

# Psalm 104:1–35

## Translation, Logoprosodic Analysis, and Observations

### YHWH as Lord of the Wonders of Creation

### Psalm 104:1–35

#### A. *YHWH Is Clothed with Honor and Majesty* (104:1)

[3.3]

104:1	Bless YHWH / O my soul //	13	2	4	4	0
	O YHWH my God /	<u>8</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>
		103:22–104:1b		17	13	3
	You are exceedingly great //	8	1	2	2	0
	with honor and majesty / you are clothed //	<u>13</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>3</u>
		103:20–104:1		39	26	13

#### B. *Wrapped in Light as a Garment He Rides the Clouds as a Chariot* (104:2–3)

[4.5]

104:2	He wraps himself with light / as a garment //	9	2	3	3	0
	he spreads out (the) heavens / as a tent //	<u>13</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>3</u>
		104:1–2		17	11	6
104:3	He lays beams in the waters / as his chambers //	<u>13</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>
		103:20–104:3a		48	32	16
	He orders the clouds as his chariot //	12	1	3	3	0
	he walks / on the wings of the wind //	<u>12</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>4</u>
		104:1–3		27	17	10

#### C. *He Sets the Earth on Its Foundations so that It Cannot be Moved* (104:4–5)

[4.4]

104:4	He makes as his messengers / the winds //	12	2	3	3	0
	his ministers / are as flaming fire //	<u>12</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>3</u>
		103:22–104:4		44	27	17
104:5	He has set the earth / upon its foundations //	13	2	4	4	0
	so that it will not be moved / ever and ever //	<u>11</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>4</u>
		104:1–5		41	24	17

#### D. *The Waters Below and Above Fled at the Thunder of Your Rebuke* (104:6–7)

[4.4]

104:6	The Deep covered it / as a vestment //	12	2	3	3	0
	above the mountains / the waters stood //	<u>12</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>4</u>
		103:22–104:6		59	34	25
104:7	At your rebuke / they fled //	11	2	3	3	0
	at the voice of your thunder / they hurried away //	<u>14</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>4</u>

**E. *The Mountains and Valleys were Formed with Set Boundaries*** (104:8–9) [4.4]

104:8	The mountains rose up / the valleys sank down //	18 2	4 4 0
	to the place / that you established for them //	<u>12 2</u>	<u>5 0 5</u>
		104:6–8	<b>23</b> 10 13
104:9	A boundary you set / <sup>a</sup> that they should not pass over //	13 2	4 4 0
	so that they would not return / to cover the earth //	<u>15 2</u>	<u>4 0 4</u>
		104:8–9	<b>17</b> 8 9

**F. *He Sent Springs to Water the Fields with Birds in the Sky*** (104:10–12a) [4.6]

104:10	He sends forth springs / in the wadis //	16 2	3 3 0
	between the mountains / they run along //	<u>12 2</u>	<u>3 0 3</u>
		104:8–10	<b>23</b> 11 12
104:11	They give drink / to every beast of the field //	<u>12 2</u>	<u>4 4 0</u>
		104:7–11a	<b>34</b> 18 16
	Wild asses quench / <sup>a</sup> their thirst //	<u>14 2</u>	<u>3 0 3</u>
		104:6–11	<b>44</b> 21 <b>23</b>
104:12	Above them / birds of the sky dwell //	<u>14 2</u>	<u>4 4 0</u>
		104:10–12a	<b>17</b> 11 6

**G. *Birds Give Their Voices and He Satisfies the Earth with Water*** (104:12b–13) [2.4]

	Among the branches / they give their voices //	<u>14 2</u>	<u>4 0 4</u>
		104:7–12	<b>45</b> 22 <b>23</b>
104:13	He waters the mountains / from his upper chambers //	<u>15 2</u>	<u>3 3 0</u>
		104:9–13a	<b>32</b> 18 14
	From the fruit of your works / the earth is satisfied //	<u>16 2</u>	<u>4 0 4</u>
		104:8–13	<b>45</b> 22 <b>23</b>

**H. *He Makes Grass Grow and Brings Forth Food from the Earth*** (104:14–15a) [4.4]

104:14	He makes grass grow / for the cattle /	<u>14 2</u>	<u>3 3 0</u>
		104:10–14a	<b>31</b> 17 14
	And herbs / for the service of humans //	<u>15 2</u>	<u>3 3 0</u>
		104:11–14b	<b>28</b> 17 11
	He brings forth food / from the earth //	<u>13 2</u>	<u>4 0 4</u>

	104:13–14		<b>17</b>	9	8
104:15	And wine / makes glad the human heart /	<u>11 2</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>
		104:12–15a	<b>29</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>12</b>

**I. He Gives Oil and Bread to Humans and Trees Drink Their Fill (104:15b–16) [4.4]**

	With oil / <sup>a</sup> to make their faces shine //	12 2	3	3	0
	and bread / to sustain the human heart //	<u>11 2</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>4</u>
		104:9–15	<b>57</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>26</b>

104:16	The trees of YHWH / are sated //	11 2	3	3	0
	the cedars of Lebanon / that he planted //	<u>14 2</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>4</u>
		104:12–16	<b>43</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>20</b>

**J. Trees and Height Provide Refuge and the Moon Shows Seasons (104:17–19) [4.3.4]**

104:17	Where there / the birds make their nests //	<u>14 2</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>
		104:14–17a	<b>32</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>12</b>

	As for the stork / the fir trees are her house //	<u>14 2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>3</u>
		104:12–17	<b>50</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>23</b>

104:18	<span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">Mountain</span> heights <sup>a</sup> are for the wild goats //	16 1	3	3	0
	rocky cliffs / are a refuge for conies //	<u>11 2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>3</u>
		104:15–18	<b>31</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>14</b>

104:19	He made the moon / to mark the seasons //	15 2	3	3	0
	the sun / knows when to set //	<u>10 2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>3</u>
		104:16–19	<b>26</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>13</b>

