THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA

The Use of Vocative and Imperative Combination in the Opening Lines of Selected Poems in the Hebrew Psalter.

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to the Faculty of the

School of Theology and Religious Studies

Of The Catholic University of America

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

By

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Washington, D.C.

2011

Abstract

The Use of Vocative and Imperative Combination in the Opening Lines of Selected Poems in the Hebrew Psalter.

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In the past few decades, studies of the biblical Hebrew verse have made invaluable contributions in the understanding of the complex literary and theological traditions of the Psalter. The fundamental question of what makes the text poetry has generated many different literary approaches and linguistic models. It has been long suggested that the hallmark of biblical Hebrew verse is the sense of rhythmic balance that takes place within and between the adjacent lines upon which the structure of the poem unites. While this sense of rhythmic structural balance might be explained by certain descriptive linguistic correspondences and parallelistic phenomena, the regularities of these linguistic markers across the biblical Hebrew verse have yet to be ascertained.

As helpful as recent studies have been, none indicates what constitutes a line of biblical Hebrew verse other than the lineation indicated by the MT accents or that arranged by the editors of the BHS. With the latter one finds that in many instances the proposed textual emendations are metrically motivated, and the former is not always free of errors. Michael P. O'Connor was the first to advance significantly the definition of a poetic line in his Syntactic Description model.

The vocative and imperative combine in the opening lines of 37 psalms in the Psalter. Using the Syntactic Description model, the dissertation investigates how such

vocative-imperative pattern operates in a poem, especially as a way of opening a poem and the effects it might have on the overall articulation, structure, and theological significance of the poem as a whole. The dissertation analyzes the syntactical structures of twenty classic Individual Laments and identifies commonalities beyond the opening lines such as content, mode of speech, and syntactical structure of the lines. Based on these findings, the dissertation suggests a different genre classification for the psalms studied.

This dissertation by Dan Hoang fulfills the dissertation requirement for the doctoral degree in Biblical Studies approved by Joseph Jensen, O.S.B., S.S.L., S.T.D., as Director, and by Robert D. Miller II, Ph.D., and David Bosworth, Ph.D. as Readers.

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Table of Contents

Chapter One

Theoretical Considerations and Recent Studies

1.1 Statement of the Problem and Background 1

1.2 Purpose.....3

1.3 Methodology.....4

1.4 Biblical Hebrew Verse.....6

1.5 Metrical Systems.....8

1.6 Parallelism 11

1.6.1 Adele Berlin 16

1.7 Studies in Strophes, Stanzas, Similes 20

1.7.1 Petersen and Richards.....20

1.7.2 Hans Kosmala.....21

1.7.3 Pieter van der Lugt.....25

1.8 Syntactic Studies of Biblical Verse.....28

1.8.1 Terrence Collins.....28

1.8.2 Walter T. W. Cloete.....29

1.8.3 Eric D. Reymond 30

1.8.4 Michael P. O'Connor.....31

1.9 Conclusion 39

Chapter Two

Syntactic Description of the Texts of the Twenty Individual Laments

2.0 Introduction 42

2.1 General Description of the Twenty Individual Laments.....47

2.2 Form-Critical Implications in Structure Divisions 48

2.2.1 The Work of Westermann.....48

2.2.2 Gerstenberger, the Problem of Thematically Based Structure Divisions 51

2.3 Syntactical Approach to Structure Divisions: Various Modes of Speeches 54

2.3.1 Summons and General Petition.....54

2.3.2 The Affirmation and Confession Mode of Speech 58

2.3.3 The Complaint 59

2.3.4 The Petition.....64

2.3.5 Praise and Affirmation of Prayer Heard 66

2.4 Syntactic Descriptions and Exegeses of Psalms 26, 54, and 57 67

2.4.1 Psalms 26 67

2.4.2 Psalm 54.....79

2.4.3 Psalm 57.....88

2.5 Syntactic Descriptions of Selected Individual Laments 96

Psalm 5.....96

Psalm 17.....101

Psalm 35.....106

Psalm 43.....113

Psalm 51.....117

Psalm 55.....122

Psalm 56.....128

Psalm 59.....132

Psalm 61.....138

Psalm 64.....141

Psalm 69.....144

Psalm 70.....151

Psalm 86.....155

Psalm 102.....160

Psalm 140.....166

Psalm 141.....170

Psalm 143.....174

Chapter Three

Poetic Descriptions of the Twenty Individual Laments

3.0 Introduction.....179

3.1.1 Initial Grouping of the Twenty Psalms.....181

3.1.2 The Syntactic Constraints of the Lines and Their Distributions.....184

3.1.3 The Structures of the Lines and Line Types of the Twenty Psalms 185

3.2.0 Issues Related to Individual Laments as a Genre 196

3.2.1 Concerning the Poetic Structure of Petitionary Psalms.....196

3.3 Conclusion 206

Chapter Four

Conclusion

4.0 Introduction....208

4.1 The Survey....208

4.2 The Assessment of Syntactic Description Regarding Lineation....210

4.3 The Independence of the Line and Syntactic Ties beyond the Bicolon....213

4.4 The Syntactic Constraints....214

4.5 The Problem of Thematically Based Structure Divisions....215

4.6 The Basic Problem of Individual Lament as a Genre....216

4. 7 Going from Known to Unknown....217

4.8 The Opening Lines of Other Psalms in the Individual Lament Genre....218

4.9 Closing Remarks....221

Bibliography

References....222

Commentaries....222

Monographs....224

Collected Essays and Articles....230

List of Abbreviations

AB	Anchor Bible
ATJ	*Asbury Theological Journal*
BBB	Bonner Biblische Beitrage
Bib	*Biblica*
BJRL	*Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*
BTB	*Biblical Theology Bulletin*
BZAW	Beiheft zur Zeitschrift fur die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
CBQ	*Catholic Biblical Quarterly*
CJL	*Canadian Journal of Linguistics*
CC	Continental Commentary
ConJ	*Concordia Journal*
ConQ	*Congregational Quarterly*
COT	Commentary on the Old Testament
CovQ	*Covenant Quarterly*
CR:BS	*Currents in Research: Biblical Studies*
CTJ	*Calvin Theological Journal*
DJD	Discoveries in the Judaean Desert
DSS	*Dead Sea Discoveries*
EAJT	*East Asia Journal of Theology*
FAW	Forschungen Zum Alten Testament
FOTL	Forms of the Old Testament Literature
HAR	*Hebrew Annual Review*
HBT	*Horizons in Biblical Theology*
HSM	Harvard Semitic Monographs
ICC	International Critical Commentary
Int	*Interpretation*
JANES	*Journal of the Ancient Near Eastern Society*
JAOS	*Journal of the American Oriental Society*
JBL	*Journal of Biblical Literature*
JBQ	*Jewish Bible Quarterly*
JBS	Jerusalem Biblical Studies
JETS	*Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*
JNES	*Journal of Near Eastern Studies*
JSJPHRP	*Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Periods*
JSOT	*Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*
JSOTSup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series
JSP	*Journal for the Study of Pseudepigrapha*
JSS	Journal of Semitic Studies
KHKAT	Kurzer Hand-Kommentar zum Alten Testament

LHBOTS	Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies
LS	*Louvain Studies*
LWC	Living Word Commentary
MB	*Le monde de la Bible*
NCB	New Century Bible
NIBC	New International Biblical Commentary
NRT	*Nouvelle Revue Theologique*
OBT	Overtures to Biblical Theology
OS	*Oudtestamentische Studiën*
OTE	*Old Testament Essays*
OTS	Old Testament Studies
ProEccl	*Pro Ecclesia*
Proof	*Prooftexts*
PRS	*Perspectives in Religious Studies*
PTSB	*Princeton Theological Seminary Bulletin*
QR	*Quarterly Review*
RE	*Review and Expositor*
RevQ	*Revue de Qumran*
RSR	*Revue des Sciences Religieuses*
RW	*Reformed World*
SB	Subsidia Biblica
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SJOT	Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament
TBC	Torch Bible Commentaries
TynBul	*Tyndale Bulletin*
UF	*Ugarit-Forschungen*
VT	*Vetus Testamentum*
VTSup	Vetus Testamentum Supplement Series
WBC	World Biblical Commentary
ZAW	*Zeitscrift fur die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*

Chapter One

Theoretical Considerations and Recent Studies

1.1 Statement of the Problem and Background

For two and a half centuries, since Robert Lowth's 1753 *Lectures on the Sacred Poetry of the Hebrews*, scholars have continued to gain better understanding of the ancient Hebrew language and its poetic forms. Modern scholars have produced studies on the subject and concluded that parallelism in biblical Hebrew verse is far more complex than Lowth's synonymous, antithetic, and synthetic parallelism.

Linguistic study in the decades from 1970s to 1980s produced several significant works focusing on the literary aspects of biblical Hebrew verse. Among the valuable studies were the works of Terence Collins, Stephen A. Geller, Wilfred G. E. Watson, and Adele Berlin.[1] These works presented various linguistic approaches, involving phonological, grammatical, lexical, and semantic aspects. Unlike previous studies, they advanced the recognition that syntax is important in the studies of biblical Hebrew verse. Yet as exceptional as they are, these studies did not define the constraints on the line.

Michael P. O'Connor's *Hebrew Verse Structure* filled this gap with its model of Syntactic Description.[2] Having studied a corpus of twelve-hundred and twenty-five lines

[1] Terence Collins, *Line-Forms in Hebrew Poetry* (SP 7; Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1978); Stephen A. Geller, *Parallelism in Early Biblical Poetry* (Missoula, MT: Scholar Press, 1979); Wilfred G. E. Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry* (JSOTSup 26; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1984); Adele Berlin, *The Dynamics of Biblical Parallelism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985).
[2] Michael P. O'Connor, *Hebrew Verse Structure* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1980).

of biblical Hebrew verse, O'Connor observed that about three-quarters of the lines consist of two or three grammatical elements, each consisting of two or three words.

Linguists and biblicists alike welcomed and received the work with much interest.[3] Experts praised O'Connor's *Hebrew Verse Structure*; Berlin, e.g., said "an impressive book - a synthesis of research in the fields of semitics, linguistics, and literary criticism that takes a giant leap forward in explaining biblical verse."[4] Dennis Pardee welcomed it as "the most important book on Hebrew poetry since Lowth's *Lectures on the Sacred Poetry of the Hebrews*."[5]

Yet biblicists have made use of O'Connor's model of Syntactic Description only in a few commentaries and studies of particular prophetic and wisdom texts;[6] for the Psalter, only three articles on three psalms, 23, 31, and 103, have been published.[7] This neglect was perhaps because *Hebrew Verse Structure* is a highly technical work with too

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[3] Among those who have responded with interest are the following: David T. Andersen, "Problem in Analyzing Hebrew Poetry," EAJT 4 (1986) 68-94; Adele Berlin, *The Dynamics of Biblical Parallelism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985); W. Bright, "With One Lip, with Two Lips," *Language* 66 (1990) 437-52; W. T. W. Cloete, *Versification and Syntax in Jeremiah 2-25: Syntactical Constraints in Hebrew Colometry* (SBLDS 117; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989); Alan M. Cooper, "On Reading Biblical Poetry," *Maarav* 4 (1987) 22-41; Paul E. Dion, *Hebrew Poetics: A Student's Guide* (Mississauga, ON: Benben, 1988); N. K. Gottwald, *The Hebrew Bible: A Socio-Literary Introduction* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985); William L. Holladay, *Jeremiah* (2 vols., Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Augsburg Fortress Publishers, 1986- 89), and "*Hebrew Verse Structure* Revisited (I): Which Words Counted?," *JBL*118/1 (1999) 19-32; Cynthia L. Miller, "The Relation of Coordination to Verb Gapping in Biblical Poetry," JSOT 32/1 (2007) 41-60; Patrick Miller, *Interpreting the Psalms* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986); Dennis Pardee, "The Semantic Parallelism of Psalm 89," in *In the Shelter of Elyon: Essays in Honor of G. W. Ahlström* (ed. W. B. Barrick and J. R. Spencer; JSOTSup 31; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1984) 121-37; Eric D. Reymond, *Innovations in Hebrew Poetry: Parallelism and the Poems of Sirach* (SBL 9; Atlanta : Scholars, 2004).
[4] Adele Berlin, review of Michael P. O'Connor, *Hebrew Verse Structure*, *JAOS* 102/2 (1982) 392-93.
[5] Dennis Pardee, review of Michael P. O'Connor, *Hebrew Verse Structure*, *JNES* 42/4 (1983) 298-301.
[6] These are the works of Cloete, Dion, and Holladay cited in note 1 above.
[7] Paul E. Dion, "Strophic Boundaries and Rhetorical Structure in Psalm 31," *EgT* 18 (1987) 183-92; also "Psalm 103. A Meditation on the "Way" of the Lord," *EgT* 21 (1990) 13-31; C. O'Connor, "The Structure of Psalm 23," *LS* 10 (1985) 206-30.

many neologisms. What is necessary, therefore, is the application of the Syntactic Description to a definite corpus of psalmic texts.

1.2 Purpose

The Syntactic Description model can be useful in analyzing the structural patterns of specific groups of psalms. For example, a group of thirty-seven psalms in the Psalter found their commonality in the combination of vocative and imperative in the opening cola.[8] Using O'Connor's Syntactic Description model, the proposed research will investigate how such a combination operates in a poem, especially as a way of opening a poem, and what effects it might have on the articulation, structure, and theological significance of the poem as a whole.

Below are the thirty-seven psalms referred to, given in accord with Gunkel's genre classifications:[9]

Psalm of Confidence:	4, 16
Individual Lament:[10]	5, 17, 26, 35, 43, 51, 54, 55, 56, 57, 59, 61, 64, 69, 70, 86, 102, 140, 141, 143
Hymn:	29, 33, 103, 104, 117, 134
Wisdom:	49
Enthronement Song:	47

[8] I will exclude the articles and vocative particles, e.g., *lamedh*, and *waw*. Cf. Patrick D. Miller, "Vocative Lamed in the Psalter: A Reconsideration," *UF* 11 (1980) 617-37.
[9] Hermann Gunkel and Joachim Begrich, *Introduction to Psalms: The Genres of the Religious Lyric of Israel* (trans. James D. Nogalski; Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1998) 22, 66, 82, 99, 121, 190, 199, 247, and 295.
[10] I have included Psalm 70 to this list in light of Ps 70:2b and Ps 40:14.

Individual Thanksgiving:	66, 100
Royal Psalm:	72, 132
Legend:	78
Communal Lament:	12, 80

1.3 Methodology

The proposed dissertation presents a two-fold thesis: 1) that these thirty-seven psalms, specifically the twenty Individual Laments, have other similar structural features beyond the opening line, and 2) that the contents of these poems are structured differently than those composed without such an opening combination of vocative and imperative.

I will test this thesis on the twenty Individual Laments identified above because, numerically, they account for more than half of the thirty-seven psalms referred to. This particular genre also occupied nearly a third of all the psalms in the Psalter.

The dissertation will have four chapters:

Chapter One summarizes the present discussions of biblical Hebrew poetry in order to clarify why syntactic analysis, particularly O'Connor's Syntactic Description, is needed and what it is.

Chapter Two assesses the structures of the twenty Individual Laments referred to. This chapter asks the following questions:

1. What are the themes and topics of these psalms?
2. What do they have in common besides the above mentioned syntactic construction in the opening lines?
3. Will O'Connor's definition of a line hold true for this set of new texts?

In the first part of this chapter, I will present brief exegetical comments on three Individual Laments, Psalms 26, 54, and 57. I selected these three psalms because they exemplified the basic prayer forms having this basic structural scheme: address, petition, and praise.[11] I will assess the syntactic structures of these three psalms at the levels of words and lines. The second part of the chapter presents the gross structures of the remaining seventeen psalms.

Chapter Three assesses important similarities and dissimilarities in the structures of Psalms 26, 54, and 57 compared with the rest of the twenty Individual Laments referred to, and subsequently, with other Individual Laments in the Psalter.

Chapter Four evaluates the method and summarizes the findings concerning the texts studied.

[11] Gunkel, *Introduction*, 194; according Gunkel, the structure of Psalms 54 has the resemblance of the oldest form of the individual complaint songs. Psalm 26 has no complaint motif.

1.4 Biblical Hebrew Verse

Most of us can tell the difference between poetry and prose when we read or listen to a discourse in our own language. We cannot do the same with biblical Hebrew verse because we do not know enough about biblical Hebrew poetry; the text of Jeremiah is one example. Undoubtedly, the cuneiform hymnic literature of Mesopotamia, the Ugaritic material, and the Qumran Psalms have been invaluable sources for comparative studies. Yet much remains unknown about the origin, form, and function of the biblical psalms. One assumption is that the patterns of biblical psalms might have originated from the period of early Israel's tribal stage. The ancient Israelites might have articulated their prayers orally in poetical forms and shared them among families and friends, and these prayers were then later edited in written verses and used in larger religious communities.[12] The two forms of poetry, oral and written, while having the same content and meaning, are two different types of medium and format. The oral format could have been articulated in different modes of intonation in accord with various settings and traditions, while the written format would be fixed. To date, linguistic research on the oral format remains largely neglected.[13]

The attempt to recover the original poetic forms of the ancient biblical verse requires a complete knowledge of the original system of poetry of the biblical language.

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[12] Erhard S. Gerstenberger, *Psalms: Part 1 with an Introduction to Cultic Poetry* (FOTL 14; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988) 5-35. See also "Theologies in the Book of Psalms," in *The Book of Psalms: Composition and Reception* (ed. Peter W. Flint and Patrick Miller; VTSup 99; Boston: Brill, 2005) 604-25.

[13] For articles on this topic, see E. J. Revell, "Biblical Punctuation and Chant in the Second Temple Period," *JSJ* 7 (1976) 181-98; as also "Pausal Forms in Biblical Hebrew: Their Function, Origin, and Significance," *JSS* 25 (1980) 165-79; and Bibliography.

Besides the required native competency in the ancient language, this knowledge requires not only the mastery of the written poetic forms of the ancient biblical verse, but also knowledge of how the ancient Jewish people articulated them orally. Sadly, such knowledge is lost for no treatise on the ancient art of biblical verse exists, and the original text of the OT and its phonological aspects are lost. What we have with respect to the oral form of the biblical verse is the invention of the Masoretic-Tiberian system of vowel pointing and accents that is more than a millennium later than the time the ancient Hebrew Psalms were first spoken.

The first task of the inquiry into biblical verse is to define the linguistic functions and properties that make the text poetry. In the search for the descriptions of the biblical Hebrew verse, scholars seek to identify the linguistic patterns that regulate its rhythmic structural quality. For many, a simple way is to identify the phonological patterns of the poems; these scholars believe that such patterns can be identified through the inquiries of the metrical and strophic schemes. The search began long ago by early scholars, Philo and Josephus, who were familiar with the metrical systems in the classic Greek traditions.

1.5 Metrical Systems

As controversial as it is, the topic of meter has continued for centuries to generate many studies and reviews. Scholars claimed various types of metrical models: accent counting, syllable and accent counting, alternate stress counting, syllable counting, letter counting, and word counting models.[14] Of these, the most popular metrical model is the accent counting, accredited to J. J. Bellerman, K. Budde, E. Sievers, J. Ley, and H. Ewald from the early 19th century to the turn of 20th century. Ley claimed that the characteristic feature of the bicolon of Hebrew poetry is the number of tones or accented syllables regardless of the number of unaccented syllables. [15]

Is the biblical Hebrew verse regulated by metrical systems? In his *Classical Hebrew Poetry* (1984), after having rejected various criticisms against the metrical

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[14] See the encyclopedic work of W. G. E. Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry: A Guide to its Techniques.* (JSOTSup 26; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1984); also Alonso L. Schökel, *A Manual of Hebrew Poetics* (trans. Adrian Graffy; SB 11, Rome: Biblical Institute, 1988). The syllable-accent counting system adopted by David Noel Freedman is a modified *Qinah* meter that was developed by K. Budde in 1892; cf. David Noel Freedman, "Acrostics and Metrics in Hebrew Poetry," *HTR* 65 (1972) 367-92. In a more recent study, Freedman and Miano analyzed Psalms 20, 58, 100, 103, and 105 using the same method; they observed that that the numbers of syllables and stresses per line fluctuate between eight syllables-three stresses per line to ten syllables-four stresses per line; cf. David Noel Freedman and David Miano, "Non-acrostic Alphabetic Psalms," in *Book of the Psalms, Composition and Reception* (eds., Peter W. Flint and Patrick Miller; London: Brill, 2005) 87-96. For a good critique of syllable counting metrical system, see George Buchanan Gray, *Forms of Hebrew Poetry Considered with Special Reference to the Criticism and Interpretation of the Old Testament* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1915) 137-54.

