" are: cola, verselines, strophes, canticles and cantos. None of these terms are adequately defined; and the listing of them displays the skewing of the picture in the direction of macro-analysis. To this point in time, neither Labuschagne nor Van der Lugt deal responsibly with the smaller foundational building blocks in the formation of Hebrew poetry, as reflected in the system of the *te'amim* (the so-called "accentual system") of the Masoretic Text, which apparently reflects the original musical phrasing of the Psalms. The foundational building block of Hebrew poetry is the individual "word," as reflected in the two primary terms already adopted in the Word Count Project: "logotechnical" (Labuschagne) and "logoprosodic" (Christensen). But these words are made up of smaller "building blocks" so far as so-called "metrical" matters are concerned (i.e., systems of scansion), namely: syllables, and their subdivision into *morae*.

The term strophe itself is in dispute. Terrien includes the word "strophe" in the title of his book, but he does not mean by this term what Labuschagne and Van der Lugt mean. His delineation of five "strophes" in Psalm 80 corresponds to the "cantos" in the logoprosodic analysis presented here. A primary concern in the method of logoprosodic analysis is to integrate all of these "building blocks" into one system. The hierarchy of "building blocks" appears to be:

morae
 syllables
 words
 SAS (syntactic accentual stress) units
briques—primary SAS units [similar but not identical to “cola”]
 versets [similar but not identical to “verselines”]
 strophes
 cantos

It is not yet clear if we need more than one category to distinguish between suggested poetic “building blocks” larger than the strophe—or whether the syllable, as such, needs to be included in this list of primary “building blocks” in the study of Hebrew poetry, as it is in the study of classical Greek prosody in John Bremer’s methodology.

12. In order to obtain a total of 130 words in Psalm 80, Labuschagne has removed a total of eleven words out of the 141 words in the Masoretic Text, or almost 8% of Psalm 80 as it stands in Codex L (BHS). It is no wonder that he cannot find a **meaningful center** on the basis of word-count. The **meaningful center** in terms of word-count, as presented here, is in full agreement with that identified by Labuschagne on other grounds—and it falls precisely in the center of Psalm 80, whether one considers words, syntactic SAS (accentual stress units), *briques* (or cola), versets (or verselines), strophes, canticles and/or cantos. I am still in the process of defining the strophe and the canto in my own system of logoprosodic analysis. I am certainly open to including the term canticle as well, if it is needed—or in using that term in place of the word “canto” as I have been using that word to this point in time—or in coming up with a new term altogether so as to avoid confusion.

13. The fact that many significant compositional numbers in terms of multiples of the four numbers **17**, **23**, **26** and **32** were found with and without the removal of a word on my part in Psalm 80—together with the fact that when Labuschagne removes 11 words, the two of us end up with almost identical **meaningful centers**—should remind us that we are a long way from proving very much yet in terms of the numerical composition of the Psalms, or even describing with any certainty the things we are beginning to see. It might be a good idea to avoid such claims as “there is no doubt at all that the text of the poem has purposely been so organized” (Labuschagne, p. 5). After making this statement, Labuschagne tries to confirm what he believes by noting that there are exactly **102** (= **17** x 6) letters in the entire pivotal “meaningful center” he has identified. At the same time, the 29-word meaningful center found on the basis of word-count in Psalm 80 in this report has exactly **119** (**17** x 7) letters. With this line of reasoning, *obviously* both of these different “meaningful centers” are “not a matter of coincidence, but consciously so designed.” Though in one sense, this may yet actually prove to be the case, we need to remember that the fact that the crucial keyword **יָבֵן** (“vine”) has the numerical value of **102** proves nothing at all about the precise delineation of the **meaningful center** of Psalm 80. In like manner, we should be careful in making assertions that those who composed the Asaphite Psalms established some kind of “compositional technique” for “all Asaphite psalms” such that “the meaningful center ... is not found on word level, but in terms of the poetical structure” (Labuschagne, p. 1). As far as I can tell at this point in time, every single one of the Asaphite Psalms, and apparently all of the other psalms in the entire Psalter as well, have meaningful centers determined on the basis of word-count.

14. Determining the details of the musical and literary structures of Psalm 80 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.

15. Bibliography

- Auffret, P. *Voyez de vos yeux ...* VTSup 48 (Leiden, 1993) 247–61.
- Beyerlin, W. "Schichten im 80. Psalm." In *Das Wort und die Wörter*, FS Gerhard Friedrich (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1973) 9–24.
- Eissfeldt, O. "Psalm 80." In *Geschichte und Altes Testament*, FS Albrecht Alt. BHT 16 (Tübingen: Mohr, 1953) 75–78 [= *Kleine Schriften* III (1966) 221–32].
- Gelston, A. "A Sidelight on 'The Son of Man.'" *SJT* 22 (1969) 189–96.
- Heinemann, H. "The Date of Psalm 80." *JQR* 40 (1949–50) 297–302.
- Hill, D. "'Son of Man' in Psalm 80 v. 17." *NovT* 15 (1973) 261–69.
- Johnson, A. R. *CPIP* 136–50.
- Mettinger, T. N. D. *The Dethronement of Sabaoth*, tr. F. H. Cryer. ConB, OT 18 (Lund: CWK Gleerup, 1981).
- _____. *In Search of God: The Meaning and Message of the Everlasting Names*, tr. F. A. Cryer (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988).
- _____. "YHWH Sabaoth—The Heavenly King on the Cherubim Throne." In *Studies in the Period of David and Solomon and Other Essays*, ed. T. Ishida (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1982) 109–38.
- Nasuti, H. P. *Tradition History and the Psalms of Asaph* (Atlanta, 1988) 97–102.
- Raabe, P. R. *Psalm Structures: A Study of Psalms with Refrains*. JSOTSup 104 (Sheffield, 1990) 200–203.
- Schreiner, J. "Hirte Israels, stele uns wieder her! Auslegung von Psalm 80." *BibLeb* 10 (1969) 95–111.
- Thomas, D. W. "The Meaning of יָיָא in Psalm LXXX.13." *ExpTim* 76 (1965) 385.
- Thordarson, T. K. "The Metric Dimension: Hermeneutical Remarks on the Language of the Psalter." *VT* 24 (1974) 218–19.
- Tromp, N. J. "Psalm LXXX: Form of Expression and Form of Contents." In *New Avenues in the Study of the Old Testament*, FS M. J. Mulder (Leiden, 1989).
- Victor, P. "On Psalm LXXX, 13." *ExpTim* 76 (1964–65) 294.
- Wagner, H. "Der Menschensohn des 80. Psalms." *JQR* 40 (1940–50) 297–302.

© 2005
Dr. D.L. Christensen Professor of Old Testament
845 Bodega Way Languages and Literature,
Rodeo, California 94572 Graduate Theological Union (retired)
+1 510 799 0858 Berkeley, California
dlc @ bibal.net