**K. You Bring Night When Young Lions Prowl after Their Prey (104:20–21) [4.4]**

104:20	You bring darkness / <sup>a</sup> and it becomes night //	14 2	4	4	0
	in which all the beasts of the forest / prowl about //	<u>12 2</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>5</u>
		104:16–20	<b>35</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>

104:21	The young lions / roar after their prey //	15 2	3	3	0
	seeking from God / <sup>a</sup> their food //	<u>13 2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>3</u>
		104:17–21	<b>34</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>

**L. With Sunrise They Withdraw as Humans Go Forth to Their Work (104:22–23) [4.4]**

104:22	The sun rises / they withdraw //	13 2	3	3	0
	and in their lairs / they lie down //	<u>14 2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>3</u>
		104:18–22	<b>33</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>

104:23	Humans go forth / to their work //	13	2	3	3	0
	and to their labor / <sup>a</sup> until evening //	<u>15</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>3</u>
		104:19-23		33	16	17

**M. How Many are Your Works, the Earth is Filled with Your Creatures (104:24) [4.2]**

104:24	How many are your works / O YHWH //	14	2	4	4	0
				31	17	14
	All of them in wisdom / you have made //	<u>13</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>
		104:19-24b		40	23	17
	The earth is filled / with your creatures //	<u>15</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>3</u>
		104:20-24		37	20	17

**N. The Great Sea Is Full of Life with Leviathan Sporting in It (104:25-26) [6.4]**

104:25	Yonder <sup>a</sup> is the great sea / and it stretches in all directions //	17	2	5	5	0
	there swim things / innumerable //	<u>10</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>
		104:19-25b		52	32	20
	Small animals / along with great ones //	<u>14</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>4</u>
		104:24-25		23	16	7
104:26	There / ships move along //	13	2	3	3	0
	(and) Leviathan / that you formed to sport in it //	<u>16</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>5</u>
		104:20-26		58	32	26

**O. They Depend on You for Food and They are Satisfied with Good (104:27-28) [4.4]**

104:27	All of them / wait for you //	14	2	3	3	0
	to receive their food / <sup>a</sup> in due season //	<u>11</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>3</u>
		104:19-27		70	38	32
104:28	You give to them / (and) they gather it up //	11	2	3	3	0
	you open your hand / (and) they are satisfied with good //	<u>12</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>4</u>
		104:25-28		34	18	16

**P. In the Cycle of Life You Send Your Spirit to Renew Creation (104:29-30) [4.4]**

104:29	You hide your face / (and) they are overwhelmed //	15	2	3	3	0
	you take away their breath <sup>a</sup> they expire //	<u>13</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>
		104:21-29b		68	40	28
	And to their dust they return //	<u>12</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>3</u>
		104:23-29		59	34	25

104:30 You send forth your Spirit / they are created //  
 and you renew / the face of the ground //

	14 2	3 3 0
	<u>14 2</u>	<u>3 0 3</u>
104:24–30		59 <b>34</b> 25

**Q. The Earth Trembles and Mountains Smoke at His Touch (104:31–32) [4.4]**

104:31 Let the glory of YHWH endure / forever //  
 may YHWH find joy /<sup>a</sup> in his works //

	15 2	4 4 0
	<u>11 2</u>	<u>3 0 3</u>
104:22–31		78 44 <b>34</b>

104:32 He looks at the earth / and it trembles //  
 he touches the mountains /<sup>a</sup> and they smoke //

	13 2	3 3 0
	<u>14 2</u>	<u>3 0 3</u>
104:25–32		62 <b>34</b> 28

**R. I Will Sing :Praise to YHWH—May My Joyful Song be Pleasing (104:33–34) [5.4]**

104:33 I will sing to YHWH /<sup>a</sup> as long as I live //

	<u>15 2</u>	<u>3 3 0</u>
104:27–33a		52 28 24

I will voice praise /<sup>b</sup> to my God /<sup>c</sup> with my whole being //

	<u>15 3</u>	<u>3 0 3</u>
104:29–33		34 19 15

104:34 May my sung meditation / be pleasing to him //

	<u>11 2</u>	<u>3 3 0</u>
104:24–34a		81 47 <b>34</b>

As for me / I rejoice in YHWH //

	<u>13 2</u>	<u>3 0 3</u>
104:25–34		74 40 <b>34</b>

**S. Let the Wicked be No More—Praise Yah! (104:35) [3.3]**

104:35 Let sinners be consumed / from the earth /

	<u>15 2</u>	<u>4 4 0</u>
104:31–35a		29 17 12

And let the wicked /<sup>a</sup> be no more /

	<u>13 1</u>	<u>3 3 0</u>
104:31–35b		32 20 12

Bless YHWH / O my soul /

	<u>13 2</u>	<u>4 4 0</u>
104:34–35c		17 14 3

Praise Yah //

	<u>6 1</u>	<u>2 2 0</u>
104:31–35		38 <b>26</b> 12

104:1–35 271 149 120

Scansion in Accentual Stress Units:

$$\begin{aligned}
 &(6.4).(3.2).(4.4) . (4.4).(4.4) . (4.6).(2.4) . (4.4).(4.4).(4.3.4).(4.4).(4.4) . (4.2) . (6.4).(4.4).(4.4) . (4.4).(2.3).(4.6) \\
 &= [10+5+8] + [8+8] + [10+6] + [(8+8) + \boxed{11}] + (8+8) + [6+10] + [8+8] + [8+5+10] \\
 &= (23 + 16 + 16) + (16 + 11 + 16) + (16 + 16 + 23) = 55 + 43 + 55 = \mathbf{153}
 \end{aligned}$$

or: 98 // 98 [with pivot counted in each half]  
{153 = 17 x 9; 98 = 49 x 2 (and 49 = 17 + 32 = 23 + 26); 55 = 23 + 32 and 43 = 17 + 26}