[15] Many have accepted this method of accent-counting system, proposed by Julius Ley in his *Grundzüge des Rhythmus, des Vers und Strophenbaues in der hebraischen Poesie,* 1875. Ley first held that a line of Hebrew poetry consists of the number of accented syllables regardless of the number of unaccented syllables (e.g., the meter of a bicolon is presented as 3 + 3 = two cola of 3 accents per line, or 2 + 2 + 2 = three cola of 2 accents per line. The same view is held by Sievers, " Metrische Studien," and " Studien zur beb raischen Metrik " in *Abhandlungen der philhist. Classe der kanigtich sachsischen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften* (1901); also in his *Hebrew Genesis Rhythmically Arranged* (1904). Modern scholars like Frank Moore Cross, David Noel Freedman, and Michael Dahood, among others also have adopted and modified this metrical model.

systems, Watson opted for J. Ley's accent counting system,[16] saying that scholars have failed to "distinguish between metre as actually present in verse, and *regular* metre." According to him, "there is metre, yes, but not regular metre, since metrical patterns are never maintained for more than a few verses at a stretch, if even that."[17] However, some ten years later Watson countered his own view, saying: "my own view is that metre, if it is present, should be transparent and obvious."[18]

The presence of various theoretical models, each having its own unique technique, indicates that the subject of meter is controversial. Perhaps, the study of meter is becoming less popular among biblicists because the proposed models did not show a reasonable degree of regularity and consistency across the texts studied. In addition, the overwhelming presence of verses that do not fit into any prescribed patterns argues against the possibility of a metrical system. Undoubtedly, the task of finding some consistency and regularity of specific syllabic, accent, and stress patterns over the large corpora of the diverse ancient poetic materials preserved by the Masoretes that can accurately describe ancient biblical verse is rather difficult, if not impossible.[19]

Gray observes,

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[16] W. G. E. Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry* (JSOTSup 26; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1984) 91-92. Also, *Traditional Techniques in Classical Hebrew Verse* (JSOTSup 170; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1994) 49.
[17] Watson, *Classical*, 97-98.
[18] W. G. E. Watson, "Problems and Solutions in Hebrew Verse: A Survey of Recent Work," *VT 43* (1993) 380.
[19] For a general discussion of textual history, see E. Würthwein, *The Text of the Old Testament* (trans. E. F. Rhodes; Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1995) 11-44. Würthwein points out: 1) the pronunciation might have changed over time because the Masoretic Tiberian tradition is separated from the ancient Hebrew language for more than a millennium, 2) there are differences in pronunciations within the Masoretes of the ben Asher and ben Naphtali families, 3) the Greek and Latin transliterations of the early Hebrew texts do reflected different pronunciations from the Masoretic Tiberian tradition.

> I have no new theory of Hebrew metre to set forth; and I cannot accept in all its details any theory that others have elaborated. In my judgment, some understanding of the laws of Hebrew rhythm has been gained: but much still remains uncertain.[20]

Therefore, O'Connor states, "no consensus has ever been reached in the matter of Hebrew meter because there is none."[21] So also Kugel,

> Nearly two thousand years of scanning, syllable-counting, and the like have failed to yield a consistent metrical system in them – certainly nothing to which the terms "hexameters," "pentameter," or "trimeter" might be meaningfully applied.[22]

Without having convincingly identified a meter system, how would then scholars differentiate biblical verse from prose? This leads to the issues of parallelism.

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[20] Gray, *Forms*, vi. For a critical view against metrical systems, see Johannes C. de Moor's "The Art of Versification in Ugarit and Israel: The Rhythmical Structure," in *Studies in Bible and the Ancient Near East Presented to Samuel E. Loewenstamm on his Seventieth Birthday* (ed. Yitschak Avishur and Joshua Blau; Jerusalem: E. Rubinstein's Pub. House, 1978) 119-39. Also Dennis Pardee, "Ugaritic and Hebrew Metrics," in *Ugarit in Retrospect: 50 Years of Ugarit and Ugaritic* (ed. G. D. Young; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1981) 113-30. So also Hans Kosmala, "Form and Structure in Ancient Hebrew Poetry: A New Approach," in *Poetry in the Hebrew Bible: Selected Studies from Vestus Testamentum* (compiled by David E. Orton; Boston: Brill, 2000) 423-45.

[21] Michael P. O'Connor, *Hebrew Verse Structure* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1980) 138.

[22] James L. Kugel, *Idea of Biblical Poetry: Parallelism and its History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981) 141.

1.6 Parallelism

In an attempt to reconcile the tension between two different rabbinic schools of thoughts on the issue of meter, Rabbi Azariah dé Rossie proposed that the basic elements of biblical Hebrew meter are the number of ideas, i.e., number of words, and not the numbers of syllables and stresses.[23] Azariah dé Rossi's idea has cleared a new path for an exit from metrical studies. His claim gives way to the focus on the linguistic sense, i.e., the characteristic of biblical Hebrew verse. Leading the way was Bishop Robert Lowth.

In his 1778 *Lectures on the Sacred Poetry of the Hebrews*, Lowth's comments on the lexical and grammatical correspondences between couplets provided the fundamental principles for many linguistic approaches to the biblical verse,

> The correspondence of one verse, or line, with another, I call parallelism. When a proposition is delivered, and a second is subjoined to it, or drawn under it, equivalent, or contrasted with it, in sense; or similar to it in the form of grammatical construction; these I call parallel lines, and the words or phrases, answering one to another in the corresponding lines, parallel terms. Parallel lines may be reduced to three sorts: parallels synonymous, parallels antithetic and parallels synthetic.[24]

Lowth's theory has standardized the bicolon as the basic building block of biblical Hebrew verse. For the past two and a half centuries to the present time, many inquiries

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[23] As pointed out by Adele Berlin, "Azariah de' Rossi on Biblical Poetry," *Prooftexts* 12 (1992) 175-83.

[24] Robert Lowth, *Isaiah: A New Translation* (London: Wm. Tegg and Co., 1778) viii. For recent studies on Lowth, see the following articles in *Sacred Conjectures: The Context and Legacy of Robert Lowth and Jean Astruc* (ed. John Jarick, LHBOTS 457; London/New York: Clark, 2007): Scott Mandelbrote, "Biblical Scholarship at Oxford in the Mid-Eighteenth Century: Local Contexts for Robert Lowth's *De Sacra Poesi Hebraeorum*," 1-24; Anna Cullhed, "Original Poetry: Robert Lowth and Eighteenth-Century Poetics," 25-47; Stephen Prickett, "Robert Lowth and the Idea of Biblical Tradition," 48-61; Christopher Bultmann, "After Horace: Sacred Poetry at the Centre of the Hebrew Bible," 62-82; John Rogerson, "Charles François Houbigant: His Background, Work, and Importance for Lowth," 83-92; Markus Witte, "Die literarische Gattung des Buches Hiob: Robert Lowth und seine Erben," 93-123. On the same topic, see Berlin's *Biblical Poetry through Medieval Jewish Eyes* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1991).

into the biblical Hebrew verse started out with the presupposition that parallelism is the hallmark characteristic of biblical verse.[25] Yet the majority of past studies have grounded Lowth's definition of parallelism exclusively in the semantic correspondences which he referred to as *sense*. Many biblical scholars, misled by Lowth's definition of parallelism, have neglected the *form of grammatical construction*, which are the morphological and syntactical correspondences. Roman Jakobson points out:

> The role performed by "figure of grammar" in world poetry from antiquity up to the present time is still surprising for students of literature a whole century after it was first pointed out by Hopkins. The ancient and medieval theory of poetry had an inkling of poetic grammar and was prone to discriminate between lexical tropes and grammar figures (*figuae verborum*), but these sound rudiments were later lost.[26]

At the rise of modern literary critical criticism, many scholars have moved away from Lowth's definition of parallelism and investigated the parallelistic phenomena using different linguistic approaches and theories. Many good insights have been drawn from the early Ugaritic materials and the later Hebrew and Aramaic literatures of the apocrypha and pseudepigrapha from the second century BC to the second century AD.[27]

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[25] Cf. Gray, *Form*, 17.

[26] R. Jakobson, "Poetry of Grammar and Grammar of Poetry," *Lingua* 21 (1968) 604. See also his other article "Grammatical Parallelism and Its Russian Facet," *Language* 42 (1966) 423.

[27] For example, Ecclesiasticus, Maccabees, Judith, *Psalms of Solomon*, *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, *Jubilees*, and *Apocalypse of Ezra/4 Ezra*. One important work is James Kugel, *Idea of Biblical Poetry: Parallelism and its History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981). In chapters 3- 6 of his book, Kugel provides a wealth of information on the history of the studies of biblical Hebrew verse since the rabbinic time up to the Renaissance period. For a good survey of the origin of the ideas of parallelism since the second century AD, see the introductory chapter of Gray, *Forms of Hebrew*, 23-30.

In addition, the studies of Qumran materials are also important contributions to the linguistic studies of biblical verse.[28]

Equipped with modern linguistic tools, scholars reckoned that biblical Hebrew verse is far more complex than Lowth's synonymous, antithetic, and synthetic parallelism.[29] They challenge the core of Lowth's theory, which is grounded on the belief that the contiguous character of the *parallelismus membrorum* of the bicola/tricola and meter characterized the biblical Hebrew verse. O'Connor argues that the Standard Description needs drastic revisions, charging that Lowth's Standard Theory is "both linguistically inadequate and heuristically worn out (i.e. it is wrong and useless)."[30]

O'Connor asserts that the Standard Description does not adequately describe the rhythmic structure quality of biblical Hebrew verse because of these three major flaws:[31]

1. The Standard Theory focuses on the bicolon as the only real unit was an important deterrent to the study of the whole poem because it erroneously describes poems as structureless assemblages of uniform bicola.
2. The Standard Theory erroneously absolutizes the bicolon as the basic building block. This claim is false because the pairing of cola is almost absolute, but

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[28] On Qumran studies of poetry, see D. Falk, *Daily, Sabbath, and Festival Prayers in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Leiden: Brill. 1998); E. G. Chazon, "Prayers from Qumran and their Historical Implications," *DSD* 1 (1994) 265-84; B. Nitzan, *Qumran Prayer and Religious Poetry* (Leiden: Brill, 1994); S. Segert, "Observations on Poetic Structures in the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice," *RevQ* 13 (1988) 215-24; and J. Strugnell and D. J. Harrington, *Qumran Cave 4, Sapiential Texts, Part 2: 4Q Instruction* (DJD 34; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999).
[29] For a good critique on Lowth's synthetic parallelism, see Gray, *Forms of Hebrew*, 48-50.
[30] Michael P. O'Connor, *Contour of Biblical Hebrew Verse: An Afterword to Hebrew Verse Structure* (Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 1997) 632.
[31] O'Connor, *Contour*, 638-41.

not quite, even in certain types of verses, e.g., Proverbs, Job, and Psalm 119, where an overwhelming regularity of the pairing of cola occurred.

3. The Standard Theory falsely defines parallelism as a narrowly lexical phenomenon.

Another prominent opponent of the Standard Theory is Kugel. Rejecting Lowth's description of parallelism, Kugel concurs with many modern scholars who have realized that Lowth's idea of synthetic parallelism is erroneous because it serves as a catchall category in cases the cola do not fit into the first two categories. Kugel aptly point out that Lowth's synonymous category is linguistically inadequate because it implies that the paralleled cola contain two identical statements, i.e., saying the same thing twice.[32]

Noting the inadequacy of the Standard Theory, recent inquiries into the phenomena of parallelism in biblical verse have resulted in many literary types and categories of parallelism (e.g., antithesis, centripetal/centrifugal, parallelism of greater precision, among other types of parallelism).[33] Berlin sees parallelism as the correspondences of linguistic equivalences involving all linguistic aspects, i.e., lexical, grammatical, semantic, and phonetic aspect. Along this approach is Pardee; he defines four types of parallelism: repetition, grammatical (morphology and syntax), semantic, and phonetic. For O'Connor, parallelistic phenomena can take place between two adjacent cola, and between remote cola. The latter is a major difference between

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[32] Kugel, *Idea*, 12-15.

[33] Cf. J. Krašovec, *Antithetic Structure in Biblical Hebrew Poetry* (SVT 35; Leiden: Brill, 1984); D. Grossberg, *Centripetal and Centrifugal Structure in Biblical Poetry* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989); A. Cooper, "On Reading Biblical Poetry," *Maarav* 4 (1987) 221-41; D. L. Petersen and K. H. Richards, *Interpreting Hebrew Poetry* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992).

O'Connor's and the conventional understanding of parallelism, i.e., the pairing of two adjacent cola.[34]

Like the metrical theories, past and present approaches to parallelism suffered the wide gaps of theoretical differences. These differences indicate that biblical Hebrew verse remains elusive. Kugel aptly observes,

> Most important is to stress that the taxonomic approach to parallelism has in the past proven largely futile, and that the multiplication of categories of semantic or other parallelism has had a particularly diverting, and therefore negative, effect on an overall understanding.[35]

Nonetheless, recent proposals of various linguistic models have shown much progress in the understanding of biblical Hebrew verse. Scholars have expanded and modified previous studies; using modern tools across linguistic spectrum, they claimed that the phenomena in poetic forms and characters might be universal and that they might not be restricted to biblical verse alone, as once believed.

After more than twenty years the works of Berlin, Geller, Greenstein, Kugel, Pardee, Watson, among others, continue to be useful resources for understanding parallelism.[36] These studies have received much attention and generated many insightful reviews. It is not necessary to present a complete account of every theoretical model dealing with parallelism. The intention here is to provide a brief survey of studies deemed significant to the goals of this investigation.

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[34] O'Connor calls these parallelistic phenomena "tropes," O'Connor, *HVS*, 96.
[35] James L. Kugel, "Some Thoughts on Future Research into Biblical Style: Addenda to *The Idea of Biblical Poetry*," JS0T 28 (1984) 107.
[36] These works have been cited in note 1.

1.6.1 Adele Berlin[37]

Some twenty-five years after its publication, many still consider Berlin's *Dynamic of Biblical Parallelism* as the best textbook for understanding the phenomena of parallelism in biblical Hebrew verse. According to Berlin, a poem is constructed within the parameters of two main characteristics: terseness and parallelism. Drawing insights from R. Lowth, H. Clark, J. E. Deese, T. van Dijk, and R. Jakobson, Berlin approaches biblical Hebrew verse by investigating parallelism. Berlin proposes that the activation of both lexical (phonology and semantics) and grammatical (morphology and syntax) aspects form parallelism.

Berlin describes semantic parallelism using psycholinguistic theories of word association in paradigmatic and syntagmatic categories. The former describes the semantic relations and the latter syntactical functions of the words; Berlin describes these categories in terms of fixed word-pairs. The phonological parallelism is the repetition and contrast of sound pairs of identical or same consonants excluding vowels.

According Berlin, grammatical parallelism is the alternation of grammatical structure in parallel stichs, or the pairing of two different grammatical structures in parallel stichs. Berlin sees grammatical parallelism as having two subdivisions: morphological and syntactical. Morphology deals with the individual words in the sentence. It is the pairing of word pairs from different morphological classes (noun, pronoun, relative clause, prepositional phrase, adverb, substantive, and verb), or from the

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[37] Adele Berlin, *Dynamic of Biblical Parallelism* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1985).

same morphological class with different morphological components (different tense, conjugation, gender, and number).

Syntactic parallelism deals with different syntactic construction patterns in the sentence/stich as a whole. According to Berlin, syntactic parallelism consists not only of the pairing of two identical syntactic constructions but it also involves the transformation that takes place not in "the original sentence that has been transformed, but rather another, unrealized sentence that is parallel to it."[38] Berlin gives examples from various corpora illustrating four main types of transformations that she calls syntactic parallelism.

The first type is Nominal-Verbal syntactic parallelism. Berlin cites Micah 6:2b to illustrate:

כִּי רִיב לַיהוָה עִם־עַמּוֹ
וְעִם־יִשְׂרָאֵל יִתְוַכָּח

For Yhwh has a case against his people;
And with Israel he will dispute.

In close observation, there are other layers of syntactic correspondences in the above two sentences besides the Nominal to Verbal transformation, e.g., words association of "my people" and "Israel," repetition of particle עם and the use of prepositional phrases and their positions in the couplet. The observations point out the difficulty in the classification of parallelism.

The second category is Positive-Negative syntactic parallelism; Berlin gives this example of Proverb 6:20:

[38] Berlin, *Dynamic*, 53.

נְצֹר בְּנִי מִצְוַת אָבִיךָ
וְאַל־תִּטֹּשׁ תּוֹרַת אִמֶּךָ

Keep, my son, the commandment of your father
And do not forsake the teaching of your mother;

Again, the above two cola syntactically show more than just Positive-Negative transformation. Note how the second-person singular imperative נְצֹר relates to the second-person singular non-perfective negative prohibition וְאַל־תִּטֹּשׁ in the next line.[39] Note also the word associations of the construct chains מִצְוַת אָבִיךָ and תּוֹרַת אִמֶּךָ and their grammatical slots in the sentences.

The next two categories are Subject-Object and Change in Grammatical Mood parallelism. They, too, exhibit the same problems as the preceding two categories.

These observations illustrate the problems in the defining and classifying the types of parallelism. In fact, they challenge the ideas of parallelism as the hallmark of biblical Hebrew verse.

Moving on to Berlin's other idea of parallelism, the relationship between the linguistic elements, that which is distilled and condensed within the cola, is what makes poetry.

> A poem distills and condenses its message, removing "unnecessary" words and leaving only the nucleus of thought. At the same time, without losing its terseness, it constructs relationships between its parts such that the final product is unified.[40]

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[39] In the next chapter of the dissertation, I will show that this type of construction, i.e., the imperative-vocative clause in the first line followed by perfective or non-perfective clause in the second line is quite common in the Psalter.

[40] Berlin, *Dynamic*, 6.

Berlin sees two main characteristics in a poem: terseness and parallelism. For her, all aspects of grammatical and lexical accounts play equal roles in the formation of parallelism and, in effect, the unity of a poem. The problem with this assertion is that Berlin's proposal of parallelism only accounts for the linguistic correspondences that occur within and between the two adjacent cola, not between the remote cola, and certainly not the entire poem. Therefore, it is difficult to see how the cohesiveness, if any, of the surface structure of the two adjacent cola in parallel extends its connectedness to the whole poem.

Berlin's global view on the construction of parallelism ignores the important question of what comes first. Is it the selection of words that dictates syntactic construction of a line, or it is the syntax that regulates terseness and calls for the selection of words? Her global view is in tension with Jakobson's linguistic theoretical principles and insights that she has drawn from. For Berlin, the parallelistic phenomena of grammatical and lexical correspondences take place at the same time. Perhaps this is a main difference between Berlin's, O'Connor's and Collins' proposals, for O'Connor and Collins both held that the governing force of Hebrew poetry is syntax. O'Connor's idea about the constraints on the line, and the working of the tropes that describe the syntactic correspondences within and between cola might have some parallels with Berlin's idea of the construction of the cola described in terms of terseness and parallelism. Berlin's work raises these questions about parallelism:

1. How does the parallelism of the two adjacent cola contribute to the structural unity of the poem?

2. What linguistic elements and correspondences, contained within a cola, can serve as the determining criteria in identifying and classifying types of parallelism?
3. How predominant is parallelism as a phenomenon in biblical verse versus prose?
4. What are the function and effect of parallelism with respect to the understanding of the text?

Berlin's *Dynamic of Biblical Parallelism* won high praise for pointing out various grammatical phenomena related to parallelism in the biblical verse. However, unless one can confirm the predominance of certain types of parallelisms in a given text or in a corpus of texts, students of biblical verse soon realize that the topic of parallelism is no less controversial than the topic of meter because "parallelism is not indicative of poetry since prose, too, uses parallelism."[41]

1.7 Studies in Strophes, Stanzas, Similes:

1.7.1. Petersen and Richards[42]

Petersen and Richards tried to show that non-Semitic ideas of poetry might be used in analyzing biblical verse. In their compact monograph, Petersen and Richards discussed four topics of Hebrew poetry: parallelism, meter, rhythm, and simile. Petersen and Richard seemed to come short of rejecting the ideas of meter, though they are in accord with Kugel, O'Connor, Döller, Collins, and Pardee, saying that meter lacks

[41] Watson, *Classical*, 50.
[42] David L. Petersen and Kent Harold Richards, *Interpreting Hebrew Poetry: Guides to Biblical Scholarship* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992).

predictability. Petersen and Richards hold that biblical verse should be thought of in terms of rhythmic patterns instead of meter.[43] It is difficult to assess their view on meter and rhythm. In the introductory chapter, it seemed that they have argued against the ideas of grounding one's metrical analysis on the Masoretic pointing system:

> So, when one attempts to determine the rhythm of a Hebrew poem, one must remember that the Masoretic text's vocalization includes a phonology, a system of sounds, that may not reflect the poem's original form. Adding to, subtracting from, or revising the sound and spelling of a word or line affects fundamentally the way it works rhythmically.[44]

Petersens and Richards' assessment of parallelism is also difficult. According to them, parallelism "occurs in the interaction of semantic and grammatical equivalence and opposition [this part comes from Lowth and Berlin]. The juxtaposition of an A and B provides the opportunity for an almost infinite number of correspondences [this is partly from Kugel]."[45] Petersens and Richards' broad description of parallelism has made it more than a hallmark of biblical Hebrew verse, for the possibilities of correspondences between the cola are almost infinite.

