

PSALM 8

To the Chief Musician (1 word – לְמַנְצֵחַ)

Upon the instrument of Gath (2 words – עַל - הַגִּתִּית)

A Psalm of David (2 words – מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד)

v. 1 – O Yahweh our Lord, (2 words – יְהוָה אֱדֹנָינוּ)

how majestic is Your Name in all of the earth, (5 words – מָה - אֲדִיר שְׁמֶךָ בְּכֹל - הָאָרֶץ)

with the result that (You) set Your splendor above the heavens.

(אֲשֶׁר תִּגַּה הוֹדֶךָ עַל - הַשָּׁמַיִם – 5 words)

The final line is very difficult to translate.

v. 2 – Out of the mouth of babes and infants You have established strength,

(מִפִּי עוֹלָלִים וְיִנְקִים יִסְדַּת עֹז – 5 words)

because of Your adversaries, (2 words – לְמַעַן צוֹרְרֶיךָ)

in order to stop an enemy (2 words – לְהַשְׁבִּית אוֹיֵב)

and those who take vengeance. (1 word – וּמִתְנַקֵּם)

There are seven מ/ם – mem, a “m”; the first three words have one.

Eight words contain a י – yod, “y”.

v. 3 – When I am looking at Your heavens, (3 words – כִּי - אֶרְאֶה שָׁמַיְךָ)

the working of Your fingers, (2 words – מַעֲשֵׂי אֶצְבָּעֶיךָ)

moon and stars which You set in place, (4 words – יָרַח וְכּוֹכָבִים אֲשֶׁר כּוֹנְנָתָה)

Ellipsis – “When I am looking at . . .” for all three lines

v. 4 – what is man that You are remembering him, (4 words – מָה - אֲנֹשׁ כִּי - תִזְכְּרֶנּוּ)

and the son of Adam that You are visiting him? (4 words – וּבֶן - אָדָם כִּי תִפְקְדֶנּוּ)

Synthetic Parallelism

Both lines are very similar – two letter word, word for man, that, verb

The last two words in each line sound very similar – key tizkerennu and key tifqedennu

v. 5 – Then You made him lack a little from God, (3 words – וַתַּחַסְרֵהוּ מְעַט מֵאֱלֹהִים)

and glory and honor You are crowning him. (3 words – וְכְבוֹד וְהָדָר תַּעֲטֶרְהוּ)

Synthetic Parallelism with Chiasm

Both verbs sound very similar – tehassereyhu and teattereyhu

The second word very similar to the beginning of the last word – meat and teat.

v. 6 – You are causing him to rule on the works of Your hands, (3 words – תִּמְשִׁילֵהוּ בְּמַעֲשֵׂי יָדֶיךָ)

all things You have put under his feet: (4 words – כָּל שֵׁתָּה תַחַת - רַגְלָיו)

Synonymous Parallelism with Chiasm

v. 7 – flocks and cattle, all of them, (3 words – צֹנֶה וְאֶלְפִים כֻּלָּם)

and also beasts of the field; (3 words – וְגַם בְּהֵמוֹת שָׂדֵי)

Notice how evenly balanced both lines are.

The middle four words contain an מ/ם – mem, a “m”.

v. 8 – birds of the heavens and fish of the sea, (4 words – צְפוֹר שָׁמַיִם וְדִגְי הַיָּם)
those that pass through the paths of the seas. (3 words – עֲבָר אַרְחוֹת יָמִים)
Four words contain י – yod, “y”; five overall.
Three words contain an מ/ם – mem, a “m”; five overall.

v. 9 – O Yahweh our Lord, (2 words – יְהוָה אֲדֹנָינוּ)
how majestic is Your Name in all of the earth, (5 words – מָה - אֲדִיר שְׁמֶךָ בְּכֹל - הָאָרֶץ)
Note the inclusio with verse 1.

Broader Structure:

Title

vv. 1-2 – Yahweh’s Majesty and Strength

vv. 3-4 – A Humble Question

vv. 5-8 – God’s Honor To Man

v. 9 – Yahweh’s Majesty

Title

vv. 1-2 – God’s Majesty and Might

vv. 3-4 – Man’s Insignificance

vv. 5-8 – God’s Job For Mankind

v. 9 – Concluding Praise

Three Chiasms:

Title

v. 1 – Praise to Yahweh

vv. 2-4 – Man’s Apparent Weakness

vv. 5-8 – Man’s True Strength

v. 9 – Praise to Yahweh

Title

v. 1a – Ascription of Praise

vv. 1b-2 – The Glory of the Great King

vv. 3-4 – God’s Interest in Man

v. 5 – Man’s Derived Glory

vv. 6-8 – The Glory of Man as Vice-regent

v. 9 – Ascription of Praise

Title

v. 1a – God’s Name

v. 1b-3 – Focus on the Heavens

v. 4 – Central Questions

vv. 5-8 – Focus on the Earth

v. 9 – God’s Name

Yahweh/LORD – 2x

Adonai/Lord – 2x

2nd Person (You, Your) – 16x; all refer to Yahweh; half are subjects of verbs; four is the number of creation – 4 x 4

3rd Person (him, his) – 6x; all refer to man – the number of man

1st Person (I, our) – 3x