Concentric Compositional Formula: 271 = 135 + 1 + 135 [word count—with heading]  
or: 136 // 136 [with pivot in both “halves”]  
{136 = 17 x 8}

### Notes:

- 104:9<sup>a</sup> Reading *tarḥā* preceded by *gaʿyā* (= *meteg*) in BHS as disjunctive.
- 104:11<sup>a</sup> Reading the sequence of *tarḥā* followed by *munaḥ* in BHS as disjunctive.
- 104:15<sup>a</sup> Reading the second of two successive occurrences of *munaḥ* here as disjunctive.
- 104:18<sup>a</sup> Reading *deḥī* in BHS as conjunctive.
- 104:20<sup>a</sup> Reading *tarḥā* preceded by *gaʿyā* (= *meteg*) in BHS as disjunctive.
- 104:21<sup>a</sup> Reading the sequence of *tarḥā* followed by *munaḥ* in BHS as disjunctive.
- 104:23<sup>a</sup> Reading *tarḥā* preceded by *gaʿyā* (= *meteg*) in BHS as disjunctive.
- 104:25<sup>a</sup> Reading *mehuppak legarmēh* in BHS as conjunctive.
- 104:27<sup>a</sup> Reading the sequence of *tarḥā* followed by *munaḥ* in BHS as disjunctive.
- 104:29<sup>a</sup> Reading *deḥī* in BHS as conjunctive.
- 104:31<sup>a</sup> Reading the sequence of *tarḥā* followed by *munaḥ* in BHS as disjunctive.
- 104:32<sup>a</sup> Reading the sequence of *tarḥā* followed by *munaḥ* in BHS as disjunctive.
- 104:33<sup>a</sup> Reading the sequence of two successive occurrences of *munaḥ* in BHS (with *gaʿyā* [= *meteg*] added in Letteris) as disjunctive.
- 104:33<sup>b</sup> Reading *tarḥā* followed by *gaʿyā* (= *meteg*) in Letteris as disjunctive. BHS omits *gaʿyā* (= *meteg*).
- 104:33<sup>c</sup> Reading the *munaḥ* here, which is preceded by *gaʿyā* (= *meteg*) in Letteris, as disjunctive. BHS omits the *gaʿyā* (= *meteg*).
- 104:35<sup>a</sup> Reading *mehuppak legarmēh* in BHS as conjunctive.

## Summary of the Logoprosodic Analysis

1. Psalm 104:1–35 has 19 strophes: 104:1–2, 3, 4–5, 6–7, 8–9, 10–12a, 12b–13, 14–15a, 15b–16, 17–19, 20–21, 22–23, 24, 25–26, 27–28, 29–30, 31–32, 33 and 34–35.

A	104:1–2	3 balanced dyads:	$[13 + 8] + (8 + 13) + (9 + 13)$	= 21 + 21 + 22	morae
B	104:3	balanced triad:	$[13 + 12 + 12]$	= 13 + 12 + 12	morae
C	104:4–5	2 balanced dyads:	$[12 + 12] + [14 + 11]$	= 24 + 25	morae
D	104:6–7	2 balanced dyads:	$[12 + 12] + [11 + 14]$	= 24 + 25	morae
E	104:8–9	2 balanced dyads:	$[18 + 12] + [13 + 15]$	= 30 + 28	morae
F	104:10–12a	2 balanced dyads + pivot:	$[16 + 12] + 12 + [14 + 14]$	= 28 + 12 + 28	morae
G	104:12b–13	balanced triad:	$[14 + 15 + 16]$	= 15 + 16	morae
H	104:14a–b	balanced dyad:	$[14 + 15]$	= 14 + 15	morae
	104:14c–15a	balanced dyad:	$[13 + 11]$	= 13 + 11	morae
I	104:15b–16	2 balanced triads:	$[13 + 11] + [12 + 11]$	= 24 + 23	morae

X	104:17	balanced dyad:	$[14 + 14]$	= 14 + 14	morae
	104:18–19	2 balanced dyads:	$[16 + 11] + [15 + 10]$	= 27 + 25	morae

I'	104:20–21	2 balanced dyads:	$[14 + 12] + [15 + 13]$	= 26 + 28	morae
H'	104:22–23	2 balanced dyads:	$[13 + 14] + [13 + 15]$	= 27 + 28	morae
G'	104:24	balanced triad:	$[14 + 13 + 15]$	= 14 + 13	morae
F'	104:25–26	2 balanced dyads + pivot:	$[17 + 10] + 14 + [13 + 16]$	= 27 + 14 + 29	morae
E'	104:27–28	2 balanced dyads:	$[14 + 11] + [11 + 12]$	= 25 + 23	morae
D'	104:29–30	2 balanced dyads + pivot:	$[15 + 13] + 12 + [14 + 14]$	= 28 + 12 + 28	morae
C'	104:31–32	2 balanced dyads:	$[15 + 11] + [13 + 14]$	= 26 + 27	morae
B'	104:33	balanced dyad:	$[15 + 15]$	= 15 + 15	morae
A'	104:34–35c	2 balanced dyads + pivot:	$[11 + 13] + 15 + [13 + 13]$	= 24 + 15 + 26	morae
	104:35d	"Hallelujah" ending—stands outside the prosodic structure as a musical postlude			

2. The first strophe (104:1) is a single part arranged in two subdivisions on the basis of word-count: 104:1ab and 1cd.
- 103:22–104:1 **39 = 26 + 13** [compositional formula]
3. The second strophe (104:2–3) is a single part arranged in three subdivisions on the basis of word-count: 104:2, 3a and 3bc.
- 104:1–2 **17** words
  - 104:1–3 **17** words before *atnach*
4. The third strophe (104:4–5) is a single part arranged in two subdivisions on the basis of word-count: 104:4 and 5.
- 103:22–104:4 **17** words after *atnach*
  - 104:1–5 **17** words after *atnach*