1.7.2 Hans Kosmala[46]

Kosmala was among the first to quantify the cola in term of the number of units, i.e., he counts a word as a unit. Unconvinced by the Masoretic vocalization and accentuation system, Kosmala rejects the metrical models; he argues that these theoretical

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[43] Petersen and Richards, *Interpreting*, 42-43.
[44] Petersen and Richards, *Interpreting*, 5.
[45] Petersen and Richards, *Interpreting*, 35; comments in brackets are mine.
[46] Hans Kosmala, "Form and Structure in Ancient Hebrew Poetry: A New Approach," in *Poetry in the Hebrew Bible: Selected Studies from Vestus Testamentum* (compiled by David E. Orton; Boston: Brill, 2000) 423-45.

models require unnecessary and radical textual emendations. Kosmala sees similarities between various biblical prophetic corpora and Ugaritic poems with respect to regularity in the structure of the cola, claiming that the same structural regularity also occurred in many of the Hebrew psalms, for they too followed similar rules.

Kosmala holds that the smallest member of a poetic line is a unit. A unit is a constituent, that is, everything that can be expressed by one essential word, any noun, verb, pronoun, adjective, adverb, a numeral. Any essential word and its suffix in the sentence represents one unit (definite object marker, particles, prepositions, unless they have a suffix designating a person or an object are excluded).[47] A couplet consists of six units in most cases, but also five to eight units are quite frequent. Having examined certain poetic pieces from the book of Isaiah and other prophetic corpora, Kosmala claims that these two principles define a poem in strict correspondence between its outward form and inner structure:

1. The regularity of the number of thought units, i.e. words, of a sentence forms a complete and self-contained *line* regardless of the numbers of stresses (*line* = couplet).
2. A line of a certain length corresponds to another line of equal length.[48]

Kosmala's definition of structure of a poem is vague. He believes that the use of two parallel clauses in a line, and the close correspondences between the form, and the arrangement of ideas in the composition as a whole create parallelism between and within

[47] Kosmala, *Form*, 426. Similarly, Theodore Robinson emphasized the importance of the word-unit in his article, "Some Principles of Hebrew Metrics," *ZAW* 54, (1936) 28-43.
[48] Kosmala, *Form*, 424.

the couplets. Citing various examples in First Isaiah, minor prophets, and the Psalter, Kosmala proposes two basic poetic forms: 1) oracles and 2) poems with progressive and symmetrical stanzas.

According Kosmala, the simplest form of poetry appears in oracles. This form consists of between two to five cola/couplets. One example he gives is Numbers 24:16-17:

נְאֻם שֹׁמֵעַ אִמְרֵי־אֵל	The oracle of the listener of the words of God,
וְיֹדֵעַ דַּעַת עֶלְיוֹן	And knows the knowledge of the Most High.
מַחֲזֵה שַׁדַּי יֶחֱזֶה	He sees the vision of the Almighty,
נֹפֵל וּגְלוּי עֵינָיִם:	Falling down, and his eyes uncovered.
אֶרְאֶנּוּ וְלֹא עַתָּה	I see him, but not now.
אֲשׁוּרֶנּוּ וְלֹא קָרוֹב	I behold him, but not near.
דָּרַךְ כּוֹכָב מִיַּעֲקֹב	A star has marched forth from Jacob;
וָקָם שֵׁבֶט מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל	A scepter shall rise from Israel.
וּמָחַץ פַּאֲתֵי מוֹאָב	And shall shatter the sides of Moab,
וְקַרְקַר כָּל־בְּנֵי־שֵׁת:	And the crown of the heads of all the sons of Sheth.

Kosmala believes that "in symmetrically constructed poems, the first line corresponds to the last, both in length and in content, the second line to the last but one, and so forth. The central axis is the middle of the poem; it is an individual line that may carry the main message of the poem."[49]

In trying to establish this pattern of chiastic construction and symmetrical balance between the cola, Kosmala left out not only words but also cola. He incorrectly starts counting at v. 16 instead of v. 15b, and ends Balaam's first saying at v. 17 instead of v. 19, thus forcing the oracle to fit into five cola of the same length of six units each. He argues for a chiastic construction of the oracle, saying that the first two cola, v. 16, belong together; so do the last two cola. This grouping leaves v. 17a as the central axis between the two pairs.[50]

Clearly, though the oracle does not scan as Kosmala has claimed, quantitatively the cola fall within the range of two to three words per line. In a closer look at Numbers 24:15-24, several observations can be made:

1. The four prophecies of the oracle do not align with the Masoretic divisions.
2. The connectedness and contiguity of the bicola are not consistent.[51]

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[49] Kosmala, *Form*, 433-44.
[50] Actually, Balaam's fourth and last oracle contains four sayings on different topics (vv. 15b-19, v. 20b, vv. 21b-22, and vv. 23b-24), each saying is marked with the direct quotation frame "and he lifted up his discourse and said" which occurs at vv. 15a, 20a, 21a, and 23a.
[51] Same problem is shown in Pardee's analysis of Psalm 29 in "On Psalm 29: Structure and Meaning," in *The Book of the Psalms, Composition and Reception* (ed. Peter W. Flint and Patrick Miller; Leiden, Netherlands : Brill, 2005) 153-83.

3. The relative independent character of the cola is shown in vv. 18-19, and 23-24.
4. The tendency of taking the cola/distich as the absolute basic unit hinders one from assessing the working of the larger units of the poem.

Kosmala's chiastic structural analyses are subjective; but his study indicates the focus on the localized reading of individual parts/members of the cola and the relationships between them, which in turn form the structure of the sentences and the entire poem as the result.

Kosmala's quantification of the couplet prompts this basic question: Does it make any difference whether a couplet contains five, six, or eight words? On the one hand, it does not, unless the number of words in the cola stay constant in a certain textual tradition or genre (to be sure they do not), such that one may identify some sort of a rhythmic pattern. On the other hand, it does point out quantitatively the character of the structure of a couplet within the prescribed range of the number of words, i.e., five to six in most cases, and can be up to eight in rare cases. Recalling, also, what have been averaged in various metrical model analyses (four to six accents per bicolon, one accent per word), one now has some idea about what Berlin called terseness. In this respect, Kosmala's essays serve as a second stepping-stone, after dé Rossie. His description of the couplet as a basic member of the structure of the poem gives hints for important linguistic models to follow; among them is O'Connor's *Hebrew Verse Structure*.

1.7.3 Pieter van der Lugt [52]

One recent significant piece of research into strophic structure of the Psalter is Pieter van der Lugt's *Cantos and Strophes in Biblical Hebrew Poetry with Special Reference to the First Book of the Psalter* (2006). Lugt has written several monographs on the strophic structure of the biblical verse, including his dissertation written in Dutch, *Strofische structuren in de bijbels-hebreeuwse poezi* (1980) and *Rhetorical Criticism and the Poetry of the Book of Job* (1995).

Lugt offers a commendable survey of the history of the study of strophes in biblical poetry from the beginning of the nineteenth century to the first half of the twentieth century (pp. 1-68). After having surveyed more than sixty important studies and numerous proposals from prominent scholars on the subject, Lugt concludes, "to this very day, the question of strophic structure in Hebrew poetry is a much disputed issue."[53]

Lugt explains his methodology in chapter two (pp. 69-92). He scans the strophic divisions based on themes, transition markers, verbal repetitions, and quantitative structure aspects. The last of these is Lugt's idea of strophic symmetry of chiastic pattern following Kosmala; the chiastic pattern consists of two halves in an equal number of verse lines and cola. Serving as the central theme of the poem, a central axis separates the two halves. The number of words in a line, a bicolon, or tricolon determines the central axis. Interestingly, the belief in the symbolic nature of numbers plays a decisive role in structure division and the meaning of the text.

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[52] Pieter van der Lugt, *Cantos and Strophes in Biblical Hebrew Poetry with Special Reference to the First Book of the Psalter* (OTS 53; Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2006).
[53] Lugt, *Cantos*, 69.

The bulk of Lugt's study is in chapter three; it consists of the structural analyses of Psalms 1-41 (pp. 93-418). In chapter four, he tabulates the design of the cantos for the 150 psalms (pp. 419-36); in chapter five Lugt gives some remarks on the verbal repetition, refrain, overall structures, tricola, and transition markers (pp. 437-566).

It is difficult to assess Lugt's ideas of the chiastic patterns and the notion of a central axis that he derives from all forty-one psalms because he gives no textual supports. In the attempt to achieve symmetrical and chiastic patterns in strophic divisions, Lugt scans his structural divisions subjectively. His idea of the central axis that contains the central theme of the psalm is exegetically over-simplified and erroneous; it compromises the messages of the entire poem.

It seems that Lugt was reluctant at first to determine the basic unit of the poem. He begins with the macrostructure of the larger unit of stanzas and cantos and uses them to establish the structures of the psalms, stating, "from this perspective, the problem of the length of the cola is of 'secondary' importance."[54] However, he later concurs with the view of taking the bicolon as the basic unit, asserting that,

> The view in question is, among other things, based on the conviction that in the book of the Psalms, as a rule, *the arrangement of the Masoretic text may be trusted.* Next, the material and/or formal correspondences between successive cola, the *parallelismus membrorum* or the internal parallelism, is an important rhetorical characteristic determining the inner coherence of the verselines. Additionally, it is important to note that the *Masoretic accents within the verses, which (among other things) mark off the cola, generally deserve more serious* consideration than is usually shown to them by critics.[55]

[54] Lugt, *Cantos*, 73.
[55] Lugt, *Cantos*, 522; italics are mine.

Taking the bicolon as the basic unit has caused Lugt's thesis and his structural analyses of forty-one psalms to fall apart. Contrary to the conviction stated above, Lugt's quantitative analyses counted a line as one unit. Moreover, his analyses did not align with the arrangement of the Masoretic text, nor did they consider the Masoretic accents seriously. Lugt's analyses showed the deviations from the Masoretic accents in forty cola delimitations, in twenty-three psalms out of the total forty-one presented.[56] These deviations are due to Lugt's denial of the independent character of the line, to his forcing of the texts into some symmetrical strophic-chiastic patterns, to his word counts that the texts do not afford, and perhaps, to his disregard for the Masoretic accents.

1.8 Syntactic Studies of Biblical Verse

Scholars have offered many different linguistic models ranging from generative to extremely descriptive models. Looking for the alternatives to the metrical models and the Lowthian system, they began to investigate the ancient texts using modern theories across the linguistic spectrum, both in the ancient and modern languages, trying to formulate a new set of general descriptions of biblical Hebrew verse.

What are the descriptions of correspondences of the biblical verse? What is the building block unit of the structure of a poem? Enriched by the knowledge of modern linguistics, scholars began to approach biblical Hebrew verse on the basis of grammatical aspects, going from the known realm of linguistic phenomena to the unknown realm of

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[56] These are: Ps 2:11-12, p. 100; Ps 4:2b, 3b, 5a, p. 112; Ps 5:.9b, p. 118; Ps 7:9a, p. 135; Ps 8:9b, p. 137; Ps 9:3, p. 142; Ps 10:10, 15, p. 148; Ps 12:5, p. 169; Ps 14:7, p. 178; Ps 15:5c, p. 183; Ps 17:3b, p. 195; Ps 18:2-3, 13a, 29, p. 205; Ps 19:5c, p. 219; Ps 20:10, p. 226; Ps 22:31-32, p. 240; Ps 23:4, p. 250; Ps 25:1-2, p. 262; Ps 29:7-9, p. 294; Ps 30:12, p. 301; Ps 32:2a-b, p. 321; Ps 34:8, p. 337; Ps 35:4, 15, p. 349; Ps 40:5a-b, 6, 12, p. 399.

the ancient biblical verse. The works produced in the decades from 1970s to the present in many ways exemplify such attempts.[57]

1.8.1 Terrence Collins

Terrence Collins, *Line-Forms in Hebrew Poetry*, is among the first to advance further the important role of syntax in the analyses of biblical Hebrew verse. Like O'Connor, Collins proposes that syntax is the predominant force in the construction of the line in biblical Hebrew verse. Collins attempted to provide a syntactically based method that systematically describes and classifies biblical Hebrew verse in prophetic materials.

Noting the grammatical arguments/constituents of the line, Collins categorizes over 1,900 cola of prophetic texts, which he places under of *basic*, *general*, and *specific line-types.* Basic sentence lines consist of four different types: 1) one basic sentence-line, 2) two basic sentence-lines with same grammatical arguments, 3) two basic sentence-lines with different arguments, 4) two different basic sentence-lines. Collins shows that syntax study can provide good insights for the interpretations of biblical verse; he observes that syntactic usages in Jeremiah are more similar to Third Isaiah than First and Second Isaiah.

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[57] These are some examples: Terence Collins, *Line-Forms in Hebrew Poetry* (SP 7; Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1978); Aland M. Cooper, *Biblical Poetics: A Linguistic Approach* (Missoula: Montana: Scholars Press, 1979); Wilfred G. E. Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry: A Guide to Its Techniques* (JSOTSUP 26; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1984); W. T. W. Cloete, *Versification and Syntax in Jeremiah 2-25: Syntactical Constraints in Hebrew Colometry* (SBLDS 117; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989); Paul E. Dion, *Hebrew Poetics: A Student's Guide* (Mississauga, ON: Benben, 1988); William L. Holladay, *Jeremiah I*, (Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986), also *Jeremiah II* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1989); Cynthia L. Miller, *The Verbless Clause in Biblical Hebrew: Linguistic Approaches* (Linguistic Studies in Ancient West Semitic; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1999); Dennis Pardee, *Ugaritic and Hebrew Poetic Parallelism: A Trial Cut [ᶜnt 1 and Proverbs* 2] (VTSup 39; Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 1988); Eric D. Reymond, *Innovations in Hebrew Poetry: Parallelism and the Poems of Sirach* (SBL 9; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 2004); Michael Rosenbaum, *Word-Order Variation in Isaiah 40-55: A Functional Perspective* (SSN 36; Assen, Netherlands: Van Gorcum, 1997).

1.8.2 Walter T. W. Cloete

Cloete modified and used O'Connor's method in his attempt to define the colometric system of biblical Hebrew verse using Jeremiah 2-25.[58] After having surveyed non-syntactic approaches to versification such as parallelism and various metrical models, he argues that these models, except syntax, are inadequate for line delimitation. Cloete reaffirms O'Connor's syntactic approach to line delimitation but modifies it to include the counting of objects suffixed to verbs as units and constituents. Cloete also includes the stress counting in his analysis.

Cloete defines the line as the basic metrical unit that is comprised of four levels: units, constituents, clause predicators, and main stress. A line can have a range of between 2-5 units, 1-4 constituents, 0-3 clause predicators, and 1-4 main stresses.[59] The reason Cloete includes the stress counts in his analysis is because the main stress marks the end of the line. Cloete's analysis is an interesting merge of syntax and phonology features to describe the text of Jeremiah 2-25.

1.8.3 Eric D. Reymond [60]

The corpus considered by Reymond comprises the nine poems of the Masada scroll: Sir 40:11-44:15. Reymond considers the bicolon as the basic unit. Reymond's quantitative analysis involves the division of the cola into consonants, syllables, words, and vocable counts. He also employs O'Connor's analyses of clause predicators,

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[58] Walter Theophilus Woldemar Cloete, *Versification and Syntax in Jeremiah 2-25: Syntactical Constraints in Hebrew Colometry* (SBLDS 117; Atlanta: Scholars, 1989).
[59] Cloete, *Versification,* 216.
[60] Eric D. Reymond, *Innovations in Hebrew Poetry: Parallelism and the Poems of Sirach* (SBL 9; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 2004).

constituents, and units. With respect to parallelism, Reymond follows Dennis Pardee and classifies four main types of parallelism occurring within and between adjacent and distant cola: repetition, grammatical (morphology and syntax), semantic, and phonetic.

Using syntactic analysis, Reymond was able to conclude that Sirach is a distinctive and independent prototype of biblical verse revealed by the poet's choices of word pairs. Reymond finds five common features in the text studied: (1) a consistent bicolon structure, (2) an approximate equivalence of line-length within bicola, (3) frequency of grammatical parallelism within the cola, (4) infrequency of common word pairs and of semantic parallelism at verse level, and (5) frequent grammatical, semantic, repletion parallelism between intermediate adjacent verses. [61]

1.8.4 Michael P. O'Connor

O'Connor's *Hebrew Verse Structure* has been influenced by the structuralist linguistic theory's of the Prague school headed by Roman Jakobson, who holds that grammar is a determining force in poetry. O'Connor claims four qualities make a poem distinctive: (1) cultural idioms, (2) setting amid language acts: speakers, listeners, and background audiences, (3) use of language: the best words [in the best order], and (4) rhythm or structure: the best order.[62] O'Connor believes that because the rhythm or structure quality has not been properly understood, understanding of other qualities of the poem is distorted. O'Connor's *Hebrew Verse Structure* holds a two-part thesis: (1) the

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[61] Reymond, *Innovations*, 1-2, and 137-38.
[62] Michael P. O'Connor, *Contour of Biblical Hebrew Verse: An Afterword to Hebrew Verse Structure* (Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 1997) 631-32.

rhythm or structure quality as presented by the bicola/tricola system, which he called Standard Description, is linguistically inadequate, and (2) the alternative to Standard Description is Syntactic Description as described in *Hebrew Verse Structure*.[63]

Syntactic Description offers the descriptions of syntactic regularities, in the constraints on the cola and in the phenomena of tropes occurring in all levels of the text. O'Connor proposes that the colon, i.e., a *line* in O'Connor's term, is the basic unit of the poem, and the larger unit is the *batch*. The batch is constricted in most cases to about eight lines per unit; and the largest unit is the *stave* (about 23 to 31 lines per unit). Having examined a large corpus of fourteen hundred lines of biblical Hebrew poetry, O'Connor concluded that the majority of the lines, about three-quarters of the lines, are constrained to two or three grammatical elements (i.e., constituents) consisting of a total of two to three words. He also asserted that the boundaries of the definition of the line might be varied according genre.[64] According to O'Connor, these types of constraints form the shape of a line:

1. A line is a sentence containing up to three clause predicators (finite verbs, infinitive absolutes, infinitive constructs, participles, vocatives, focus markers).
2. A line is a sentence with two or three grammatical elements/constituents (verbs, nouns, prepositional phrases).

[63] O'Connor, *Contour*, 632.
[64] O'Connor, *Contour*, 643.

3. If a line contains more than one clause predicator, it does not contain a nominal constituent that is not dependent on one of the clause predicators.[65]
4. A line is generally (about seventy percent of the cola) a sentence with two or three units.
5. A line does not contain a dependent or noun phrase when it has three clause predicators.
6. If a line contains two clause predicators, one of them must be a dependent or nominal noun phrase.
7. A constituent contains up to four units.

O'Connor explains syntactic correspondences, which he also refers to as "parallelistic phenomena," in terms of "tropes." The tropes are the correspondences occurring within and between lines at the word level. There are eight main types of tropes: repetition, binomination, coordination, combination, matching, gapping, syntactic dependency, and mixing. The tropes of binomination, coordination, and combination operate between words in a line. The tropes of matching and gapping operate between adjacent cola. The tropes of syntactic dependency and mixing operate between cola across the entire text. O'Connor discussed at length and gave abundant of examples for each type of trope in his book, there is no need to repeat them here; given below are some of the examples of various types of tropes:

[65] In this study, I will count a vocative as a unit of a line.

1. Trope of Repetition operates at the word level within and between the cola of the entire poem. There are several types of repetitions; Psalm 106: 26b-27a is an example of simple repetition.[66]

לְהַפִּיל אוֹתָם בַּמִּדְבָּר׃
וּלְהַפִּיל זַרְעָם בַּגּוֹיִם

To cast them out in the wilderness,
And *to cast* their seed among the nations

2. Trope of Binomination is the correspondence between names and their glosses of identifying description. Below is an example of divine binomination; it is one of the five types of such correspondences:[67]

יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יְשׁוּעָתִי
Oh Yhwh, the god of my salvation (Ps 88:2a)

3. Trope of Coordination occurs when two names designate not one individual but the two parts of a basic pair. Below is an example of one of the four types of such construction:[68]

וַיְקַנְאוּ לְמֹשֶׁה בַּמַּחֲנֶה
לְאַהֲרֹן קְדוֹשׁ יְהוָה׃

They vexed *Moses* in the camp
They vexed *Aaron* the holy one of Yhwh (Ps 106:16).

4. Trope of Combination involves a pair of construct phrases:[69]

לִרְאוֹת בְּטוּבַת בְּחִירֶיךָ
לְשִׂמְחַ בְּשִׂמְחַת גּוֹיֶךָ

To see the goodness of your chosen ones,
To rejoice in the gladness of your nation (Ps 106:5).

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[66] O'Connor, *HVS*, 110.
[67] O'Connor, *HVS*, 373.
[68] O'Connor, *HVS*, 114.
[69] O'Connor, *HVS*, 114.