5. The fourth strophe (104:6–7) is a single part arranged in two subdivisions on the basis of word-count: 104:6 and 7.
  - 103:22–104:6 **34** (= 17 x 2) words before *atnach*
  - 103:21–104:7 **32** words after *atnach*
6. The fifth strophe (104:8–9) is a single part arranged in two subdivisions on the basis of word-count: 104:8 and 9.
  - 104:6–8 **23** words
  - 104:8–9 **17** words
7. The sixth strophe (104:10–12a) is a single part arranged in four subdivisions on the basis of word-count: 104:10, 11a, 11b and 12a.
  - 104:8–10 **23** words
  - 104:6–11 **23** words after *atnach*
8. The seventh strophe (104:12b–13) is a single part arranged in four subdivisions on the basis of word-count: 104:12b, 13a and 13b.
  - 104:7–12 **23** words after *atnach*
  - 104:8–13 **23** words after *atnach*
9. The eighth strophe (104:14–15a) has two parts arranged in four subdivisions on the basis of word-count: 104:14a, 14b, 14c and 15a.
  - 104:13–14 **17** words
10. The ninth strophe (104:15b–16) is a single part arranged in two subdivisions on the basis of word-count: 104:15bc and 16.
  - 104:9–15 **26** words after *atnach*
  - 104:12–16 **23** words before *atnach*
11. The tenth strophe (104:17–19) has two parts arranged in three subdivisions on the basis of word-count: 104:17, 18 and 19.
  - 104:12–17 **23** words after *atnach*
  - 104:15–18 **17** words before *atnach*
  - 104:16–19 **26** words
12. The eleventh strophe (104:20–21) is a single part arranged in two subdivisions on the basis of word-count: 104:20, 21, 22 and 23.
  - 104:16–20 **17** words before *atnach*
  - 104:17–21 **34 = 17 + 17** [compositional formula]
13. The twelfth strophe (104:22–23) is a single part arranged in two subdivisions on the basis of word-count: 104:22 and 23.
  - 104:18–22 **17** words after *atnach*
  - 104:19–23 **17** words before *atnach*
14. The thirteenth strophe (104:24) is a single part arranged in two subdivisions on the basis of word-count: 104:24a, 24b and 24c.
  - 104:20–24 **17** words after *atnach*

15. The fourteenth strophe (104:25–26) is a single part arranged in three subdivisions on the basis of word-count: 104:25ab, 25c and 26.
- 104:24–25      **23** words
  - 104:20–26      **58 = 32 + 26**                      [compositional formula]
16. The fifteenth strophe (104:27–28) is a single part arranged in three subdivisions on the basis of word-count: 104:27 and 28.
- 104:19–27      **32** words after *atnach*
  - 104:25–28      **34** (= 17 x 2) words
17. The sixteenth strophe (104:29–30) is a single part arranged in three subdivisions on the basis of word-count: 104:29ab, 29c and 30.
- 104:23–29      **34** (= 17 x 2) words before *atnach*
  - 104:24–30      **34** (= 17 x 2) words before *atnach*
18. The seventeenth strophe (104:31–32) is a single part arranged in two subdivisions on the basis of word-count: 104:31 and 32.
- 104:22–31      **78** (= 26 x 3) words and **34** (= 17 x 2) words after *atnach*
  - 104:25–32      **34** (= 17 x 2) words before *atnach*
19. The eighteenth strophe (104:33–34) has two parts arranged in four subdivisions on the basis of word-count: 104:33a, 33b, 34a and 34b.
- 104:29–33      **34** (= 17 x 2) words
20. The nineteenth strophe (104:35) has two parts arranged in four subdivisions on the basis of word-count patterns—a triad plus the concluding “Hallelujah” rubric: 104:35a, 35b, 35c and 35d.
- 104:25–34      **34** (= 17 x 2) words after *atnach*
  - 104:31–35      **26** words before *atnach*

## Observations

1. The 19 strophes in Psalm 104 may be outlined in a 3-level nested menorah pattern:

### **1<sup>st</sup> Level Menorah: YHWH Is Lord of the Wonders of Creation (Ps 104:1–35)**

A	YHWH is clothed with majesty and magnificence	[6.4]	104:1
B	Wrapped in light as a garment, he rides the clouds as a chariot	[3.2]	104:2–3
C	He sets the earth on its foundations so that it cannot be moved	[4.4]	104:4–5
X	<b>God's spirit renews the original created order</b>	—	104:6–30
C'	The earth trembles—he touches the mountains and they smoke	[4.4]	104:31–32
B'	I will sing praise to YHWH —may my joyful song be pleasing	[2.3]	104:33–34
A'	Let the wicked be no more—praise Yah!	[4.6]	104:35

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Level Menorah: God's Spirit Renews the Original Created Order (Ps 104:6–30)**

A	Waters below and above fled at the thunder of your rebuke	[4.4]	104:6–7
B	The mountains and valleys were formed	[4.4]	104:8–9
C	He sent springs to water the fields with birds in the sky	[4.6]	104:10–12a
X	<b>God made the luminaries and living creatures on earth</b>	—	104:12b–24
C'	The great sea extends far with Leviathan sporting in it	[6.4]	104:25–26
B'	They depend on you for food and they are satisfied with good	[4.4]	104:27–28
A'	In the cycle of life you send your Spirit to renew creation	[4.4]	104:29–30

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Level Menorah: God made the Luminaries and Living Creatures (Ps 104:12b–24)**

A	Birds give their voices, he waters the earth and it is satisfied	[2.4]	104:12b–13
B	He makes grass grow and brings forth food from the earth	[4.4]	104:14–15a
C	He gives oil and bread to humans and the trees drink their fill	[4.4]	104:15b–16
X	<b>Mountains are a refuge with moon and sun to show time</b>	[4.4.4]	104:17–19
C'	You bring night when young lions prowl after their prey	[4.4]	104:20–21
B'	With sunrise they withdraw and humans go forth to their work	[4.4]	104:22–23
A'	How many are your works, the earth is filled with your creatures	[4.2]	104:24

2. The content of Psalm 104 may also be outlined in a menorah pattern in terms of its seven cantos:

A	YHWH is the creator of light—and of the heavens and the earth	104:1–5
B	YHWH is the creator of the waters and the dry land	104:6–9
C	He sent waters for the fields and birds in the heavens	104:10–13
X	<b>He made plants and animals—and moon and sun to show time</b>	104:14–23
C'	He filled the earth and seas with creatures—including Leviathan	104:24–26
B'	He provided food and in the cycle of life his Spirit renews creation	104:27–30
A'	Mountains smoke at his touch and I praise him with my whole being	104:31–35

3. The opening strophe (v. 1) is carefully contrived with the concluding verses of Psalm 103 so that the compositional formula is:

Ps 103:20–104:1                    **39 = 26 + 13**

The numerical value of the word **אֶחָד** (“one”) is 13 [= 1+8+4] and that of the word **יְהוָה** is **26** [= 10+5+6+5]. On the use of the “YHWH-*ʿechad* Model,” see C. J. Labuschagne, *Numerical Secrets of the Bible* (BIBAL Press, 2000), pp. 128–30. This formula is apropos at the beginning of a poem on YHWH as Lord of the wonders of creation; for, as the *Shema*<sup>c</sup> puts it in Deut 6:4, “Hear, O Israel, YHWH is our God; YHWH is One.” The sequence of the numbers **26** plus **13** expresses the idea that “YHWH is One.”

4. Psalm 104 presents YHWH as the fashioner and maintainer of the entire cosmos, who is addressed in prayer on intimate terms. As Terrien puts it: “The divine actor, maker, initiator, and originator of the whole world reality is the owner of a majesty and the bearer of a ‘magnificence’ that sets him aside, beyond and above a divinized force of nature with the status of casual or steady acquaintance, a familiar companion, or a ‘fellow pal.’ Yahweh, whose name means ‘He causes to be,’ is also ‘my God’” (p. 711).
5. On the relationship of Psalm 104 to Genesis 1, Leslie Allen says: “The links were explored especially by P. Humbert (*RHPR* 15 [1935] 19–21) and A. van der Voort (*RB* 58 [1951] 321–47). The correspondences are striking. The sequence of material is largely the same: light, the concept of the heavenly waters, the draining of the waters from the earth, vegetation, the sun and moon as timekeepers, sea creatures, and the provision of food. Moreover, the overlap of vocabulary is remarkable” (*WBC* 21 [2002], pp. 41–41).

Day 1	let there be light	Gen 1:3–5
Day 2	spread of heavenly tent (“firmament” in midst of waters)	Gen 1:6–8
Day 3	containment of primal waters (dry land) and vegetation	Gen 1:9–13
Day 4	creation of sun, moon, stars and planets	Gen 1:14–19
Day 5	swimming of sea fishes & monsters as well as flying birds	Gen 1:20–25
Day 6	appearance of quadrupeds and human beings	Gen 1:28–30; cf. 2:15

6. The divine-name YHWH appears nine times (in 104:1 [twice], 16, 24, 31 [twice], 33, 34 and 35). The word *ʾēl* (“God”) appears once (in 104:21) and *ʾēlōhay* (“my God”) appear twice (in 104:1 and 33). Terrien notes “that the use of the divine name, Yahweh, is reserved for the Prelude (v. 1), the Postlude (v. 35c), and, in the body of the psalm, for Strophe IV (v. 16), Strophe VI (v.24), and Strophe VIII (vv.31, 33, and 34). The heart of the poem addresses the Deity without name, not in the style of prayer (2<sup>nd</sup> person singular) but in the style of meditation (3<sup>rd</sup> person). Thus the two styles are distributed as follows:

<i>Second person</i>	<i>Participial and third person</i>
vv. 1, 6, 7, 8, 8, 9, 11, 13, 20, 24, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30	2, 3, 4, 5, 10, 13, 14, 16, 19, 31, 33, 34, 35

Such a distribution may not be accidental. True to the style of meditation (v. 34a), the poet may have suggested in this fashion the absolute independence of the Lord’s creative activity with the cosmic elements: light, sky, earth, water, clouds, wind, and fire” (p. 710).

7. In terms of the 271 words in Psalm 104, the **arithmological center** falls on the word **הרים** (“mountains”) in 104:18a with 135 words on either side. The initial **concentric compositional formula** is:

$$271 = 135 + 1 + 135 \quad \text{[word count—with heading]}$$

$$\text{or: } \mathbf{136 // 136} \quad \text{[with pivot counted in each “half”]}$$

$$\{\mathbf{136} = \mathbf{17} \times \mathbf{8}\}$$

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

צפרים יקננו	Birds build their nests
חסידה ברושים ביתה	As for the stork, her house is in the cypresses
הגבהים ליעלים <b>הרים</b>	Mountain heights are for the wild goats
סלעים מחסה לשפנים	Rocky bluffs, a shelter for conies

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

$$271 = \mathbf{130} + 11 + \mathbf{130} \quad \text{[word count]}$$

$$\text{or: } 141 // 141 \quad \text{[with “pivot” included in each half]}$$

$$\{\mathbf{130} = \mathbf{26} \times \mathbf{5}\}$$

The **meaningful center** may be expanded by including 11 words on either side of the **arithmological center**. In this instance, the *Concentric Compositional Formula* becomes:

$$271 = 124 + \mathbf{23} + 124 \quad \text{[word count]}$$

$$\text{or: } 147 // 147 \quad \text{[with “pivot” included in each half]}$$

8. The 13-word “nested framework” (with the 6-word framework underlined) reads as follows:

1	<u>ברכי נפשי את־יהוה</u>	<u>Bless YHWH O my soul</u>
	<u>יהוה אלהי</u>	<u>O YHWH my God</u>
	גדלת מאד	You are exceedingly great
	תוד והדר לבשת	With majesty and magnificence you are clothed.
2	עטה־אור	He wraps himself with light
35	יתמו חטאים מן־הארץ	May sinners be consumed from the earth;
	ורשעים עוד אינם	And let the wicked be no more.
	<u>ברכי נפשי את־יהוה</u>	<u>Bless YHWH, O my soul.</u>
	<u>הללויה</u>	<u>Hallelujah!</u>