The book is a valuable exegetical tool for biblical students of structural study, and it might be the most important book on biblical Hebrew poetry since Robert Lowth, as some have claimed. It describes in linguistic terms how the members within and between the lines communicate with one another, and thus emphasizes the relative independence and important role of the line as the syntactic entity – the basic building block of the structure of the poem. However, why has it only elicited limited responses and from a small circle? Below are some of the probable causes:[70]

a. It is a highly technical work with many neologisms. The presentations of the texts in the book are difficult to follow because of the extensive use of technical terms and abbreviations that require many cross-references.

b. The confusion of terms redoubled as scholars adopted new terms to explain their theoretical differences along with the attempt to re-define certain core linguistic phenomena. This is particularly true for O'Connor's *Hebrew Verse Structure*, for it has generated criticism among biblical scholars in this regard. Berlin comments,

> However, despite the clear plan of organization, the book is difficult in both content and form. O'Connor's own syntax is as complex as the syntactic problems with which he deals. And, although his discussion of linguistic matters is not overly technical, he does use terminology which is unfamiliar to biblicists.[71]

[70] Cloete listed several scholars' criticisms against O'Connor and concluded that the majority of them are groundless, *Versification*, 80-98.
[71] Berlin's review of O'Connor's *Hebrew Verse Structure*.

c. The book argues against a long established set of ideas, i.e., Standard Description, by pointing out its flaws without giving due credit to aspects that are valid. O'Connor's rejection of the bicolon system has raised objections because the interdependence and correspondence of the *parallelismus membrorum* of the bicolon system is near absolute in every aspect in the books of Job and Proverbs, and it has an acceptable degree of regularity elsewhere in poetic texts. However, in fairness, O'Connor reckons the connections between the adjacent lines not in terms of semantic parallelism, nor its connectedness, nor its order, nor contiguity of ideas, but in grammatical correspondences such as tropes of matching, tropes of syntactic dependency, tropes of repetition, tropes of mixing, and tropes of gapping.

d. It provides grammatical descriptions and points out the constraints of biblical Hebrew verse, but it does not explain them in terms of linguistic functions nor compare them with prose. This lacking was because O'Connor rejected the belief that "poetic language is a phenomenon entirely apart from ordinary language."[72] It is difficult to deny that poetic grammatical phenomena do occur both in elevated prose and in poetry. However, the real issue is the degree of frequency and the roles that such phenomena play in poetry or prose.

e. It did not explain the decisions of lines delimitations in cases where his lineation deviated from that of the MT.[73]

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[72] O'Connor, *HVS*, 102.
[73] O'Connor, *HVS*, 167-68.

On the other hand, the benefits of using the Syntactic Description in the reading of the whole poem are many.[74] If one recalls Kosmala's description, "a couplet generally contains six to eight units." O'Connor did not seem to offer anything new except dividing Kosmala's description of a couplet into two lines with an equal number of units for each line. However, it is more than just defining a set of numbers, for the crux of O'Connor's definition of the line is that it is the syntactic entity, the basic building block unit of the poem.

This approach does several things:

i. It frees one's analyses from the defects of the bicolon system that deters the study of the whole poem because the bicolon system erroneously describes poems as structureless assemblages of uniform bicola since this system does not account for the linguistic correspondences between remote lines.

ii. It frees one's analyses from the defects of metrical systems brought about by the unconditional subscription to the bicolon system. Thus, it avoids unnecessary emendations of the MT. Kraus' metrical analysis of Psalm 54 is an example.[75]

iii. It avoids erroneous structural divisions into stanzas, strophes, or chiastic pattern based on the bicolon system. Kosmala's analysis of Balaam's oracles in Number 24, and the work of Lugt are examples given above.[76]

To further support this point, a more recent example on the structure division based on chiastic pattern is the analysis of Psalm 101 by Michael L.

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[74] O'Connor, *Contour*, 644.
[75] Hans Joachim Kraus, Psalms (2 vols.; trans. Hilton C Oswald; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993) 2. 514.
[76] O'Connor, *Contour*, 638-39.

Barré (2005).[77] Following John S. Kselman, Barré scans the structure of Psalm 101 into three main units: (1) vv. 1-2, (2a) vv. 3-5 and (2b) vv. 6-7, and (3) v. 8. Barré claims that a four-part chiastic pattern constructed by the repetitions of four key words/phrases is the indication that vv. 3-7 is one of the major units of the poem (2a + 2b):

v. 3a	לנגד עיני	a	v. 6a	עיני	d'
v. 3a	דבר	b	v. 7a	עשׂה	c'
v. 3b	עשׂה	c	v. 7b	דבר	b'
v. 5b	עינים	d	v. 7b	לנגד עיני	a'

On a quick scan, one notes that (1) the cola in Psalm 101 do not behave consistently as the *parallelismus membrorum*, i.e., they do not follow the general rule of the dichotomy or binarism. (2) The repetitions of words are not concentrated in vv. 3-7; they span over the entire poem and more than just four listed by Barré:

יהוה	v. 1b	v. 8bα
בקרב	v. 2bβ	v. 7a
ביתי	v. 2bα	v. 7a
בדרך	v. 2a	v. 6aγ
לבב	v. 2bα	vv. 4aα , 5aγ
ארץ	v. 6aα	v. 8aβ
אצמית	v. 5aβ	v. 8aα

Delitzsch observed long ago,

> But the Masoretic division of the verses is not only obliged sometimes to give up the law of dichotomy, because the verse (as e.g., [Pss]18:2; 25:1;

[77] Michael L. Barré "The Shifting Focus of Psalm 101," in *Book of the Psalms, Composition and Reception* (ed. Peter W. Flint and Patrick Miller; Leiden: Brill, 2005) 206-223.

> 92:9), does not admit of being properly divided into two parts; and its subjects not only verses of three members (as e.g., [Pss]1:1; 2:2) in which the third member is embellishingly or synthetically related to the other two – both are phenomena which in themselves furnish proof in favour of the relative independence of the lines [cola] of the verse – but also verses of four members where the sense requires it (as [Pss]1:3; 18:16) and where it does not require it (as [Pss]22:15; 40:6), to the law of dichotomy.[78]

iv. It is attentive to the Masoretic text and encourages a localized reading of the text based on the smallest building blocks of the line: words. Therefore, it gives due attention to the linguistic correspondences, especially syntactic constructions, between units/words in a given line, between the adjacent lines, and between the remote lines in the poem; it thus enables the assessments of the larger units of the poem, therefore the whole poem.

v. It explains syntactic correspondences that occur between adjacent and remote lines. Thereby it rejects the Lowthian's principle of dichotomy of the bicolon semantic based solely on synonymous, antithetic, and synthetic parallelism. At the same time, it explains semantic parallelism in specific lexical terms.

vi. It gives due attention to the repetition of words between the adjacent and remote lines in structural division.[79]

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[78] Franz A. Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Book of Psalms* (COT 5, trans. F. Bolton 1886-91; repr., Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1996) 16; punctuations are as quoted and brackets are mine. Similarly, Lugt pointed out that according to J. G. Sommer ("*Die alphabetischen Lieder von Seiten ihrer Structur und Integrität*," [Biblische Abhandlungen 1; Bonn: H. B. König, 1846]), the symmetrical structure of the strophes can be revealed if one concentrates on the line (cf. Lugt, *Cantos*, 13). However, Lugt did not follow Sommer's advice.

[79] For a recent study of repetition, see Shamir Yona, "A Type of Expanded Repetition in Biblical Parallelism," *ZAW* 119/4 (2007) 586-601.

vii. It pays attention to the rhythmic quality controlled by syntactic constructions of the lines, offering an alternative to meter.

viii. It properly explains binarism, dichotomy, contiguity, connectedness, and correspondences of the adjacent cola/couplet not exclusively in terms of semantic parallelism, but in various categories of lexical and grammatical descriptions.

1.9 Conclusion

The use of syntax in the study of biblical Hebrew verse is beneficial as shown in the preceding surveys. Study of syntax of biblical verse spread from the influence of Russian Formalism linguistic theory to the Functional Grammar of metalanguage.[80] The recent works of Rosenbaum, *Word-Order Variation in Isaiah 40-55: A Functional Perspective,* and Lunn, *Word-Order Variation in Biblical Hebrew Poetry: Differentiating Pragmatics and Poetics* exemplify such studies.[81]

O'Connor's idea about the rhythmic structure of biblical Hebrew verse is not new; it draws insights from three principles: metrical, strophic, and structuralist linguistic theories. In defining the constraint of the line, O'Connor combines the idea of Azariah dé Rossie on the word as basic unit of the meter system (as further defined by Kosmala), and the idea of Sommer on the independent role of the line in strophic structure (as reckoned by Delitzsch). He then categorically and descriptively expounds and explains these ideas in the framework of the Russian Formalism and linguistic theory of the Prague school.

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[80] Functional grammar is concerned with the functional/relational aspects of the structure as opposed to the formal nature of language that concern with the categories of abstract structure.

[81] Michael Rosenbaum, *Word-Order Variation in Isaiah 40-55: A Functional Perspective* (SSN 35; Assen: Van Gorcum, 1997); Nicholas P. Lunn, *Word-Order Variation in Biblical Hebrew Poetry: Differentiating Pragmatics and Poetics* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster Press, 2006).

The product is the definition of the line as a syntactic building block of the structure of the poem.

More importantly, Syntactic Description involves not mere grammatical description or word-counting of the lines. As pointed out in the preceding section, Syntactic Description can be a useful exegetical tool for biblicists because it provides an alternative approach to parallelism and meter studies. O'Connor explains lexical and grammatical parallelistic phenomena, which other scholars have reckoned and defined as parallelism, as the consequence of syntactic constraints, which he called "tropes." Berlin observes,

> To my mind, one of the most important by-products of this book is to show that phenomena once thought to be peculiar to Hebrew poetry are really common in many poetries, and phenomena once thought to be peculiar to poetry are really aspects of language as a whole. These facts are known to linguists, but they needed to be demonstrated to biblicists.[82]

Likewise, metrical patterns are also the consequence of syntactic constraints. O'Connor quantifies metrical patterns of the lines in terms of syntactic constraint. Holladay declares,

> I myself am convinced that O'Connor has really solved the nagging question of the analysis of the structure of Hebrew poetry; he understands the pattern to be not metric or rhythmic but syntactic, and he has set forth what he calls "constraints" on allowable syntactic patterns within a given colon."[83]

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[82] Berlin's review of O'Connor's *Hebrew Verse Structure*.
[83] William L. Holladay, "*Hebrew Verse Structure* Revisited (I): Which Words Counted?," *JBL* 118/1 (1999) 19-20.

Chapter Two

Syntactic Description of the Texts of the Twenty Individual Laments

2.0 Introduction

The present chapter will aim to analyze the syntactic structure of the twenty Individual Laments containing the vocative-imperative combination in the opening lines. In this chapter, I will approach the texts of the twenty psalms using Michael O'Connor's Syntactic Description. I will present the lineation, for the most part, in accord with the MT with all major disjunctive accents observed (e.g., *silluq, soph pasuq,'athnach*). In addition, I will follow the line divisions as delineated by the editors of the BHS where possible. However, in difficult texts where textual decisions made by the editors of the BHS or the MT appear as erroneous, I will use the constraints of Syntactic Description as guideline. This approach aims also to test the accuracy of the Syntactic Description model in this set of different texts.

As mentioned in Chapter One, O'Connor defined a line as having zero to three clause predicators, one to four constituents, and two to five units.[84] A line having three clause predicators cannot have a dependent noun phrase. If a line contains two clause predicators, only one clause predicator can have a dependent noun phrase. A constituent cannot exceed more than four units.

[84] Concerning which words will be counted, see William L. Holladay, "*Hebrew Verse Structure* Revisited (I): Which Words Counted?," *JBL* 118/1 (1999) 19-20.

It is necessary to make clear that adopting O'Connor's syntactic constraint theoretical model does not mean that I reject or deny the presence of other poetic phenomena in my corpus of texts. In spite of of the theological complexity and textual difficulties the biblical psalms contain, I understand a biblical poem generally as a creative work having two artistic dimensions, written and spoken. The linguistic phenomena contained in a poem can be fully appreciated by assessing the two dimensions together. However, while Syntactic Description has completely ignored the phonological aspect of biblical Hebrew verse, O'Connor's method should be more than adequate for the purpose of this dissertation in analyzing the structures of the psalms. In addition, for the sake of clarity, the present chapter will focus on the texts and not the canonical contexts of these psalms, therefore, I will not comment on implications related to the titles and superscriptions of the psalms.

The chapter will contain two parts. In the first part, I will provide a general description of the texts of the Individual Laments. I will revisit briefly the basic groundwork laid by form-critical pioneers and later scholars. I also will discuss various implications of the structural outlines and modes of speech prescribed by these scholars. The core of the first part of the chapter will be the structural and exegetical analyses of Psalms 26, 54, and 57 with my own translation. The purpose of these exegetical exercises will be to show the working of Syntactic Description; therefore, I will limit my exegetical comments to important points that concern my decisions on lineation and structure outlines. Since the focus will be on the purpose explained above, I will not discuss every textual difficulty and complex theological idea these three psalms contain.

In the second part of the chapter, I will present the Syntactic Description of the texts of the remaining seventeen Individual Laments and the syntactic structures of the lines of these psalms. A concluding section will summarize the findings.

With respect to the format arrangement of the Syntactic Description analyses of the seventeen Individual Laments, I will present the BHS text and the NRSV translation for each psalm in two columns. Following the text and translation will be the Syntactic Description analysis of the psalm. In this analysis, the syntactic structures of the lines of individual psalm will be assessed and presented. This exercise will serve several purposes:

1. The first purpose will be to verify HVS's claims concerning the syntactic constraints in biblical Hebrew verse
2. The second will be to examine the overall syntactic constraints of the poetic lines in my corpus of texts
3. The third will be to appraise the overall distributions of the syntactic constraints of the lines across the twenty psalms
4. The fourth will be to assess the syntactic structures of the lines of the twenty psalms for further analyses in Chapter 3.

I will arrange the Syntactic Description analysis in five columns:

a. The first column presents the BHS text for ease of cross-reference.
b. The second column presents a set of three-digit numbers: the first number gives the number of clause predicators, the second number gives the number of constituents representing the full contents of grammatical slots

of the line, i.e., the surface syntactic structure of the line, and the third number gives number of units/words. For example, a line that contains one clause predicator, two constituents, and two units will be presented as 122.

c. The third column presents the syntactic structure of the line; subordinate clauses are in brackets. I will use the following abbreviations: A, adverb; S, subject; O, object; V, verb; P, prepositional phrase; Pred, predicate; Phr, phrase; Voc, vocative.

d. The fourth column identifies the trope(s) of the line. I will use the following abbreviations: SD, syntactic dependency; M, matching; G, gapping/ellipsis; SI, syntactic inversion (a syntactic phenomenon not discussed in O'Connor's HVS); and R, repetition. The number following the abbreviations, e.g., SD2, M2, tallies the specific tropes contained in the psalm; this number will restart for each psalm.

e. When there is a fifth column, it identifies the addressee(s) to whom the speech is directly addressed.

Concerning textual difficulties, the NRSV undoubtedly has, in good measures, dealt with these difficulties as reflected in its translation; therefore, I will limit my text-critical comments to places where such difficulties might affect my lineation. For the most part, as the analyses will show, my lineation agrees with the MT, and/or BHS; however, in instances where the NRSV differs from the MT, BHS, or my lineation and

structures divisions, I will arrange the NRSV as published and provide notes to explain my lineation.

Concerning my presentation of the analyses, with respect to the vocatives, my tabulation will be different from the HVS. I will count each single individual vocative as a part of the sentence representing one independent clause, one constituent, and one unit. A vocative count will be presented as "+1" (number of units in a vocative phrase will be accounted accordingly). Ps 54:3-4 is an example:

[3] אֱלֹהִים בְּשִׁמְךָ וּשְׁיעֵנִי	122+1	PV+Voc	SD1; M1	God
וּבִגְבוּרָתְךָ תְּדִינֵנִי׃	122	[PV]	SD1; M1	God
[4] אֱלֹהִים שְׁמַע תְּפִלָּתִי	122+1	VO+Voc	M2	God
הַאֲזִינָה לְאִמְרֵי־פִי׃	123	VO	M2	God

Without the vocatives, lines 54:3a and 54:4a above each contains one clause predicator, two constituents, and two units (i.e., coded as 122). Counting the vocatives as independent clauses, lines 54:3a and 54:4a each then contains two clause predicators, three constituents, and three units. The above arrangement reveals the parallelistic phenomena, i.e., tropes, of the lines.

In some cases, the use of a vocative introduces a sudden break in the flow of the main clause. Without such a break, the syntactic structures of the lines are identical, i.e., match. Ps 17:1a below is one such example:

[1] שִׁמְעָה יְהוָה צֶדֶק	122+1	VO+Voc	M1	God
הַקְשִׁיבָה רִנָּתִי	122	VO	M1	God

Using the same presentation, the phenomenon of syntactic inversion is clearly visible in the below Ps 5:2 example:

אֲמָרַי הַאֲזִינָה יְהוָה [2]	122+1	VO+Voc	SI1; M1	God
בִּינָה הֲגִיגִי׃	122	OV	SI1; M1	God

2.1 General Description of the Twenty Individual Laments

The Individual Laments in general, according to Gunkel, originated in a worship setting and then later evolved as spiritual songs of the individual.[85] According to Gunkel, 39 psalms belong to the general Individual Lament genre: Psalms 3; 5; 6; 7; 13; 17; 22; 25; 26; 27:7-14; 28; 31; 35; 38; 39; 42-43; 51; 54-57; 59; 61; 63; 64; 69; 70; 71; 86; 88; 102; 109; 120; 130; 140; 141; 142; and 143. Out of these psalms, Gunkel further classified Psalms 5, 7, 17, 26 as the Psalms of Protesting Innocence sub-group. He also further grouped Psalms 51 and 130 as the Psalms of Confession. Disagreeing with Gunkel's terminology, other scholars refer to these psalms as a) Prayer Songs, b) Prayer Psalms of the Individual, c) Psalms of Disorientation, d) Prayers for Help, e) Individual Complaint, f) Personal Psalms of Lamentation, and g) Psalms of Petition.[86]

Twenty of the above Individual Laments begin with a vocative and imperative combination in the opening sentence. These twenty psalms have been identified in

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[85] Hermann Gunkel (completed by Joachim Begrich), *Introduction to Psalms: The Genres of the Religious Lyric of Israel* (Mercer University Press, 1998; translation of *Einleitung in die Psalmen: die Gattungen der religiösen Lyrik Israels* [Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1985, 1933]).

[86] In the order listed above:

a) Hans J. Kraus, *Psalms* (2 vols., trans. H. C. Oswald; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993) 47.
b) Craig C. Broyles, *Psalms* (NIBC 11; Peabody: Hendrickson, 1999) 16.
c) Walter Brueggemann, *The Message of the Psalms* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1984) 51.
d) Patrick D. Miller, *They Cried to the Lord: The Form and Theology of Biblical Prayer* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994) 55.
e) Erhard S. Gerstenberger, *Psalms: Part I with an Introduction to Cultic Poetry* (FOTL 14; Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1988) 14.
f) Sigmund Mowinckel, *The Psalms in Israel's Worship* (2 vols. in one; trans. D. R. Ap-Thomas; Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 2004) 2. 1-25.
g) Claus Westermann, *Praise and Lament in the Psalms* (trans. Keith R. Crim and Richard N. Soulen; Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1981) 64-71.

chapter one, but I list them here again for the convenience of the reader: Psalms 5, 17, 26, 35, 43, 51, 54, 55, 56, 57, 59, 61, 64, 69, 70, 86, 102, 140, 141, and 143. In the following chapter of the dissertation, I will compare my analyses of these twenty psalms to the other Individual Laments in the Psalter.

2.2 Form-Critical Implications in Structure Divisions

2.2.1 The Work of Westermann

Gunkel claimed that the Individual Laments have these components: 1) summons, 2) lament, 3) motivations, 4) petition, and 5) assurance of prayer being heard.[87] This classic structural scheme of the biblical psalms of laments pioneered by Gunkel in 1930s still serves as the basic framework for many form-critical psalm researchers.[88]

After Gunkel, besides the work of Mowinckel, Westermann's study is one major contribution to form-critical approach to the Psalter.[89] Westermann asserts that the oscillating movement between two major modes of speeches of praise and lament characterizes the Individual Laments.[90] While following Gunkel's basic structural schema as the groundwork, Westermann claims that the Individual Laments typically have these component parts: 1) address and introductory cry or turning to God for help,

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[87] Gunkel, *Introduction,* 121.

[88] Undoubtedly, the Individual Laments have generated a vast numbers of scholarly studies and researches since the time of Gunkel. Although eight decades have passed, Gunkel's genre classification of the Individual Laments and their basic structural schema, described in his *Einleitung in die Psalmen*, published in 1933 by his student Begrich after his death, continues to be adopted and modified by many form-critical commentators and psalms researchers. Among them are: Brueggemann, *Message*, 58 note 21; Gerstenberger, *Psalms:Part I*, 14; Kraus, *Psalms*, 54; Miller, *They Cried*, 55-134; Mowinckel, *Psalms in Israel's*, 2: 1-25; Klaus Seybold, *Introducing the Psalms* (trans. R. G. Dunphy; New York: T & T Clark, 1990) 116; Artur Weiser, *Psalms*: *A Commentary* (trans. H. Hartwell; Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2000) 66; and Westermann, *Praise and Lament*, 64-71.