9. Preliminary data on the letter-count in Psalm 104 from David Crookes reveals the following:

Total letter count: 1103

The absolute **gematrical center** falls on the 4<sup>th</sup> letter of the 2<sup>nd</sup> word of v. 18 [הַגְּבוּרִים], i.e., the 552<sup>nd</sup> letter, which is the letter ה. Note that the **gematrical center** of Psalm 103 falls on the letter ך, so the centers in these two consecutive psalms spells יה (“Yah”), which is also the final word in Psalm 104, in the phrase “Hallelu-Yah”.

$$\text{Gematric compositional formula: } 1103 = 551 + 1 + 551$$

The gematrical value of the 1<sup>st</sup> word הַרִיִם (“mountains”) = 255 [= 5+200+10+40].

The gematrical value of the 2<sup>nd</sup> word הַגְּבוּרִים (“heights”) = 65 [= 5+3+2+5+10+40]

The gematrical value of the 3<sup>rd</sup> word לִיעֲלִים (“for the wild goats”) = 190 [= 30+10+70+30+10+40]

The numerical value of the 1<sup>st</sup> word in this phrase (255) equals the sum of the next two words: 255 = 65 + 190. Musicians talk about “word-painting” in music. Here there may be a bit of *numerical* word-painting, with the mountains “containing” the two words that follow; i.e., providing “the heights for the wild goats.”

The numerical value of the key phrase עוֹף־הַשָּׁמַיִם (“birds of the sky”) in v. 12 is 551 [= 70+6+80+5+300+40+10+40], which gives us the “wing” in the gematrical formula. This phrase begins on the 87<sup>th</sup> word of the psalm, which is the numerical value of the word for “stork” (הַסִּידָהּ = 8+60+10+4+5 = 87) in v. 17b. The stork famously has no voice, and yet the psalmist represents it as a musician by placing it among the “singing birds” referred to in v. 12. So what is meant by the three words of v. 17b? Fir-trees provide the singing-boards, or the soundboards, of most stringed instruments. A violin is made from hard maple—except for its belly or soundboard. That’s the bit that the strings are stretched over, pierced with two f-shaped holes. Some stringed instruments are even made completely of pine or fir, like the rebec. Note that use of the phrase עֲצֵי בְרוֹשִׁים in 2 Sam 6:5—“and David and all the house of Israel played before the Lord on all manner of *instruments made of* fir-wood, even on harps, and on psalteries, and on timbrels, and on cornets, and on cymbals” (KJV).

In short, the inarticulate stork resides in the very trees that one day will provide the singing-boards of stringed instruments, and that one day the silent bird will have a voice.

#### 10. Summary of the *concentric* compositional formulae:

$$271 = 130 + 11 + 130 \quad \text{or: } 141 // 141 \quad \text{word-count}$$

$$271 = 124 + 23 + 124 \quad \text{or: } 147 // 147$$

{with others in between}

$$271 = 13 + 243 + 13 \quad \text{or: } 256 // 256 \quad \text{v. 1-2a || v. 35}$$

$$271 = 6 + 259 + 6 \quad \text{or: } 265 // 265 \quad \text{v. 1-2a || v. 35}$$

$$\{256 = 32 \times 8 \text{ and } 243 = 3 \times 3 \times 3 \times 3 \times 3\}$$

$$153 = 55 + 43 + 55 \quad \text{or: } 98 // 98 \quad \text{SAS units}$$

$$\{153 = 17 \times 9; 98 = 49 \times 2 \text{ (and } 49 = 17 + 32 = 23 + 26; 55 = 23 + 32 \text{ and } 43 = 17 + 26)\}$$

$$80 = 29 + 22 + 29 \quad \text{or: } 51 // 51 \quad \text{briques (primary SAS units)}$$

$$\{51 = 17 \times 3 \text{ and } 80 = 40 \times 2 \text{ (and } 40 = 17 + 23)\}$$

11. In the prosodic structure of Psalm 104, the basic building blocks (**briques**) in each poetic **verset** are the **primary SAS (syntactic accentual stress) 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., 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 with the translation (above), the presence of these three primary disjunctive markers is indicated with a double slash (/). Psalm 104 has 80 **briques** (primary SAS units), 73 of which are marked by *soph pasuq* (35 times, at the end of each verse), *atnach* (34 times, in each verse except v. 35) and *ole weyored* (4 times, in vv. 1, 3, 25 and 29). The boundaries of the seven remaining **briques** are marked by *rəḥîa<sup>c</sup>* (5 times, in vv. 14, 15, 24 and 35 [twice]), *rəḥîa<sup>c</sup> muḡraš* (v. 7), and *pāzēr* (v. 35).

12. The prosodic structure of Psalm 104, in terms of its **briques** (primary SAS units), may be displayed as follows: ^ represents *atnach*; : represents *soph pasuq*; † represents *ole weyored*; and † represents all other accent markers.