[89] Westermann, *Praise*.

[90] Westermann, *Praise*, 132.

2) lament, 3) confession of trust, 4) petition, 5) assurance that prayer is heard, 6) wishes, 7) vow of praise, and 8) praise of God.[91] According to Westermann, the biblical lament tradition is visible in the poetic material in the book of Psalms, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Job, as well as in the prose materials of the Deuteronomistic corpus and Former Prophets. For Westermann, lament is the language of suffering; the lament in the Psalter has a historical antecedent and a sequel.[92] The lament looks forward for the removal of sufferings, and its aim of making an appeal to God is evident in the internal structural transition from lamentation to petition.[93] Thus, the lament functions as the ground of appeal and the argument of the petition. In lament, the petitioners seek to inform the Deity about their sufferings, giving the reasons why God should remove the sufferings:

> Lamentation has no meaning in and of itself. That it functions as an appeal is evident in its structure. What the lament is concerned with is not the description of one's own sufferings or with one's self-pity, but with the removal of the suffering itself. The lament appeals to the one who can remove the suffering. The transition is evident in the fact that the lamentation flows into petition (to secure God's attention and intervention) – or, that petition follows lamentation.[94]

Westermann claims that the lament proper in the Individual Laments contains these three parts: 1) God, 2) the one who laments, and 3) the enemies.[95] However, first, not all of the psalms he listed under the Individual Lament genre contain the lament

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[91] Westermann, *Praise*, 64.
[92] Westermann, *Praise*, 272.
[93] Westermann, *Praise*, 168, 259- 80. Cf. Miller, *They Cried*, 70-86, 337-57.
[94] Westermann 261- 66; also in his other work, *The Psalms: Structure, Content and Message* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1980) 55-57. The notion of a "sequel of historical lament" might have prompted Balentine to argue that such assertion ignores the authenticity of the sufferings of the petitioners, and that the freedom of expression and creativity does not bind itself to the literary-historical traditions. Cf. Samuel E. Balentine, *Prayer in the Hebrew Bible: The Drama of Divine-Human Dialogue* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg, 1993) 149-50.
[95] Westermann, *Praise*, 169.

motifs or make mention of the enemies, e.g., Psalms 26, 51, 54, 61. More importantly, citing Psalm 6 as one example, Miller skeptically points out that "the relationship of the three dimensions to one another is often not very clear and the interpretation founders on the effort to understand that relationship."[96]

In addition to the arguments made against Westermann's three-party participants, there is the issue of addresser and addressee(s): a significant number of psalms of Individual Laments contain indirect/direct address to the background audiences. Concerning the forms of address, there are many instances in the corpus of texts under study in which the petitioner speaks about the Deity using third-person singular forms. The shift from speaking to the Deity (in second-person singular forms), to speaking about the Deity (in third-person singular forms), is a difficult issue and relates to the issue of genre. Because of the shift, the direct addressee becomes the indirect addressee, and thus the direction of the speech suggests a social setting, e.g., a public prayer in the worship setting because the third party hearers are present. Further complicating the issue is the question of what constitutes a prayer. Are the Individual Laments prayers? What is the definition of a prayer? I will discuss these issues in the next chapter of the dissertation.

The challenges that form-criticism faces have to do with the difficulties in assessing the settings of the psalms. Even more difficult to assess are the identities of the individuals, i.e., the psalmists/petitioners.[97] Yet one predicament of form criticism is,

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[96] Patrick D. Miller, Jr., *Interpreting the Psalms* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986) 49.

[97] For a good discussion of this topic, see Amy C. Cottrill, *Language, Power, and Identity in the Lament Psalms of the Individual* (London/New York: Clark, 2008). See also Steven J. L. Croft, *The Indentity of the Individual in the Psalms* (JSOT Sup 44; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1987).

ironically, the identifying of similar patterns of linguistic forms and contents so that the delineation of the structure of a psalm or group(s) of psalms into a specific genre might be possible. This is not to say that a psalm that said to belong to a specific genre must bear a specific fixed structural pattern since it is unlikely that any poetic system will conform to such rigid rules.

2.2.2 Gerstenberger, the problem of thematically based structure divisions

The gross structure of any given psalm may be delineated syntactically in conjunction with the literary forms and focuses of its content into sub-units that properly describe the overall rhythmic structure of the psalm, e.g., in terms of its meter, or the number of stanzas/strophes, or modes of speeches. I have discussed the uncertainties of the former two categories in chapter one and there is no need to repeat them here, but the lack of, or the uncertainty of these descriptions of the formal rhythmic structure often caused erroneous decisions leading to unnecessary textual emendations and structural divisions. Many structural divisions of the psalms that are based merely on the thematic shifts alone are often found to be erroneous in instances where clear thematic markers are lacking.

Gerstenberger stresses that literary phenomena that occur in biblical Hebrew verse must be taken into account in form-critical analysis in light of life situation and social setting. The identifications of these situations and settings however remain elusive; yet for Gerstenberger, the life situation and social setting is the cultic context of the liturgical setting for every psalm he interpreted. Gerstenberger starts out not with the text but the presupposition of the ceremony ritual setting of the psalms: “As a last resort they came to

Yahweh. "Asking" (*š'l*) or "seeking" (*drš*) the Lord for guidance certainly preceded the actual complaint ritual (see 1 Kgs 14:1-3; Judg 20:23). Afterwards, Yahweh had to be entreated in a manner suggested by a prophet or a singer."[98] Concerning the literary assessments, he adds:

> Normally the two parts of one line (each individually called a "hemistich," or "colon") correspond to each other in a synonymous, antithetical, or synthetic way. The same feature is well known from other Near Eastern poetic literature. The literary law here was followed in the whole region and probably developed from oral composition techniques using fixed word pairs. The form-critical must recognize such general linguistic and literary influences, which may interfere with the formative impulse of liturgical setting on the Psalms. This last statement is even more true for all those poetic devices that affect the overall structure of a psalm.[99]

According to Gerstenberger, the Individual Laments may contain these elements:

1. Invocation (appellation and initial plea or petition)
2. Complaint (descriptive, reproachful, petitionary)
3. Confession of sin, assertion of innocence
4. Affirmation of confidence
5. Plea or petition for help
6. Imprecation against enemies
7. Acknowledgement of divine response
8. Hymnic elements
9. Anticipated thanksgiving

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[98] Gerstenberger, *Psalms*, 11-12.
[99] Gerstenberger, *Psalms*, 35.

As useful as the listing of these motifs is, one recognizes that not every psalm of the classic Individual Lament genre contains all of the above motifs, and that a single line or a small group of lines can contain multiple motifs, so the main focus of these lines is not always clearly discernable. An example is Ps 26:1:

שָׁפְטֵנִי יְהוָה
כִּי־אֲנִי בְּתֻמִּי הָלָכְתִּי
וּבַיהוָה בָּטַחְתִּי לֹא אֶמְעָד׃

Vindicate me, O Yhwh,
For I have walked in my integrity;
And in Yhwh I trusted so that I will not be moved.

These three lines contain three major motifs: 1) invocation and general petition, 2) assertion of innocence, and 3) confession of trust/affirmation of confidence. Clearly, it is erroneous to split this verse into three separate units as reliance on themes alone might suggest.

Consider the opening lines of the two psalms that many have claimed belong to the classic Individual Lament genre. The opening lines of Ps 22:2-3:

אֵלִי אֵלִי לָמָּה עֲזַבְתָּנִי
רָחוֹק מִישׁוּעָתִי דִּבְרֵי שַׁאֲגָתִי׃
אֱלֹהַי אֶקְרָא יוֹמָם וְלֹא תַעֲנֶה
וְלַיְלָה וְלֹא־דוּמִיָּה לִי׃

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?
Why are you so far from helping me,
Far from the words of my groaning?
O my God, I cry out by day, but you do not answer,
By night, and I am not silent.

Now consider the opening lines in Psalm 54:3-5:

אֱלֹהִים בְּשִׁמְךָ הוֹשִׁיעֵנִי
וּבִגְבוּרָתְךָ תְּדִינֵנִי׃

אֱלֹהִים שְׁמַע תְּפִלָּתִי
הַאֲזִינָה לְאִמְרֵי־פִי׃
כִּי זָרִים קָמוּ עָלַי
וְעָרִיצִים בִּקְשׁוּ נַפְשִׁי
לֹא שָׂמוּ אֱלֹהִים לְנֶגְדָּם סֶלָה׃

O God, by your name, save me;
And by your power, vindicate me.
O God; hear my prayer,
Give ear to the words of my mouth.
For strangers arose against me;
And violent men sought my life;
They do not set God before them.

There is no lament in Ps 54:3-5. The opening lines of the two psalms do not exhibit the same/similar literary forms, moods, thoughts, and contents, not at the word-level and certainly not at the line-level. Therefore, structure breaks that are based on themes alone are erroneous because of the pre-determined presupposition of a setting in life and the forced thematic reading.

2.3 Syntactical Approach to Structure Divisions: The Various Modes of Speeches

2.3.1 Summons and General Petition

Structural breaks can be determined in light of syntactic patterns, focuses, and modes of speeches. For example, the opening lines of the twenty Individual Laments referred to in this chapter can be grouped as opening sections/paragraphs, hereafter refer to as "summons and general petition." The opening paragraph has several functions:

1) It addresses the Deity

2) It petitions

3) It explains reasons for petition

The first clause of the opening paragraph is given in the second-person singular imperative that stands before or immediately after the vocative, asking the Deity to vindicate, judge, save, rescue, or listen to the petitioner's speech. This construction is then usually followed by two subordination causal clauses, i.e., syntactic dependency, explaining the reasons for the petition. The first causal clause of the pair begins with a perfective verb led by a causative כי; the second causal clause, which continues the motivation also with a perfective verb, begins with a *waw* apodosis/interclausal conjunction.[100] These motivation clauses intend to move Yhwh to respond to the petitions. Using Ps 26:1 again as an example that examplifies such syntactical dependency construction:

שָׁפְטֵנִי יְהוָֹה
כִּי־אֲנִי בְתֻמִּי הָלָכְתִּי
וּבַיהוָה בָּטַחְתִּי לֹא אֶמְעָד׃

> Vindicate me, O Yhwh,
> For I have walked in my integrity;
> And in Yhwh I trusted so that I will not be moved.

In the example of Ps 54:3-5b below, the short form of address-petition-motivation construction includes all three elements of *address* (vocative), *general petition* (imperative), and *motivation* (prepositional phrase) in one opening sentence, Ps 54:3a. The next line, Ps 54:3b, contains a non-perfective and prepositional phrases reiterating the argument of the first line. Another vocative and a series of additional imperatives or perfective or non-perfective verbs in second person singular repeat the

[100] Paul Joüon, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew* (2 vols. Subsidia Biblica 14; trans. T. Muraoka; Editrice Pontifico Istituto Biblico: Rome, 1996) 638. See also, Anneli Aejmelaeus, "Function and Interpretation of כי in Biblical Hebrew," *JBL* 102/5 (1986) 193-209.

invocation/petition/motivation construction. Ps 54:3-5 illustrates such syntactical connection between the lines in the opening paragraph:

אֱלֹהִים בְּשִׁמְךָ הוֹשִׁיעֵנִי
וּבִגְבוּרָתְךָ תְּדִינֵנִי׃
אֱלֹהִים שְׁמַע תְּפִלָּתִי
הַאֲזִינָה לְאִמְרֵי־פִי׃
כִּי זָרִים קָמוּ עָלַי
וְעָרִיצִים בִּקְשׁוּ נַפְשִׁי
לֹא שָׂמוּ אֱלֹהִים לְנֶגְדָּם סֶלָה׃

O God, by your name, save me;
and by your power, may you vindicate me.
O God; hear my prayer,
give ear to the words of my mouth.
For strangers arose against me;
and violent men sought my life;
they do not set God before them.

In some cases where the situation seems urgent, the imperative takes an accusative begining with the preposition מִן adverbial phrase pointing to the main source that causes the petitioner's crisis. Psalm 59:2-4a exemplifies this type of construction; one notes the imperative + imperfective clauses:

הַצִּילֵנִי מֵאֹיְבַי אֱלֹהָי
מִמִּתְקוֹמְמַי תְּשַׂגְּבֵנִי׃
הַצִּילֵנִי מִפֹּעֲלֵי אָוֶן
וּמֵאַנְשֵׁי דָמִים הוֹשִׁיעֵנִי׃
כִּי הִנֵּה אָרְבוּ לְנַפְשִׁי
יָגוּרוּ עָלַי עַזִּים

Deliver me from my enemies, O my God;
May you set me aloft from those who rise up against me.
Deliver me from iniquity doers
And save me from men of bloodshed
For behold, they lie in ambush for my life;
Strong men attack me,

In other cases, as shown in Ps 64:2-3 below, the imperfects are used instead of the imperatives. The imperfect takes double accusative adverbial phrases beginning with the preposition מִן, Ps 64:3a-b; this construction forms the parallelistic phenomenon of verb gapping. The statements point to the source of crisis and express the petitioner's suffering in order to motivate the Deity to respond:

שְׁמַע־אֱלֹהִים קוֹלִי בְשִׂיחִי
מִפַּחַד אוֹיֵב תִּצֹּר חַיָּי׃
תַּסְתִּירֵנִי מִסּוֹד מְרֵעִים
מֵרִגְשַׁת פֹּעֲלֵי אָוֶן׃

Hear, O God, my voice in complaint;
From dread of the enemies, preserve my life.
Hide me from the counsel of evildoers,
From the tumult of those who do iniquity.

In some cases, the change in the direction of address marks the structural break. Accompanying such changes in directions are changes in verbal forms to introduce different focuses and modes of speeches. In the example of Ps 57:2-4 below, the shift from second-person singular to third-person singular forms moves the Deity's position from the direct addressee in v. 2 to become the background audience in vv. 3-4 (who are the direct addressee(s) in vv. 3-4?).

חָנֵּנִי אֱלֹהִים חָנֵּנִי
כִּי בְךָ חָסָיָה נַפְשִׁי
וּבְצֵל־כְּנָפֶיךָ אֶחְסֶה
עַד יַעֲבָר הַוּוֹת׃

אֶקְרָא לֵאלֹהִים עֶלְיוֹן
לָאֵל גֹּמֵר עָלָי׃
יִשְׁלַח מִשָּׁמַיִם וְיוֹשִׁיעֵנִי
חֵרֵף שֹׁאֲפִי סֶלָה
יִשְׁלַח אֱלֹהִים חַסְדּוֹ וַאֲמִתּוֹ׃

Be gracious to me, O God, be gracious to me,
Because I will seek refuge in you;

I will seek refuge in the shadow of your wings
Until Destruction passes by.

I cry to God Most High,
To God who provides for me.
May he send from heaven and save me;
May he reproach one who crushes me. Selah.
May God send his kindness and his faithfulness.

Using the preceding observations, e.g., change of direction of address, and syntactic phenomena in determining structural breaks, the following additional modes of speeches might be identified in the twenty psalms under study.

2.3.2 The Affirmation and Confession Mode of Speech

The Affirmation and Confession generally consists of these three elements: a) declaration of trust, b) protestation of innocence, and c), confession of sins.

a) In the Declaration of Trust the *waw* adversative with the subject pronoun, e.g. "but I . . .," or "but you . . .," stands at the beginning of a clause indicating a change in mode of speech, and therefore a structure break:[101]

וְאַתָּה אֲדֹנָי אֵל־רַחוּם וְחַנּוּן
אֶֽרֶךְ אַפַּיִם וְרַב־חֶסֶד וֶאֱמֶת׃

But you, O Lord, are the merciful and gracious God,
Slow to anger and abundant in kindness and truth (Ps 86:15).

b) Protestation of Piety and Innocence: This mode of speech usually follows the Summons and Introductory Petition. An example is Ps 17:3-5:

בָּחַנְתָּ לִבִּי פָקַדְתָּ לַּיְלָה
צְרַפְתַּנִי בַל־תִּמְצָא
זַמֹּתִי בַל־יַעֲבָר־פִּי׃

[101] Cf. Gunkel, *Introduction*, 179; and so Westermann, *Praise*, 69-75.

לִפְעֻלּוֹת אָדָם בִּדְבַר שְׂפָתֶיךָ
אֲנִי שָׁמַרְתִּי אָרְחוֹת פָּרִיץ׃
תָּמֹךְ אֲשֻׁרַי בְּמַעְגְּלוֹתֶיךָ
בַּל־נָמוֹטוּ פְעָמָי׃

You have probed my heart, visited me at night.
You have tested me and found no evil in me;
I have determined that my mouth will not transgress.
As to the works of men, by your words
I have kept myself from the way of violence.
My steps have held to your paths;
My feet did not slip.

c) Confession of Sins: This mode of speech is infrequent in the group of psalms under study. An example is Ps 51:5-6 below:

כִּי־פְשָׁעַי אֲנִי אֵדָע
וְחַטָּאתִי נֶגְדִּי תָמִיד׃
לְךָ לְבַדְּךָ חָטָאתִי
וְהָרַע בְּעֵינֶיךָ עָשִׂיתִי

For I know my transgressions;
And my sin is before me.
Against you only, I have sinned;
And I have done evil in your eye.

2.3.3 The Complaint: This mode of speech has three categories: a) complaint against the enemies, b) complaint about the sufferings of the petitioner, and c) complaints against the Deity.

a) Complaint against the enemies: In this type of complaint, the perfective verbs nuance the aspect of present perfect to describe the events that have happened in the past and continue in the present. An example is Ps 55:3b-4:

אָרִיד בְּשִׂיחִי וְאָהֱמָה׃
מִקּוֹל אוֹיֵב
מִפְּנֵי עָקַת רָשָׁע

כִּי־יָמִיטוּ עָלַי אָוֶן
וּבְאַף יִשְׂטְמוּנִי׃

I am restless in my complaint and I am distracted
From the voice of the enemies
And from the pressure of the wicked,
For they bring down trouble upon me;
And in anger they bear a grudge against me.

b) Complaint about the suffering of the petitioner: The suffering can be due to illnesses, persecutions by the enemies, or burden of sins. In Ps 55:5-6 below, this mode of speech made no mention of the enemies. Here, the suffering is mental illness, the terrors of death:

לִבִּי יָחִיל בְּקִרְבִּי
וְאֵימֹות מָוֶת נָפְלוּ עָלָי׃
יִרְאָה וָרַעַד יָבֹא בִי
וַתְּכַסֵּנִי פַּלָּצוּת׃

My heart is in anguish within me,
And the terrors of death have fallen upon me.
Fear and trembling come upon me,
And horror has overwhelmed me.

In other cases, the suffering is the real physical danger posed by the enemies. An example is Ps 57:5 below:

נַפְשִׁי בְּתוֹךְ לְבָאִם
אֶשְׁכְּבָה לֹהֲטִים בְּנֵי־אָדָם
שִׁנֵּיהֶם חֲנִית וְחִצִּים
וּלְשׁוֹנָם חֶרֶב חַדָּה׃

My soul is among lions;
I lie down among cannibals who devour,
Their teeth are spears and arrows
And their tongues are sharp swords.

c) Complaint against the Deity: This mode of speech is uncommon in the Individual Laments under study; it occurs only in Psalms 43 and 102.[102] This mode of speech is usually contains a vocative clause naming the Deity as the cause of the pettioner's suffering. In the Individual Laments, there are two common types of vocatives: vocative of expression and vocative of exclamation. Ps 54:3 contains an example of vocative of expression:

אֱלֹהִים בְּשִׁמְךָ הוֹשִׁיעֵנִי
O God, save me by your name. (Ps 54:3)

In the above example, אֱלֹהִים is the vocative expression; it identifies the Deity as the one to whom the petitioner is speaking. It is an independent syntactic element from the imperatival clause "save me by your name."

In other instances, the interrogative clause stands after the vocative and forms an exclamative expression. One example of this type is Ps 22:1:

אֵלִי אֵלִי לָמָּה עֲזַבְתָּנִי
My God my God, why have you forsaken me?

The interrogative "why have you forsaken me?" identifies the vocative phrase "My God my God" as the person to whom the question is addressed. Such vocative-interrogative construction is the direct exclamative expression. Some have argued that this type of construction, and other similar interrogative clauses that occurred frequently in the

[102] Interestingly, scholars have raised many issues concerning the genre and structures of these two psalms. Many have viewed Psalm 43 as the conclusion of Psalm 42. The assessment of structure and genre for Psalm 102 is notoriously difficult; this psalm contains many difficulties and implications regarding genre classification.