I A <sup>1</sup> *bārāḵî naḡšî ʿet yhw<sup>h</sup> †* *yhw<sup>h</sup> ʿəlōhay gādaltā məʿōḏ ^*  
*hōḏ wəhādār lāḡāštā :*

B <sup>2</sup> *ʿōṭer ʿōr kaśśalmāh ^* *nōṭeh šāmayim kayrîʿāh :*  
<sup>3</sup> *hamqāreh ḡammayim ʿālyōṭāyw †* *haśśām ʿāḡîm rəḡūḡō ^*  
*haməhallēḡ ʿal kanḡē rūaḡ :*

C <sup>4</sup> *ʿōseh malʿāḡāyw rūḡōṭ ^* *məšārətāyw ʿēš lōḡēt :*  
<sup>5</sup> *yāsad ʿereḡ ʿal məḡônēhā ^* *bal timmōṭ ʿōlām wāʿeḡ :*

II D <sup>6</sup> *təhōm kalləḡūš kissîṭō ^* *ʿal hārîm yaʿamdū māyîm :*  
<sup>7</sup> *min gaʿārātəḡā yəḡūsûn ^* *min qōl raʿamḡā †* *yēḡāḡēzûn :*

E <sup>8</sup> *yaʿālū hārîm yērəḡū ḡəqāʿōṭ ^* *ʿel məqōm zeh yāsadtā lāhem :*  
<sup>9</sup> *ḡəḡûl šamtā bal yaʿāḡōrûn ^* *bal yəšūḡûn ləḡassōṭ hāʿāreḡ :*

III F	<sup>10</sup> <i>hamšallēah maʿyānîm bannəḥālîm</i> ^ <sup>11</sup> <i>yašqû kol ḥaytô sādāy</i> ^ <sup>12</sup> <i>ʿălêhem ʿôp haššāmayim yiškôn</i> ^	<i>ʾbên hārîm yəhallēkûn</i> : <i>yišbərû pərāʾîm šəmāʾām</i> :
G	<i>mibbên ʿāpāʾîm yittənû qôl</i> : <sup>13</sup> <i>mašqeh hārîm mēʿālîyôṭāyw</i> ^	<i>mippərî maʿāsêkâ tisbaʿ hāʾāreš</i> :
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IV H	<sup>14</sup> <i>mašmîaḥ ḥāšîr labbəhēmāh</i> † <i>ləhōšîl leḥem min-hāʾāreš</i> :	<i>wəʿéseḥ laʿāḇōdaṭ hāʾādām</i> ^ <sup>15</sup> <i>wəyayin yəsammaḥ ləḇaḇ ʾənôš</i> †
I	<i>ləhašhîl pānîm miššāmen</i> ^ <sup>16</sup> <i>yišbəʿû ʿāšê yhwḥ</i> ^	<i>wələḥem ləḇaḇ ʾənôš yisʿāḍ</i> : <i>ʾarzê ləḇānôn ʾāšer nāṭāʿ</i> :
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X	<sup>17</sup> <i>ʾāšer šām šippōrîm yəqannēnû</i> ^ <sup>18</sup> <span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;"><i>hārîm</i></span> <i>haggəḇōhîm layyəʿelîm</i> ^ <sup>19</sup> <i>ʿāsāḥ yārēaḥ ləmôʿādîm</i> ^	<i>ḥāsîḍāḥ bərôšîm bêyāḥ</i> : <i>səlāʿîm maḥseh lašpānîm</i> : <i>šemeš yāḍaʿ məḇôʾô</i> :
I'	<sup>20</sup> <i>tāšet ḥōšek wîhî lāylāḥ</i> ^ <sup>21</sup> <i>hakkəpîrîm šōʾāgîm yēʾāsēpûn</i> ^	<i>bô tîrmōs kol ḥaytô yāʿar</i> : <i>wəʾel məʿônōṭām yirbāšûn</i> :
H'	<sup>22</sup> <i>tizraḥ haššemeš yēʾāsēpûn</i> ^ <sup>23</sup> <i>yēšēʾ ʾādām ləpāʿolô</i> ^	<i>wəʾel məʿônōṭām yirbāšûn</i> : <i>wəlaʿāḇōdātô ʿādê ʿāreḇ</i> :
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V G	<sup>24</sup> <i>māh rabbû maʿāsêkâ yhwḥ</i> † <i>māləʾāḥ hāʾāreš qinyāneḳā</i> :	<i>kullām bəḥokmāḥ ʿāsîṭā</i> ^
F'	<sup>25</sup> <i>zeh hayyām gādôl ûrəḥaḇ yādāyim</i> ‡ <i>ḥayyôṭ qəṭannôṭ ʿim gəḍlôṭ</i> : <sup>26</sup> <i>šām ʾonîyôṭ yəhallēkûn</i> ^	<i>šam remeš wəʾên mispār</i> ^ <i>liwyātān zeh yāšartā ləsaḥeq bô</i> :
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VI E'	<sup>27</sup> <i>kullām ʾelêkâ yəsabbērûn</i> ^ <sup>28</sup> <i>tittēn lāhem yilqōṭûn</i> ^	<i>lātēt ʾākəlām bəʿittô</i> : <i>tiṭtaḥ yāḍəkâ yišbəʿûn ṭôḇ</i> :
D'	<sup>29</sup> <i>tastîr pānêkâ yibbāhêlûn</i> ‡ <i>wəʾel ʿāpārām yəšûḇûn</i> : <sup>30</sup> <i>təšallah rūḥākâ yibbārêʾûn</i> ^	<i>tōsēp rūḥām yigwāʿûn</i> ^ <i>ûtəḥaddēš pənê ʾādāmāḥ</i> :
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VII C'	<sup>31</sup> <i>yəḥî kəḇôḍ yhwḥ ləʿolām</i> ^ <sup>32</sup> <i>hambabbîṭ lāʾāreš wattirʿāḍ</i> ^	<i>yismaḥ yhwḥ bəmaʿāsāyw</i> : <i>yiggaʿ behārîm wəyeʿəšnû</i> :

B' <sup>33</sup> ʔāšīrāh la-yhwh bəḥayyāy ^ ʔāzammərāh lēʔlōhay bəʔōdī :  
<sup>34</sup> yeʕərab ʕālāyw sīhī ^ ʔānōkī ʔeśmah ʔa-yhwh :

A' <sup>35</sup> yittammū ḥaṭṭāʔim min hāʔāreṣ † ūrəšāʕim ʕōd ʔēnām †  
bārāḱī nāp̄šī ʔet yhwh † haləlū yāh :

13. The 80 **briques** (primary SAS units) are distributed in 19 strophes in Psalm 104 as follows:  
80 = [3 + 5 + 4] + [5 + 4] + [5 + 3] + [(4 + 4) + 6 + (4 + 4)] + [3 + 5] + [4 + 5] + [4 + 4 + 4] =  
(12 + 9 + 8) + (8 + 6 + 8) + (8 + 9 + 12) = 29 + 22 + 29; or **51 // 51**, with the central pivot  
included in each “half”.