Individual Laments, is the petitioner's complaint against the Deity.[103] However, it is an intricate matter to define the categories or dimensions of the complaint. Depending on the context, not every example of this type of expression can be interpreted as the complaint against God. Consider this lament proper in Ps 35:15-17:

וּבְצַלְעִ֣י שָׂמְח֣וּ וְנֶאֱסָ֑פוּ
נֶאֱסְפ֥וּ עָלַ֝֗י נַכִּ֥ים וְלֹ֣א יָדָ֑עְתִּי
קָרְע֥וּ וְלֹא־דָ֝מ֗וּ׃
בְּחַנְפֵ֣י לַ֭עֲגֵי מָעֻ֑גֹ
חָרַ֖ק עָלַ֣י שִׁנֵּימוֹ׃
אֲדֹנָ֣י כַּמָּ֣ה תִּרְאֶ֑ה
הָשִׁ֥יבָה נַפְשִׁ֝֗י מִשֹּׁאֵיהֶ֑ם
מִכְּפִירִ֥ים יְחִידָתִֽי׃

But at my stumbling they rejoiced and gathered themselves together;
The smiters whom I did not know gathered together against me,
They slandered me without ceasing.
Like godless jesters at a feast,
They gnashed at me with their teeth.
Lord, how long will you look on?
Rescue my soul from their ravages,
My only life from the lions.

Commentators have different interpretations of the phrase "Lord, how long will you look on?" Gunkel sees this type of question as a rhetorical device designed to challenge the Deity's honor, i.e., a motivation device to persuade God to act.[104] Miller considers it as a complaint against God to challenge the way God has acted or threatened to act.[105] Kraus interprets the question as part of the supplication to follow.[106] Hossfeld interpretes the petitoner's question as part of the lament proper. For Hossfeld, the

[103] Cf. Hans Joachim Kraus, *Theology of the Psalms* (trans. Keith Crim; Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1986) 137. So Miller, *They Cried*, 70-71.
[104] Gunkel, *Introduction*, 155-56; so Weiser, *Psalms*, 303.
[105] Miller, *They Cried*, 70-74; so Broyles, *Psalms*, 171.
[106] Kraus, *Psalms I*, 394; so Gerstenberger, *Psalms I*, 152.

question has a more confrontational nature, i.e., it is not a complaint but an accusation (*Anklage*) made against the Deity; the petitioner accuses the Deity of being a bystander who watches the petitioner about to be killed by the enemies but not doing anything to help.[107]

On the other hand, Eaton agrees with Westermann, interpreting the question not as a complaint against but an appeal to the Deity for immediate responses.[108] Such expression describes the petitioner's feeling of isolation and distress; it assumes a close relationship between the petitioner and the Deity.

The complaints against the Deity clearly indentify at length the Deity as the cause of the sufferings (cf. Psalms 6, 13, 43, 102). In voicing the complaints against the Deity, the petitioner explicitly accuses the Deity as the main cause of the sufferings. This type of speech continues the complaint at length; it appears predominantly in the psalms of the communal laments, in Jeremiah, and in prose prayers. In the twenty psalms under study, Psalms 43 and 102 are the only two psalms that contain the complaints against God. Below is Ps 102:10-12 is one example:

כִּי־אֵפֶר כַּלֶּחֶם אָכָלְתִּי
וְשִׁקֻּוַי בִּבְכִי מָסָכְתִּי׃
מִפְּנֵי־זַעַמְךָ וְקִצְפֶּךָ
כִּי נְשָׂאתַנִי וַתַּשְׁלִיכֵנִי׃
יָמַי כְּצֵל נָטוּי
וַאֲנִי כָּעֵשֶׂב אִיבָשׁ׃

For I have eaten ashes for bread;
And I have mixed my drink with weeping
From your indignation and your wrath,

[107] Frank- Lothar Hossfeld and Erich Zenger, *Die Psalmen 1-50* (Wurzburg: Echter, 1993) 221-22.
[108] John Eaton, *Psalms*, (London: Cromwell Press, 2003) 158-59.

Because you have lifted me up and cast me down.
My days are like a stretched out shadow,
And I, like grass, wither away.

Another example of the complaint against God is Ps 80:5-7 below. The complaints made against the Deity are clear and pronounced. The petitioner accuses the Deity as the acting agent for all the hardships and embarrassments; the accusations made against the Deity are explicit. Zenger interprets Ps 80:5-7 as "reproaching Yhwh with the utter contradictoriness and absurdity of his behavior."[109]

יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים צְבָאוֹת
עַד־מָתַי עָשַׁנְתָּ בִּתְפִלַּת עַמֶּךָ׃
הֲאֲכַלְתָּם לֶחֶם דִּמְעָה
וַתַּשְׁקֵמוֹ בִּדְמָעוֹת שָׁלִישׁ׃
תְּשִׂימֵנוּ מָדוֹן לִשְׁכֵנֵינוּ
וְאֹיְבֵינוּ יִלְעֲגוּ־לָמוֹ׃

O LORD God of hosts,
How long will you be angry with the prayer of your people?
You have fed them with the bread of tears,
And you have made them to drink tears in large measure.
You make us an object of contention to our neighbors,
And our enemies laugh among themselves.

2.3.4 The Petition

The petition is the request made to the Deity to remove or lessen the sufferings. The core verbal forms for this mode of speech are the imperative forms with first-person singular suffixes. The jussives are also used in conjunction with the imperatives expressing the wishes for divine blessings for the petitioners (friends may be included), or curses of the enemies. The petition generally consists of the following types: healing

[109] Frank-Lothar Hossfeld and Erich Zenger, *Psalms 2* (Hermeneia; trans. Linda M. Maloney; Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2005) 315.

from illness, protection from the enemies, seeking justice, forgiveness of sins, removal of punishment, protection from sins, punishment of the enemies, and gracious divine intervention.[110]

The petition for gracious intervention can be given in the form of negative prohibition, and is often interpreted erroneously, in my view, as the complaint against God. Ps 35:20-22 is one example:

כִּי לֹא שָׁלוֹם יְדַבֵּרוּ
וְעַל רִגְעֵי־אֶרֶץ דִּבְרֵי מִרְמוֹת יַחֲשֹׁבוּן׃
וַיַּרְחִיבוּ עָלַי פִּיהֶם
אָמְרוּ הֶאָח הֶאָח רָאֲתָה עֵינֵינוּ׃
רָאִיתָה יְהוָה אַל־תֶּחֱרַשׁ
אֲדֹנָי אַל־תִּרְחַק מִמֶּנִּי׃

For they do not speak peace,
But they devise deceitful words against those who are quiet in the land.
They opened their mouth wide against me;
They said, "Aha, aha, our eyes have seen it!"
You have seen it, O LORD, do not keep silent;
O Lord, do not be far from me.

The negative prohibitions, Ps 35:22a-b, are theologically loaded. I interpret such negative prohibitions as the rhetorical statements intended to move the Deity to response. These statements nuance the essences of the Deity: God knows all things for he has "seen it." God has spoken in the past and is expected to speak again, thus "O Yhwh, do not keep silent." From divine presence to divine immanence, God is everywhere and is present amidst his people and so the expectation "O Lord, do not be far from me." One should interpret the ideas of the absence and silence of the Deity in relation with the

[110] For a comprehensive list of verbs used in the petition proper, see Aejmelaeus, *Traditional Prayer*, 15-50.

expectation of the certainty that God will speak (cf. Pss 10:1, 17; 27:9; 69:17; 102:2; 143:7), and that God will reveal himself to intervene on behalf of the petitioner (cf. Ps 55:17-19).[111]

2.3.5 Praise and Affirmation of Prayer Heard:

Praises usually occur after the petition, or at the end of the poem. The petitioner praises the Deity in order to persuade the Deity to take action. Generally, praises might be grouped in two typical categories: conditional and unconditional. In conditional praises, the petitioner makes a vow to praise if the Deity answers in favor of the petitions. In some cases, this type of vow of praise involves promise of sacrifices (e.g., Ps 51:21).

Unconditional praises are the expressions of gratitude. In other instances, the petitioner praises the Deity giving the indication that the Deity has heard the prayer. This type of praise is usually declarative in general, and often appears at the conclusion of the poem (e.g., Ps 57:8-12).

Noting the above observations concerning various modes of speeches, the next section will deal with the Syntactic Descriptions and exegeses of Psalms 26, 54, and 57.

[111] Hans-Joachim Kraus, *Theology of the Psalms* (trans. Keith Crim; Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1986) 38-40.

2.4 Syntactic Descriptions and Exegeses of Psalms 26, 54, and 57

2.4.1 Psalms 26

[1] שָׁפְטֵנִי יְהוָה	Vindicate me, O Yhwh
כִּי־אֲנִי בְתֻמִּי הָלָכְתִּי	For in my integrity I have walked;
וּבַיהוָה בָּטַחְתִּי לֹא אֶמְעָד[112]:	And in Yhwh I trusted so that I will not waver.
[2]בְּחָנֵנִי יְהוָה וְנַסֵּנִי	Examine me, O Yhwh, and test me.
צָרְפָה[113] כִלְיוֹתַי[114] וְלִבִּי:	Test my mind and my heart.
[3]כִּי־חַסְדְּךָ לְנֶגֶד עֵינָי	For your goodness is before my eyes,
וְהִתְהַלַּכְתִּי בַּאֲמִתֶּךָ:	And I have walked in your truth.
[4]לֹא־יָשַׁבְתִּי עִם־מְתֵי־שָׁוְא	I do not sit with worthless men,
וְעִם נַעֲלָמִים לֹא אָבוֹא:	And with hypocrites I do not go.
[5]שָׂנֵאתִי קְהַל מְרֵעִים	I hate the assembly of evildoers,
וְעִם־רְשָׁעִים לֹא אֵשֵׁב:	And I do not sit with the wicked.
[6]אֶרְחַץ בְּנִקָּיוֹן כַּפָּי	I will wash my hands in innocence,
וַאֲסֹבְבָה אֶת־מִזְבַּחֲךָ יְהוָה:	So that I may go about your altar, O Yhwh,
[7]לַשְׁמֵעַ בְּקוֹל תּוֹדָה	To proclaim with the voice of thanksgiving,
וּלְסַפֵּר כָּל־נִפְלְאוֹתֶיךָ:	And to recount all your wonders.
[8]יְהוָה[115] אָהַבְתִּי מְעוֹן בֵּיתֶךָ	O Yhwh, I love the abode of your dwelling
וּמְקוֹם מִשְׁכַּן כְּבוֹדֶךָ:	And the place of the dwelling of your glory.
[9]אַל־תֹּאסֵף עִם־חַטָּאִים נַפְשִׁי	Do not remove my soul along with sinners
וְעִם־אַנְשֵׁי דָמִים חַיָּי:	Nor my life with men of bloodshed,
[10]אֲשֶׁר־בִּידֵיהֶם זִמָּה	In whose hands is a wicked plan,
וִימִינָם מָלְאָה שֹׁחַד:	And in whose right hand is full of bribes.
[11]וַאֲנִי בְתֻמִּי אֵלֵךְ	But I walk in my integrity.
פְּדֵנִי וְחָנֵּנִי[116]:	Redeem me, and be gracious to me.
[12]רַגְלִי עָמְדָה בְמִישׁוֹר	My foot stands on a level place;
בְּמַקְהֲלִים אֲבָרֵךְ יְהוָה:	In the congregations, I shall bless Yhwh.

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[112] The editors of the BHS suggests a missing stich corrupts the metrical structure of this half verse, v. 1b. I find no textual support to amend the text.

[113] Translation follows *Qere*, reading צָרְפָה (Qal Imperative).

[114] Literally "kidneys."

[115] The editors of BHS suggests the omission of יהוה to fit 3+3 meter pattern. There is no textual support for such omission, I prefer the reading as printed due to the uncertainties of meter.

[116] The Septuagint (A and L) adds κύριε perhaps for the sake of a 3+3 meter pattern. I retain the reading of BHS for the same reason above.

Psalms 26

שָׁפְטֵנִי יְהוָה[1]	111+1	V+Voc	SD1	Yhwh
כִּי־אֲנִי בְתֻמִּי הָלָכְתִּי	133	[SPV]	SD1; R1	Yhwh
וּבַיהוָה בָּטַחְתִּי לֹא אֶמְעָד:	233	[PV(V)]	SD1	Overhearers
בְּחָנֵנִי יְהוָה וְנַסֵּנִי[2]	222+1	VV+Voc	SD2	Yhwh
צָרְפָה כִלְיוֹתַי וְלִבִּי:	133	[VOO]	SD2	Yhwh
כִּי־חַסְדְּךָ לְנֶגֶד עֵינָי[3]	123	[SPred]	SD2	Yhwh
וְהִתְהַלַּכְתִּי בַּאֲמִתֶּךָ:	122	[VP]	SD2	Yhwh
לֹא־יָשַׁבְתִּי עִם־מְתֵי־שָׁוְא[4]	123	VP	SI1	Yhwh
וְעִם נַעֲלָמִים לֹא אָבוֹא:	122	[PV]	SI1	Yhwh
שָׂנֵאתִי קְהַל מְרֵעִים[5]	123	VO		Yhwh
וְעִם־רְשָׁעִים לֹא אֵשֵׁב:	122	[PV]		Yhwh
אֶרְחַץ בְּנִקָּיוֹן כַּפָּי[6]	133	VAO	SD5	Yhwh
וַאֲסֹבְבָה אֶת־מִזְבַּחֲךָ יְהוָה:	122+1	[VO+Voc]	SD5	Yhwh
לַשְׁמֵעַ בְּקוֹל תּוֹדָה[7]	123	[VP]	SD5	Yhwh
וּלְסַפֵּר כָּל־נִפְלְאוֹתֶיךָ:	123	[VO]	SD5	Yhwh
יְהוָה אָהַבְתִּי מְעוֹן בֵּיתֶךָ[8]	123+1	VO+Voc	SD6; G1; M1	Yhwh
וּמְקוֹם מִשְׁכַּן כְּבוֹדֶךָ:	013	[O]	SD6; G1; M1	Yhwh
אַל־תֹּאֶסֹף עִם־חַטָּאִים נַפְשִׁי[9]	133	VPO	SD7; G2; M2	Yhwh
וְעִם־אַנְשֵׁי דָמִים חַיָּי:	023	[PO]	SD7; G2; M2	Yhwh
אֲשֶׁר־בִּידֵיהֶם זִמָּה[10]	123	[SPred]	SD7	Yhwh
וִימִינָם מָלְאָה שֹׁחַד:	133	[SVO]	SD7	Yhwh
וַאֲנִי בְתֻמִּי אֵלֵךְ[11]	133	SPV	R1	Yhwh
פְּדֵנִי וְחָנֵּנִי:	222	VV		Yhwh
רַגְלִי עָמְדָה בְמִישׁוֹר[12]	133	SVP		Yhwh
בְּמַקְהֲלִים אֲבָרֵךְ יְהוָה:	133	PVO		Overhearers

Lineation:

Psalm 26 contains some lineation difficulties that can affect the decisions in the surface structure divisions. The lineation of v. 1 is problematic; consider the Masoretic and BHS lineation of v. 1:

MT

שָׁפְטֵנִי יְהוָה כִּי־אֲנִי בְתֻמִּי הָלָכְתִּי
וּבַיהוָה בָּטַחְתִּי לֹא אֶמְעָד׃

BHS

שָׁפְטֵנִי יְהוָה כִּי־אֲנִי בְתֻמִּי הָלָכְתִּי
וּבַיהוָה בָּטַחְתִּי לֹא אֶמְעָד׃

Assessing the MT a/b division of the above verse, one observes that v. 1a has three clause predicators (שָׁפְטֵנִי, יְהוָה, הָלָכְתִּי), three constituents, and five units. This lineation does not fit within the constraints of Syntactic Description; it also does not agree numerically with the remaining lines of the poems because of the length. The second line, v. 1b, has two clause predicators (בָּטַחְתִּי, אֶמְעָד), two constituents, and three words. The MT lineation of v. 1b fits within the constraints of Syntactic Description.

With respect to BHS lineation, one does not know what has prompted the editors of BHS to split v. 1 into four lines (though the splitting of v. 1a is in agreement with Syntactic Description). The editors may have split the lines because of the disjunctive *rebia‘ gadol* or because the lengths of the lines are too long, i.e., *metri causa* (BHS divisions in the Psalter seldom allow a line to contain more than three words/units). While BHS's lineation of v. 1a fits within the constraints of Syntactic Description, the splitting of v. 1b (my lineation = 1c) is unsatisfactory. The editors of the BHS propose

that a stich is missing in v. 1b therefore corrupting the meter; I find no textual support for such argument.

In cases where the MT's lineations are dubious such as these, the lacking of the definition of a line is problematic. A quick and easy solution is to emend the text so that it might fit a certain prescribed metrical pattern, however unnecessary such a decision might be. Some have suggested that by eliminating וּבִיהוָה בָּטַחְתִּי or שָׁפְטֵנִי יְהוָה כִּי the remaining lines would fit into 2+2+2 meter, but such colometric reconstruction is *metri causa* motivated; it has no textual support.[117]

Others, Craigie and Kraus for example, are either indecisive or give no support for their proposed lineation for this verse . Craigie is indecisive; he scans v. 1 as having two lines in accord with the MT while saying "it is possible to that v. 1 should be interpreted as four short lines rather than two long lines. But the parallelism links the middle two clauses, contributing to the uncertainty of the analysis."[118] Kraus, on the other hand, gives no reason why he read the text in three lines.

The MT lineation of v. 1b fits within the constraints of Syntactic Description; the negated form לֹא אֶמְעָד presents a future condition contingent on the situation expressed in וּבִיהוָה בָּטַחְתִּי. One also notes that the opening lines, i.e., the Summons and General Petition, generally contains one imperative and one vocative in the opening line. This opening line is usually followed by two lines containing two causal clauses, i.e., syntactic

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[117] Gunkel, *Introduction*, 108; cf. Kraus, *Psalms*, 26. The disparity is also shown in some modern translations: four lines = NIV; two lines = NASV; three lines = NRSV.

[118] Craigie, *Psalms*, 223. So Hossfeld, *Psalms 2*, 169. Since the issue of parallelism has been addressed in chapter one, there is no need to repeat it here. Kraus, *Psalms*, 325.

dependency of subordination to the core clause (cf. Pss 51:5, 54:5, 55:4b). The first causal clause of the pair begins with a causative כי, and the second causal clause continues the motivation with a *waw* interclausal conjunction (one notes the same syntactic dependency arrangement in v. 3). The MT lineation for the remaining lines of vv. 2-12 fit within the constraints of Syntactic Description.

Line Types:

All the lines are delineated into the constraints of zero to three clause predicators, one to three constituents, and two to three units per line. The majority of the lines contain one to two clause predicators, two to three constituents, and two to three units.

1. Clause predicators:
    a) zero clause predicator: 2/25 lines
    b) one clause predicator: 16/25 lines
    c) two clause predicators: 6/25 lines
    d) three clause predicators: 1/25 lines
2. Constituents:
    a) one constituent: 1/25 lines
    b) two constituents: 12/25 lines
    c) three constituents: 12/25 lines
3. Units:
    a) two units: 5/25 lines
    b) three units: 19/25 lines
    c) four units: 1/25 lines

4. Vocatives: Yhwh (five occurrences)

Gross Structure

The linguistic correspondences unified the gross structure of this psalm. The prefix and suffix verb forms and the imperatives used throughout the entire poem demarcate different modes of speeches in the poem. Concerning the participants, the "I," "You," and "They" forms are clearly visible in this psalm. The "I" forms dominate the entire poem; they appear twenty-nine times in various verbal forms, pronominal and nominal suffixes, and direct object suffixes. The "You" forms (the Deity), occur nineteen times in vocatives, imperatives, pronominal suffixes, and negative prohibition. The "They" forms (worthless men, hypocrites, evildoers, and the wicked) are mentioned eight times in construct nouns, plural suffixes, and participles.

I divide this twenty-five-line poem into five poetic paragraphs. Instead of using O'Connor's terminology of Batch 1, Batch 2 and so on, I am using the standard form-critical labels to describe each paragraph because of the familiarity of terminology:[119]

a) Summons and general petition vv. 1-3 (7 lines)

b) Protestation of innocence vv. 4-5 (4 lines)

[119] Concerning the structure outlines for this psalm, the following commentaries have been consulted in addition to those cited elsewhere in this chapter: F. Delitzsch, *Biblical Commentary on the Psalms* (Edinburgh: Clark, 1880) 348-53; A. F. Kirkpatrick, *The Book of Psalms with Introduction and Notes* (Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges; Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1901) 136-39; C. A. Briggs and E. G. Briggs, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Psalms* (ICC; Edinburgh: Clark, 1906) 229-36; B. Duhm, *Die Psalmen* (Kurzer Hand-Kommentar zum Alten Testament 14; Tübingen: Mohr [Siebeck], 1922) 108-11; W. O. E. Oesterley, *The Psalms Translated with Text-Critical and Exegetical Notes* (London: SPCK, 1939), 191-94; E. J. Kissane, *The Book of Psalms Translated from a Critically Revised Hebrew Text* (Westminster: Newman, 1953) 114-16; M. Dahood, *Psalms I: 1-50* (AB 16; Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1966) 160-64; J. H. Eaton, *Psalms: Introduction and Commentary* (Torch Bible Commentaries; London: SCM, 1967) 83-85; L. Sabourin, *The Psalms: Their Origin and Meaning* (Staten Island, NY: Alba House, 1969) 25-27.

c) Cultic ceremony vv. 6-8 (6 lines)

d) Petition for God to spare psalmist's life vv. 9-10 (4 lines)

e) Statements of prayer being heard vv. 11-12 (4 lines)

The poem exhibits this thematic movement:

The first paragraph of the poem

1. Summons/general petition for vindication (v. 1a)
2. Motivations for vindication are explained (v. 1b)
3. Repeated summons/call for God to judge the psalmist's standing of innocence (v. 2)
4. Motivations for God to judge the psalmist's innocence are explained (v. 3)

The second paragraph of the poem

5. Attestations of innocence in psalmist's way of life (vv. 4-5)

The third paragraph of the poem

6. Confirm standing of innocence through ritual ceremony action and thanksgiving words (vv. 7-8)

The fourth paragraph

7. Petition for God to spare psalmist's life (vv. 9-10)

The fifth paragraph

8. Statements of prayer being heard (vv. 11-12)

a) The Summons and General Petition (vv. 1-3): I further sub-divide this seven-line section into two smaller paragraphs, v. 1, and vv. 2-3. Sub-paragraph one begins with an imperative immediately followed by a vocative, v. 1a. In the individual prayers, this

form of "command/plea + address" construction is typical followed with a pair of causal clauses, v. 1b-c (subordinated to v. 1a forming the trope of syntactic dependency). These causal clauses seek to motivate the addressee to act.

Subparagraph two, vv. 2-3, has similar figure of speech arrangement. The petition is expanded with three imperatives followed by a pair of causal clauses. The use of singular imperative with first-person singular object suffixes, first-person singular perfect and imperfect forms, and first-person singular nominal suffixes united vv. 1-3 as one section. The linguistic correspondence between v. 1b and v. 3b is clear, it reinforces the unity of vv. 1-3.

The petitioner opens the plea with שָׁפְטֵנִי (judge me) asking Yhwh to test and exam the petitioner's "kidney/mind and heart." On the idea of asking the Deity to judge oneself, Kraus observed, "We are here not dealing with the *justificatio impii* but with the *justificatio justi.*"[120] It is accurate to render שָׁפְטֵנִי as "vindicate me" in the sense that the Deity is to decide the controversy between the petitioner and the wicked. He is to condemn the wicked and therefore vindicate the petitioner. Immediately after the plea are the motivation statements to move the Deity to respond because of the petitioner's integrity and trust in the Deity. The petitioner repeats the plea in vv. 2-3.

b) Protestation of Uprightness of Character (vv. 4-5)

Verses 4-5: The grammatical shift marked by the negation clause לֹא־יָשַׁבְתִּי (I do not sit) in v. 4a indicates a change in topic from Summons and General Petition to Protestation.

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[120] Kraus, *Psalms 1-59*, 173, 329.

In this section, the focus here is not on the enemies but the petitioner's plea of innocence and moral uprightness.

c) Cultic Ceremony (vv. 6-8)

The next three verses, vv. 6-8, contain the motif of the liturgical ritual of purification (cf. Deut 21:6). The rite moves from declaration of innocence, i.e., oath of purification (cf. 1 Kgs 8:31), to the ritual of washing of hands, to the affirmation of cleansing indicated by the act of walking around the altar. In the Psalter, נְקִיּוֹן occurs only here in v. 6a and Ps 73:13, where one finds the exact expression אֶרְחַץ בְּנִקָּיוֹן כַּפָּי (I will wash my hands in innocence).

The washing of hands in v. 6a has a two-fold purpose: 1) it looks backward to affirm what the psalmist said in vv. 4-5 is true (oath of purification, cf. 1 Kgs 8:31), and 2) it looks forward to anticipate the immediate series of response actions in the next three lines. The first response is a wish initiated by the cohortative וַאֲסֹבְבָה (so that I may go about); the clause וַאֲסֹבְבָה expresses a wish that was pre-conditioned by the act of washing of hands in the preceding line v. 6a (syntactic dependency). The second response is to proclaim the songs of thanksgiving in liturgical worship (cf. 1 Kgs 15:22; Jer 4:15, 5:20; Isa 52:7; Jos 6:10; Ps 66:8). The third response is to recount God's miracles (כָּל־נִפְלְאוֹתֶיךָ "all your miracles"). The cohortative and infinitive construct clauses tightly connected these lines into a unit (syntactic dependency).

The vocative Yhwh syntactically introduces a break in thematic progression of the poem; it introduces the petition proper, vv. 8-10. The two lines in v. 8 continue the Temple motif; they formed a single syntactic entity (syntactic dependency,

ellipsis/gapping); these two lines are the rhetorical motivation statementss for vv. 9-10 to follow.

d). *The Petition (vv. 9-10)*

Line 9a begins with a series of negative prohibition statements that end in v. 10b. The four lines in vv. 9-10b are united as a single syntactic entity (syntactic dependency of ellipsis/gapping of v. 9a). The phrase in v. 9b, וְעִם־אַנְשֵׁי דָמִים חַיָּי (verb gapping to v. 9a) is the core clause on which the two subordinate verbless relative clauses in v. 10a-b depend. The petitioner pleads with the Deity not to remove his soul along with sinners or his life with men of bloodshed. The basic motivation for this petition is the petitioner's love of the Temple where the glory of Yhwh dwells.

The above observations of the grammatical phenomena (the use of ellipsis/gapping, i.e., two core clauses, to construct two syntactic entities in six poetic lines) attest to the unity of vv. 8-10 as a poetic paragraph. In the preceding paragraph the syntactic dependencies are seen with the cohortative and infinitive construct clauses.[121]

e). Closing Statement of Confidence (vv. 11-12)

The concluding section contrasts the petitioner's characters with that of the wicked ones in the preceding section. The *waw* adversative + first-person pronoun וְאֲנִי (but I) contrasts the petitioner's character with that of the enemies' in the preceding lines.

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[121] According to Mosca, there are various internal indications that vv. 9-10 constitute a distinct paragraph. Syntactically the two verses form a unit, and this sense of unity is reinforced by the parallelism that marks the line-ends of the two bicola. Mosca is correct in noting the two verses as a syntactic entity but his assessment of parallelism is vague. Though the two lines form a syntactic entity it does not constitute a poetic paragraph/section. One notes that other paragraphs which he also considers as separate sections do contain more than one syntactic entity. Paul G. Mosca "Psalm 26: Poetic Structure and the Form-Critical Task," *CBQ* 47 (1985) 223, 224.

This shift in focus marks a structural break in the poem. The petitioner reiterates his plea for redemption. Line 11a repeats the opening motivation statement in v. 1b. The poem then ends with statements of confidence that include the motif of praise.

Concerning the form-critical assessment, one notes these important points:

1) The motifs of the Temple and the ritual ceremony are intertwined with the תּוֹדָה motifs in vv. 6-8,12. These motifs might have prompted some commentators to suggest that the psalm is a prayer of a falsely accused individual, a protestation of innocence of a pilgrim who takes an oath and goes through the washing of hand ritual (cf. 1 Kgs 8:31-32; Deut 21:6; Ps 73:13).[122] Many scholars also have concluded that Psalm 26 is the prayer of an unfairly accused person in the setting of the Temple.[123] Vogt, as Broyles and Kraus, argued for a liturgical setting. Citing similarities found in Psalms 15 and 24, these scholars claimed that Psalm 26 is a prayer of a falsely accused person entering the Temple.[124]

The language of the psalm insinuates the setting of the Temple where the supplicant subjects himself to the purification ritual to protest his innocence and asks Yhwh to spare his life. However, this interpretation is not without difficulty because in 1 Kings 8:31-32 the taking an oath is required if a man has sinned against his neighbor. The person was guilty and thus required to take an oath before the altar. In Psalm 26, the petitioner claimed to be innocent. It is difficult to accept Gunkel's Individual Lament

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[122] E.g., Weiser, *Psalms*, 242, Kraus, *Psalms*, 325-327.
[123] Weiser, *Psalms*, 243, Kraus, *Psalms*, 324. Hossfeld, *Psalms 2*, 167.
[124] E. Vogt, "Psalm 26, ein Pilgergebet," *Bib* 43 (1962) 328-37; Broyes, *Psalms*, 137.

genre designation for this psalm because it contains no lament, complaint, or illness motif.[125]

Concerning the structure of the present psalm, I did not aim to show that the cohesiveness of the structure of this psalm is poetically unique as a structure beyond that of other psalms. Rather, by using Psalm 26 as an example I sought to demonstrate that the working of syntactic description can help in solving difficult colometric situations without unnecessary emendation of the text on the basis of meter, where textual supports are lacking, e.g., in vv. 1,11b. The various modes of speeches of the Individual Laments presented in the preceding analysis are widely known among form-critical scholars; however, the grouping of lines based on themes/thematic progression alone cannot be substantiated where clear indication of thematic or topical change is lacking.

[125] Gunkel, *Introduction*, 35-36

2.4.2 Psalm 54

[3]אֱלֹהִים בְּשִׁמְךָ וֹשִׁיעֵנִי	O God, through your name save me.
וּבִגְבוּרָתְךָ תְּדִינֵנִי:	And through your might vindicate me.
[4]אֱלֹהִים שְׁמַע תְּפִלָּתִי	O God, hear my prayer.
הַאֲזִינָה לְאִמְרֵי־פִי:	Give ear to the words of my mouth.
[5]כִּי זָרִים[126] קָמוּ עָלַי	For foreigners stand against me,
וְעָרִיצִים בִּקְשׁוּ נַפְשִׁי	And the ruthless ones seek my life.
לֹא שָׂמוּ אֱלֹהִים לְנֶגְדָּם סֶלָה:	They do not set God before them.
[6]הִנֵּה אֱלֹהִים[127] עֹזֵר לִי	Lo, God is a helper for me,
אֲדֹנָי בְּסֹמְכֵי נַפְשִׁי:	The Lord is the supporter of my life.
[7]יָשִׁוב[128] הָרַע לְשֹׁרְרָי	He returns evil to my foes.
בַּאֲמִתְּךָ הַצְמִיתֵם[129]:	In your faithfulness, wipe them out.
[8]בִּנְדָבָה אֶזְבְּחָה־לָּךְ	By freewill, I will sacrifice to you.
אֹודֶה שִׁמְךָ יְהוָה[130] כִּי־טוֹב:	I will praise Yhwh, because it is good;
[9]כִּי מִכָּל־צָרָה הִצִּילָנִי	For he has delivered me from all troubles,
וּבְאֹיְבַי רָאֲתָה עֵינִי:	So that my eye gazed upon my enemies.

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[126] Following Mss, Targum, and Ps 86:14, NRSV, Hossfeld, and Kraus, prefer the reading of זֵדִים (insolent men). I retained the MT reading in light of LXX (κραταιοὶ); cf. Isa 25:2-3; Isa 29:5; Ezek 28:7, 31:12. So did Briggs and Briggs, Broyles, Delitzsch, Weiser, NAS, NIV, NKJ, NLT, ESV, and NJPS.

[127] Some Mss read יהוה; but LXX reads ὁ θεὸς.

[128] I prefer the reading of third-person singular, jussive, יָשֹׁב taking אֲדֹנָי as the subject. Many Mss and LXX read as *Qere* Hiphil imperfect third-person sing יְשִׁיב. Syriac and Jerome read the imperative הָשִׁיבָה.

[129] I find no reason to alter the text here, though Kraus suggests transposing יהוה from v. 8b to the end of this line on the basis of meter. Kraus, *Psalms*, 513-14,

[130] A few Mss and the LXX omitted יהוה. I prefer the reading as printed because of the reason stated in previous note.

Psalm 54

[3]אֱלֹהִים בְּשִׁמְךָ וּשְׁיעֵנִי	122+1	PV+Voc	SD1; M1	God
וּבִגְבוּרָתְךָ תְּדִינֵנִי׃	122	[PV]	SD1; M1	God
[4]אֱלֹהִים שְׁמַע תְּפִלָּתִי	122+1	VO+Voc	SD2; M2	God
הַאֲזִינָה לְאִמְרֵי־פִי׃	123	[VO]	SD2; M2	God
[5]כִּי זָרִים קָמוּ עָלַי	133	[SVO]	SD2, M3	God
וְעָרִיצִים בִּקְשׁוּ נַפְשִׁי	133	[SVO]	SD2, M3	God
לֹא שָׂמוּ אֱלֹהִים לְנֶגְדָּם סֶלָה׃	133	[VOP]	SD2	God
[6]הִנֵּה אֱלֹהִים עֹזֵר לִי	123	SPred	M4	Overhearers
אֲדֹנָי בְּסֹמְכֵי נַפְשִׁי׃	123	SPred	M4	Overhearers
[7]יָשִׁוב הָרַע לְשֹׁרְרָי	133	[VOP]		Overhearers
בַּאֲמִתְּךָ הַצְמִיתֵם׃	122	PV		God
[8]בִּנְדָבָה אֶזְבְּחָה־לָּךְ	123	PVO		God
אוֹדֶה שִׁמְךָ יְהוָה כִּי־טוֹב׃	233	VO[Pred]	SD3	Overhearers
[9]כִּי מִכָּל־צָרָה הִצִּילָנִי	123	[PV]	SD3	Overhearers
וּבְאֹיְבַי רָאֲתָה עֵינִי׃	133	[OVS]	SD3	Overhearers

Lineation:

Psalm 54 contains no lineation difficulties that affect its surface structure. The poem is heavily troped; all of the lines as presented by the MT are delineated within the constraints of Syntactic Description; my lineation also agrees with NRSV.

Line Types: all the lines are delineated within the constraints of one to three clause predicators, two to four constituents, and two to four units per line. The majority of the lines contain one predicator, two to three constituents, and three units.

1. Clause predicators:
    a) one clause predicator: 12/15 lines
    b) two clause predicators: 2/15 lines
    c) three clause predicators: 1/15 lines
2. Constituents:
    a) two constituents: 7/15 lines
    b) three constituents: 7/15 lines
    c) four constituents: 1/15 lines
3. Units:
    a) two units: 2/15 lines
    b) three units: 12/15 lines
    c) four units: 1/15 lines
3. Vocatives:
    a) God: two occurrences
    b) Yhwh: one occurrence

Gross Structure

Similar to other psalms of individual laments in the present study, the prefix and suffix verbal forms and the imperatives with first-person singular suffixes used throughout the entire poem formed the thematic progression of the tripartite participants, "I," "You," and "They" parties in this psalm. The poem is a direct address to God and to the background listeners (third-person singular forms in vv. 4a, 6a-b, 7a, and 9).

I divide this fifteen-line poem into two paragraphs. The first paragraph, vv. 3-5, consists of seven lines. The opening line begins with the vocative and immediately followed by a petition. The latter consists of an imperative and a motivation phrase. The second line, v. 3.b, is syntactically parallel to the first (prepositional phrase + verb; each line has one clause predicator, two constituents, and two words with the vocative as an independent clause).

Verse 4 repeats the Summons and Petition mode of speech; it forms another syntactic parallelistic entity. The vocative is an independent clause; the two lines in v. 4 are an exact match (verb + prepositional phrase; each line consists of one clause predicator, two constituents, and two words). The three causal clauses in v. 5 are syntactically dependent on v. 4. Together, the lines in these two verses are syntactically united as a unit.

There are syntactic parallelistic entities in lines 4a-b (subject + verb + prepositional phrase with object suffix // subject + verb + object; each line has one clause predicator, three constituents, and three words). The tropes of syntactic dependency and matching unified the seven lines in vv. 3-5 to form the first half of the poem. The first

half of the poem focuses on calling for help and stating the reasons why the divine intervention is necessary. In this section, the petitioner addresses the Deity directly:

1. Summons/general petition for saving act through God's name (v. 3)
2. Summons/call to God's attention to words of prayer (v. 4)
3. Motivations and descriptions of foreign enemies (v. 5).

The shift in the direction of speech marks a structural break in the poem. A pair of syntactically matching verbless clauses in v. 6 referring to God in third-person singular sets off the second paragraph from the first. The advantage of taking the line as the basic poetic building block is noted in vv. 6-7a where linguistic correspondence extends beyond the two lines/bicolon of v. 6 and splits the next two lines in v. 7. These three lines, vv. 6-7a, cannot be separated since v. 7a is in apposition to the objects "the supporter of my life" in v. 6b and the "helper" in line 6a. Without a shift in focus, the speech changes direction back to address God directly in the next two lines, vv. 7b-8a. These two lines together form a syntactic entity; they are conditional clauses; v. 7b is a request (independent clause, protasis) and v. 8a is a promise to return the favor if the request is granted (dependent clauses, apodosis). Again, the standard bicolon system does not hold in this case as syntactic links uniting the concluding two lines, v. 9a-b, to the preceding line v. 8b. These causal clauses subordinate to the preceding line and serve as the conclusion of the section.

The second half of the poem reiterates the supporting arguments for the requests. In this section, five out of eight lines address the overhearers. The thematic progression is as follow:

4. Statement of confidence in God as the helper and protector (vv. 6-7a), addressed to the overhearers.
5. Petition for God to silence the enemies (v. 7b), addressed to God
6. Promise of thanksgiving to God's name and voluntary sacrifice (v. 8), addressed to God.
7. The petitioner declares victory because the prayer is heard (v. 9), addressing the overhearers.

The First Half of the Poem (vv. 3-5)

Like many of the "I" prayer psalms, the imperatives dominate opening lines (save, listen, give ear). The repetitions of the imperatival clauses indicate the petitioner's urgent and earnest plea to the Deity. What stands out in the opening lines is the reference to the name of God, "by your name," as the means for the saving act of God. The association between "your name" and "your might" invokes the Exodus covenant tradition of the divine name in these two opening lines, i.e., God's name is God's might that saves and judges (Deut 12:5, 11, 13, 14, 18, 21, 26).[131]

The name of God is often associated with God's power (cf. Pss 20:1b, 5a, 7b; 106:8; Jer 10:6, 16:21). The theology of the divine name might have prompted Hossfeld to suggest the setting of the forensic sense, i.e., the petition of a public judicial vindication.[132] O'Connor viewed the association of the terms בְּשִׁמְךָ "by your name" and וּבִגְבוּרָתְךָ "in your might" as grammatically specific. He suggested that the noun phrase

[131] Weiser, *Psalms*, 30-35.
[132] Hossfeld, *Psalms II*, 47-48.

combinations in v. 3 "are separated into their component parts, usually two, and set in adjacent, not necessarily, matching lines."[133] Jeremiah 10:6 contains an example in which the combination of "name" and "might" occur in a single phrase:

מַאֵין כָּמוֹךָ יְהוָה
גָּדוֹל אַתָּה וְגָדוֹל שִׁמְךָ בִּגְבוּרָה׃

There is none like you, O Yhwh.
You are great, and great is *your name in might*.

Verse 5. The petitioner identifies the enemies as זָרִים (foreigners) and עָרִיצִים (dreadful ones/terrible ones); they are the cause of the petitioner's suffering. A closest parallel to Ps 54:5 is Ps 86:14, but there it reads זֵדִים (insolent ones) instead of זָרִים (foreigners):

אֱלֹהִים זֵדִים קָמוּ־עָלָי
וַעֲדַת עָרִיצִים בִּקְשׁוּ נַפְשִׁי
וְלֹא שָׂמוּךָ לְנֶגְדָּם׃

O God, the *insolent* rise against me.
The council of the *ruthless ones* have sought my life.
They do not set you before them.

However, if Ps 86:14 is a reworking of Ps 54:5, then the paleographical error between ד and ר might have occured. Further, זֵדִים does not occur with עָרִיצִים anywhere else except here in Ps 86:14. The combinations of זָרִים and עָרִיצִים can be found in Ezekiel and Isaiah. In Ezekiel 31:12a, this combination occurs in a single line:

וַיִּכְרְתֻהוּ זָרִים עָרִיצֵי גּוֹיִם וַיִּטְּשֻׁהוּ
The *foreigners* – the most *ruthless nations*, have cut it down and left it.

Also in Ezekiel 28:7:

לָכֵן הִנְנִי מֵבִיא עָלֶיךָ זָרִים עָרִיצֵי גּוֹיִם

[133] O'Connor, *Contour*, 649.

Thus, I will bring the *foreigners* upon you, the most *ruthless* of the nations.

Another example is Isa 25:2-3:

כִּי שַׂמְתָּ מֵעִיר לַגָּל קִרְיָה בְצוּרָה לְמַפֵּלָה
אַרְמוֹן זָרִים מֵעִיר לְעוֹלָם לֹא יִבָּנֶה׃
עַל־כֵּן יְכַבְּדוּךָ עַם־עָז
קִרְיַת גּוֹיִם עָרִיצִים יִירָאוּךָ׃

For you have made a city into a heap,
A fortified city into a ruin;
A palace of *foreigners* is a city no more, it will never be rebuilt.
Therefore a strong people will glorify you;
Cities of *ruthless* nations will revere you.

A clear example is in Isa 25:3 where the noun phrase combination of זָרִים and עָרִיצִים is separated into two component parts and set in adjacent lines in Isa 25:5:

כְּחֹרֶב בְּצִיּוֹן שְׁאוֹן זָרִים תַּכְנִיעַ
חֹרֶב בְּצֵל עָב זְמִיר עָרִיצִים יַעֲנֶה׃

Like heat in drought, you subdue the uproar of *foreigners*;
Like heat by the shadow of a cloud, the song of the *ruthless ones* is silenced.