The **arithmological center** of Psalm 104 falls on the word *hārîm* (“mountains”) at the beginning of v. 18, with 135 words on either side. Psalm 104 has 153 SAS units, 80 **briques** (primary SAS units), 37 versets, 19 strophes and 7 cantos. The **arithmological center** is in the middle **canto**, the middle strophe, the middle verset, the middle two **briques**, and the middle two SAS units. There are 1040 morae in Psalm 104—with 498 morae before the word *hārîm* (“mountains”) in 104:18a and 538 morae after it.

14. Terrien divides Psalm 104 into eight “strophes” framed by a prelude and a postlude (v. 43) (*The Psalms: Strophic Structure and Theological Commentary* [2003], pp. 742–48.) 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 19 strophes arranged concentrically in seven cantos (vv. 1–5, 6–9, 10–13, 14–23, 24–26, 27–30 and 31–35).

Christensen	Terrien
I A 104:1	Prelude 104:1
B 104:2–3	A 1 104:2–4
C 104:4–5	
II D 104:6–7	B 2 104:5–9
E 104:8–9	
F 104:10–12a	C 3 104:10–13
G 104:12b–13	
III H 104:14–15a	D 4 104:14–18
I 104:15b–16	
X 104:17–19	D' 5 104:19–23
I' 104:20–21	
H' 104:22–23	
IV G' 104:24	C' 6 104:24–26
F' 104:25–26	
E' 104:27–28	B' 7 104:27–30
D' 104:29–30	
V C' 104:31–32	A' 8 104:31–35a
B' 104:33–34	
A' 104:35	Postlude 104:35bc

15. At first glance, Psalms 104 and 105 appear to be one place in the Psalter where the thesis of James Thirtle (*The Titles of the Psalms: Their Nature and Meaning Explained* (London, 1904) can perhaps be demonstrated, with the support of LXX (which attaches the word(s) to Psalm 105)—that the heading of one psalm was mistakenly taken as the ending of the previous psalm in Codex L (BHS). The expression “Praise Yah” (Hallelujah) appears at both the beginning and the ending on eight occasions (Pss 106, 113, 135, 146, 147, 148, 149 and 150). In three of the so-called “Hallelujah Psalms” the word(s) appear only at the beginning (Pss 111, 112, 135); and five times (Pss 104, 105, 115, 116, 117), the word(s) appear only at the ending. There are thus either 15 or 16 “Hallelujah Psalms” depending on whether or not the expression “Hallelujah” at the end of 104:35 is taken as the concluding part of Psalm 104, or the misplaced heading of Psalm 105. Nonetheless, the logoprosodic analysis supports Codex L (BHS) as it stands and we are thus unable to demonstrate any substance in Thirtle’s thesis in this text—or anywhere else.

16. Note the following list of significant compositional numbers at the boundaries of the verses counting from the beginning of Psalm 104:

104:1–2	<b>17</b>	words
104:1–3	<b>17</b>	words before <i>atnach</i>
104:1–5	<b>17</b>	words after <i>atnach</i>
104:1–8	<b>34</b>	(= <b>17</b> x 2) words before <i>atnach</i>
104:1–9	<b>34</b>	(= <b>17</b> x 2) words after <i>atnach</i>
104:1–10	<b>78</b>	(= <b>26</b> x 3) words
104:1–11	<b>85</b>	(= <b>17</b> x 5) words
104:1–12	49	[= <b>17</b> + <b>32</b> = <b>23</b> + <b>26</b> ] words before <i>atnach</i>
104:1–13	<b>52</b>	(= <b>26</b> x 2) words before <i>atnach</i>
104:1–14	<b>52</b>	(= <b>26</b> x 2) words after <i>atnach</i>
104:1–16	<b>128</b>	(= <b>32</b> x 4) words and <b>68</b> (= <b>17</b> x 4) words before <i>atnach</i>
104:1–19	<b>78</b>	(= <b>26</b> x 3) words before and <b>69</b> (= <b>23</b> x 3) words after <i>atnach</i>
104:1–20	<b>156</b>	(= <b>26</b> x 6) words
104:1–21	<b>85</b>	(= <b>17</b> x 5) words before <i>atnach</i>
104:1–22	80	[= <b>17</b> + <b>23</b> ] x 2 words after <i>atnach</i>
104:1–24	<b>184</b>	(= <b>23</b> x 8) words
104:1–27	49	[= <b>17</b> + <b>32</b> = <b>23</b> + <b>26</b> ] x 2 words after <i>atnach</i>
104:1–28	<b>102</b>	(= <b>17</b> x 6) words after <i>atnach</i>
104:1–31	240	[= <b>17</b> + <b>23</b> ] x 6 words
104:1–34	<b>138</b>	(= <b>23</b> x 6) words before <i>atnach</i>
104:1–35	120	[= <b>17</b> + <b>23</b> ] x 3 words after <i>atnach</i>

It is not possible to utilize any of the four compositional numbers (**17**, **23**, **26** and **32**) until the end of verse 2, which leaves 34 possible boundaries to work with. In 16 out of 34 of these boundaries (or 47.1% of the time) a multiple of one of these four compositional numbers is present. If the numbers 40 and 49 are included, the percentage increases to 61.8% (21 out of 34). The evidence suggests the possibility of deliberate design at the point of the numerical composition of Psalm 104.

17. Determining the details of the musical and literary structure of Psalm 104 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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