Likewise, another example is Isaiah 29:5:

וְהָיָה כְּאָבָק דַּק הֲמוֹן זָרֶיךָ
וּכְמֹץ עֹבֵר הֲמוֹן עָרִיצִים
וְהָיָה לְפֶתַע פִּתְאֹם׃

But the multitude of your *foreigners* will become like fine dust,
And the multitude of the *ruthless ones* like the chaff that blows away;
And it will happen instantly,

The above-cited passages give strong arguments for the retaining of the MT זָרִים reading. The identity of the enemies in this psalm may play an important factor in the interpretation of the classic Individual Lament genre of the present psalm.

The first half of the poem concludes with the description of the זָרִים in v. 5c. The poet depicts the enemies as those who do not worship God.[134] In the first half, the petitioner prays to God for help to remove the serious danger presented by the most ruthless foreigners who have sought to take his life, i.e., those who do not worship God,

Moving on to the second paragraph, vv. 6-8, Syntactic Description also agrees with the MT and BHS. This paragraph consists of eight poetic lines. The petitioner continues to address the overhearers, beginning in v. 5c, speaking about the Deity. The demonstrative particle הִנֵּה (behold) sets off two verbless clauses in v. 6 that express the petitioner's confidence in God. In contrast to the enemies who "do not set God before them," the petitioner considers God as the עֹזֵר (helper) and סוֹמֵךְ (sustainer). These motivation statements are immediately followed by the petition for God to destroy/silence the enemies. The poem concludes with the promise of sacrifice and praise that, coupled with two causal clauses (syntactic dependency), expresses the petitioner's confidence that the prayer is heard.

Arguing against the classic Individual Lament designation of the present psalm, the motif of יְזָרִים and עָרִיצִים prompted Briggs & Briggs to suggest that the present psalm is a prayer for national victory over the עָרִיצִים of Babylonians in the earlier days of Josiah.[135]

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[134] Briggs and Briggs, *Psalms*, 2. 16.
[135] Briggs and Briggs, *Psalms*, 2. 16-17.

2.4.3 Psalm 57

[2] חָנֵּנִי אֱלֹהִים חָנֵּנִי	Be gracious to me, O God, be gracious to me,
כִּי בְךָ֣ חָסָ֣יָה נַפְשִׁ֑י	Because in you I will seek refuge.
וּבְצֵ֥ל־כְּנָפֶ֝֗יךָ אֶחְסֶ֥ה	In the shadow of your wings I will seek refuge,
עַ֣ד יַעֲבָ֣ר הַוּ֑וֹת[136]:	Until destruction passes by.
[3] אֶקְרָ֣א לֵ֭אלֹהִים עֶלְי֑וֹן	I will cry to God Most High,
לָאֵ֥ל גֹּמֵ֖ר עָלָֽי:	To God who fulfills his purpose for me.
[4] יִשְׁלַ֣ח מִשָּׁמַ֣יִם וְיוֹשִׁיעֵ֑נִי	May he send from heaven and save me;
חֵרַ֥ף שֹׁאֲפִ֝֗י[137] סֶּ֣לָה	May he reproach one who crushes me. Selah.
יִשְׁלַ֣ח אֱ֭לֹהִים חַסְדּ֣וֹ וַאֲמִתּֽוֹ:	May God send his kindness and his faithfulness.
[5] נַפְשִׁ֥י בְתוֹךְ֮ לְבָא֪ם[138]	I am among lions;
אֶשְׁכְּבָ֫ה לֹהֲטִ֥ים בְּנֵי־אָ֑דָם	I lie down with the cannibal men who devour;
שִׁנֵּיהֶ֥ם חֲנִ֖ית וְחִצִּ֑ים	Their teeth are spears and arrows,
וּלְשׁוֹנָ֥ם חֶ֝֗רֶב חַדָּֽה:	And their tongues are sharp swords.
[6] רוּמָ֣ה עַל־הַשָּׁמַ֣יִם אֱלֹהִ֑ים	Be exalted above the heavens, O God;
עַ֖ל כָּל־הָאָ֣רֶץ כְּבוֹדֶֽךָ:	Your glory is over all the earth.
[7] רֶ֣שֶׁת הֵכִ֣ינוּ לִ֭פְעָמַי	They set up a net for my feet;
כָּפַ֣ף נַפְשִׁ֑י	My soul is bowed down;
כָּר֣וּ לְפָנַ֣י שִׁיחָ֑ה	They dug a pit before me;
נָפְל֖וּ בְּתוֹכָ֣הּ סֶּ֣לָה:	They have fallen into its midst. Selah.
[8] נָכ֣וֹן לִבִּ֣י אֱלֹהִ֑ים	My heart is firm, O God,
נָכ֣וֹן לִבִּ֑י	my heart is firm;
אָשִׁ֖ירָה וַאֲזַמֵּֽרָה:	I will sing praise, and I will sing praise!
[9] עוּרָ֣ה כְבוֹדִ֑י	Awake, my glory!
עוּרָ֥ה הַנֵּ֝בֶל וְכִנּ֗וֹר	Awake, harp and lyre!
אָעִ֥ירָה שָֽׁחַר:	I will awaken the dawn.
[10] אוֹדְךָ֣ בָעַמִּ֣ים אֲדֹנָ֑י	I will praise you among the peoples O Lord,;
אֲזַמֶּרְךָ֖ בַּל־אֻמִּֽים:	I will sing praises to you among peoples.
[11] כִּי־גָ֣דַל עַד־שָׁמַ֣יִם חַסְדֶּ֑ךָ	For high to the heavens is your kindness
וְעַד־שְׁחָקִ֥ים אֲמִתֶּֽךָ:	And to the clouds is your truth.
[12] רוּמָ֣ה עַל־שָׁמַ֣יִם אֱלֹהִ֑ים	Be exalted above the heavens, O God;
עַ֖ל כָּל־הָאָ֣רֶץ כְּבוֹדֶֽךָ:	Your glory is above all the earth.

[136] NRSV renders "destroying storms;" but יַעֲבָר is in singular verb form; hence הַוּוֹת (subject in plural form) should be taken collectively as a single entity.

[137] In this sentence God is the subject of חֵרַף; and שֹׁאֲפִי is the object.

[138] I interpret this line as a nominal verbless clause. LXX adds καὶ ἐρρύσατο and reads καὶ ἐρρύσατο τὴν ψυχήν μου ἐκ μέσου σκύμνων (and rescues my soul from the midst of lion whelp).

Psalm 57

[2] חָנֵּנִי אֱלֹהִים חָנֵּנִי	222+1	VV+Voc	SD1	God
כִּי בְךָ֣ חָסָ֣יָה נַפְשִׁי	133	[PVS]	SD1	God
וּבְצֵל־כְּנָפֶ֣יךָ אֶחְסֶ֑ה	123	[PhrV]	SD1	God
עַ֥ד יַעֲבָר־הַוּֽוֹת׃	123	[AVS]	SD1	God
[3] אֶקְרָ֣א לֵאלֹהִ֣ים עֶלְי֑וֹן	123	VO	SD2; G1; M1	Overhearers
לָאֵ֥ל גֹּמֵ֖ר עָלָֽי׃	033	[O]	SD2; G1; M1	Overhearers
[4] יִשְׁלַ֥ח מִשָּׁמַ֗יִם וְיוֹשִׁיעֵ֑נִי	233	VPV		Overhearers
חֵרֵ֥ף שֹׁאֲפִ֑י סֶּ֝לָה	122	VO		Overhearers
יִשְׁלַ֣ח אֱ֭לֹהִים חַסְדּ֣וֹ וַאֲמִתּֽוֹ׃	134	VSO		Overhearers
[5] נַפְשִׁ֥י בְתוֹךְ֮ לְבָאִ֪ם	123	SPred		God
אֶשְׁכְּבָ֫ה לֹ֥הֲטִ֑ים בְּנֵי־אָ֝דָ֗ם	134	[VP Phr]	SD5	God
שִׁנֵּיהֶ֣ם חֲנִ֣ית וְחִצִּ֑ים	123	[SPred]	M2; SD5	God
וּלְשׁוֹנָ֥ם חֶ֝֗רֶב חַדָּֽה׃	123	[SPred]	M2; SD5	God
[6] רוּמָ֣ה עַל־הַשָּׁמַ֣יִם אֱלֹהִ֑ים	122+1	VP+Voc	G2; R1	God
עַ֖ל כָּל־הָאָ֣רֶץ כְּבוֹדֶֽךָ׃	122	PredS	G2; R2	God
[7] רֶ֤שֶׁת הֵכִ֣ינוּ לִפְעָמַ֑י	133	OVP		God
כָּפַ֖ף נַפְשִׁ֑י	122	VO		God
כָּ֭רוּ לְפָנַ֣י שִׁיחָ֑ה	133	VPO	SD7	God
נָפְל֖וּ בְּתוֹכָ֣הּ סֶּֽלָה׃	122	[VP]	SD7	God
[8] נָכ֣וֹן לִבִּ֣י אֱלֹהִ֑ים	122+1	VO+Voc	R3; M3	God
נָכ֥וֹן לִבִּ֑י	122	VO	R3; M3	God
אָשִׁ֖ירָה וַאֲזַמֵּֽרָה׃	222	VV		God
[9] עוּרָ֣ה כְבוֹדִ֑י	111+1	V+Voc	M4	Self
עוּרָ֥ה הַנֵּ֝בֶל וְכִנּ֗וֹר	111+1	V+Voc	M4	Instruments
אָעִ֥ירָה שָֽׁחַר׃	122	VO		Self
[10] אוֹדְךָ֣ בָ֭עַמִּים אֲדֹנָ֑י	122+1	VP+Voc	SD8; M5	God
אֲזַמֶּרְךָ֖ בַּל־אֻמִּֽים׃	123	VP	SD8; M5	God
[11] כִּי־גָ֣דַל עַד־שָׁמַ֣יִם חַסְדֶּ֑ךָ	133	[PredPS]	SD8; G3; M6	God
וְעַד־שְׁחָקִ֥ים אֲמִתֶּֽךָ׃	022	[PS]	SD8; G3; M6	God
[12] רוּמָ֣ה עַל־שָׁמַ֣יִם אֱלֹהִ֑ים	122+1	VP+Voc	R1	God
עַ֖ל כָּל־הָאָ֣רֶץ כְּבוֹדֶֽךָ׃	123	PredS	R2	God

Lineation:

Psalm 57 contains no lineation difficulties that affect its surface structure. All of the lines are delineated within the constraints of Syntactic Description.

Line Types: all the lines are delineated within the constraints of zero to three clause predicators, two to four constituents, and two to five units per line. The majority of the lines contain one to two clause predicators, two to three constituents, and two to three units.

1. Clause predicators
    a) zero clause predicator: 2/31 lines
    b) one clause predicator: 20/31 lines
    c) two clause predicators: 8/31 lines
    d) three clause predicators: 1/31 lines
2. Constituents
    a) two constituents: 18/31 lines
    b) three constituents: 12/31 lines
    c) four constituents: 1/31 lines
3. Units
    a) two units: 10/31 lines
    b) three units: 18/31 lines
    c) four units: 2/31 lines
    d) five units: 1/31 lines
4. Vocatives:

1. God: four occurrences
2. Self: one occurrence
3. Lord: one occurrence
4. Instruments: one occurrence

Gross Structure

The two different focuses of this psalm have led scholars to consider Psalm 57 as a composite psalm consisting of a community lament/prayer for the deliverance from enemies, vv. 2-5, and a song of praise/national hymn in a later peacetime, vv. 6-12.[139]

Scholars have proposed various views regarding the identity of the petitioner. The motif of seeking shelter under the shadow of God's wings וּבְצֵל־כְּנָפֶיךָ אֶחְסֶה (and I will seek refuge in the shadow of your wings) in v. 2, might have prompted Kraus to assert that the psalm is a prayer of a falsely accused person who sought asylum overnight in the Temple court. Kraus links the image depicted by וּבְצֵל־כְּנָפֶיךָ אֶחְסֶה to the sanctuary image of the throne of the cherubim in Isaiah 6.[140] This interpretation is difficult to assess since the cherubim are not the representation of the Deity. In many other texts in the Psalter, the Deity is often metaphorically depicted as a bird whose wings provide protection (Pss 17:8; 34:9, 36:8; 61:5; 63:7; 91:4).[141]

In line with the superscription, claiming that Ps 57 contains royal motifs similar to Psalms 54, 56, 58, and 59, Dahood interprets this psalm as the lament of a king, who was harassed by malicious slanderers. On the other hand, Tate's view is encompassing; he

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[139] Briggs and Briggs, *Psalms*, 2. 36-37. Similarly, Beat Weber, "Formgeschichtliche und sprachliche Beobachtungen zu Psalm 57," *SJOT* 15/2 (2001) 295-305. For an opposing view, see Tate, *Psalms*, 75.
[140] Kraus, *Psalms*, 530-31.
[141] So Gerstenberger, *Psalms II*, 230; Hossfeld and Zenger, *Psalms II*, 71-73.

believes that the original writer(s) of Psalm 57 might have had a king in mind but the psalm was democratized for any person who faces similar struggles. According to Tate, this psalm may be read in the family, group rituals, as well as in the Temple.[142]

For the most part, the poem is addressed to the Deity; the overhearers are directly addressed in the second part of the first paragraph (speaking about God in third-person singular forms in vv. 3-4). I divide this thirty-line poem into two main paragraphs; each of the two equal paragraph contains 15 lines (vv. 2-6; vv. 7-12) and ends with the refrain (vv. 6, 12). The refrain is the praise that God be exalted and takes dominion of the earth.[143] I divide each main paragraph into three smaller paragraphs:

I. First main paragraph (vv. 2-6; 15 lines)

1. Summons and petition to seek refuge and protection addressed to the Deity (v. 2)
2. Wishes for the divine intervention addressed to the Overhearers (vv. 3-4)
3. Descriptions of the current crisis and the enemies (v. 5)

Refrain of hymnic praise (v. 6)

II. Second main paragraph (vv. 7-12; 15 lines)

1. The imprecations against the enemies (v. 7)
2. Statements of confidence and praise addressed to the Deity (vv. 8-9)
3. Vow of praise (vv. 10-11)

Refrain of hymnic praise (v. 12)

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[142] Tate, *Psalms*, 75.
[143] Ps 57:8-11 is similar to Ps 108:2-6.

I. *First main paragraph (vv. 2-6; 15 lines)*: the first-person singular verbs, and first-person singular object suffixes, and first-person singular possessive suffixes dominate the first half of the psalm. The motifs of seeking shelter, protection, and desire for divine intervention dominate the first paragraph of the poem. The opening lines carry a distressing mood; the petitioner addresses the Deity asking for a place of refuge and protection. The speech then changes direction to address the overhearers with a series of requests for divine intervention.

The psalm begins with an initial plea to God for a temporary place of refuge until the crisis is over, v. 2. The opening lines are syntactically united as the first sub-unit in the first half of the poem; one notes the usual syntactical arrangement of vocative-imperative combination plus the causal clauses to follow.

Immediately after the initial call, the speech changes direction going from speaking to God in the direct address using second-person singular forms to speaking about God using the third-person singular forms, vv. 3-4. Zenger interprets this switch as an oblique form of address as though the speech was still directly addressed to God.[144] While Zenger's view might be possible within the larger context of the psalm, this switching from the second to third person in these five poetic lines in vv. 3-4 is deliberate.

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[144] Hossfeld and Zenger, *Psalms II*, 73. It is interesting to note that in the same commentary, *Psalms II*, the two co-authors hold different view regarding the phenomena of the switching from the second-person singular to the third-person singular. How does one interprete the the latter form? Is it the "speaking to God" oblique form of direct address or the "speaking of God" direct address form, i.e., referring to God when speaking to the audience? In Ps 54:6, Hossfeld interpreted the switch from second to third-person as going from "to God" to "of God," i.e., the psalmist turns from "speaking to God" to "speaking of God" thus direct his speech to the public.

The six lines in vv. 3-4 are the petitioner's wishes for Most High God, אֱלֹהִים עֶלְיוֹן, to intervene. This same title found in Gen 14:18-22 when Melchizedek, king of Salem, brought Abram tithes and bread and wine; he spoke to Abram referring to the Most High God in third person (cf. Deut 32:8-9; 2 Sam 22:14; Pss 7:17; 97:9). There is no textual evidence in the MT that God is directly addressed as "the Most High God." Vv. 3-4 hinted at the presence of a third party audience who play a passive role in overhearing the dialogue; it is to this third party listeners that the psalmist sought to explain the reasons for the petition, and at the same time identified the Deity to whom the call is made. The psalmist thus professed publicly the appeal for God's providence and protection, the Most High God who creates and has dominion over the heaven and earth.

The next four lines, v. 5, contain a series of three nominal clauses introducing a change of focus from speaking about God to speaking about the psalmist's crisis. The petitioner depicts the enemies metaphorically as ferocious cannibals with sharp teeth and tongues (probably fully armed military troops).[145] The refrain of hymnic praise in the next two lines, v. 6, ends the first half of the psalm.

II. Second half of the psalm (vv. 7-12; 15 lines)

In the second paragraph, the psalmist returns to address the Deity, describing the current crisis, i.e., the oppression of enemies. The references to the "I" and "They" parties mark the shift in focus. The mood of this section moved from negative to positive in the second half; the refrain in v. 6 marks the turning point of the mood.

[145] Hossfeld and Zenger, *Psalms II*, 73.

The focus on the deeds of the enemies via the use of third-person plural of the verbs in v. 7 marks the second half of the poem. The petitioner complaints that the enemies have ensnared the petitioner; however, the petitioner expresses the confidence that the enemies will fall by their own trap at the end.

The hymnic elements of praise in vv. 8-12 are heavily troped and thus unite the second half of the psalm (cf. Ps 108:2-6). The dominance of praise elements in this section has prompted commentators to suggest that the psalm is a composite of prayer for protection and of song of praise.[146] The repetition of the refrain in v. 12 concludes the psalm.

[146] Briggs and Briggs, *Psalms*, 2:36-37.

2.5 Syntactic Descriptions of the Remaining Seventeen Individual Laments

Psalm 5

[2] אֲמָרַי הַאֲזִינָה יְהוָה בִּינָה הֲגִיגִי:	[1] Give ear to my words, O LORD; give heed to my sighing.
[3] הַקְשִׁיבָה לְקוֹל שַׁוְעִי מַלְכִּי וֵאלֹהָי כִּי־אֵלֶיךָ אֶתְפַּלָּל:	[2] Listen to the sound of my cry, my King and my God, for to you I pray.
[4] יְהוָה[147] בֹּקֶר תִּשְׁמַע קוֹלִי בֹּקֶר אֶעֱרָךְ־לְךָ וַאֲצַפֶּה:	[3] O LORD, in the morning you hear my voice; in the morning I plead my case to you, and watch.
[5] כִּי לֹא אֵל[148]־חָפֵץ רֶשַׁע אָתָּה[a] לֹא יְגָרֶךָ רָע:	[4] For you are not a God who delights in wickedness; evil will not sojourn with you.
[6] לֹא־יִתְיַצְּבוּ הוֹלְלִים לְנֶגֶד עֵינֶיךָ שָׂנֵאתָ כָּל־פֹּעֲלֵי אָוֶן:	[5] The boastful will not stand before your eyes; you hate all evildoers.
[7] תְּאַבֵּד דֹּבְרֵי כָזָב אִישׁ־דָּמִים וּמִרְמָה יְתָעֵב[149] יְהוָה:	[6] You destroy those who speak lies; O LORD, you abhor the bloodthirsty and deceitful.
[8] וַאֲנִי בְּרֹב חַסְדְּךָ אָבוֹא בֵיתֶךָ אֶשְׁתַּחֲוֶה אֶל־הֵיכַל־קָדְשְׁךָ בְּיִרְאָתֶךָ:	[7] But I, through the abundance of your steadfast love, will enter your house, I will bow down toward your holy temple in awe of you.
[9] יְהוָה נְחֵנִי בְצִדְקָתֶךָ לְמַעַן שׁוֹרְרָי הַיְשַׁר[150] לְפָנַי דַּרְכֶּךָ:	[8] Lead me, O LORD, in your righteousness because of my enemies; make your way straight before me.
[10] כִּי אֵין בְּפִיהוּ נְכוֹנָה קִרְבָּם הַוּוֹת קֶבֶר־פָּתוּחַ גְּרוֹנָם לְשׁוֹנָם יַחֲלִיקוּן:	[9] For there is no truth in their mouths; their hearts are destruction; their throats are open graves; they flatter with their tongues.
[11] הַאֲשִׁימֵם אֱלֹהִים יִפְּלוּ מִמֹּעֲצוֹתֵיהֶם בְּרֹב פִּשְׁעֵימוֹ הַדִּיחֵמוֹ כִּי־מָרוּ בָךְ[151]:	[10] Make them bear their guilt, O God; let them fall by their own counsels; because of their many transgressions cast them out, for they have rebelled against you.

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[147] The editors of the BHS suggest the omission of the divine name for the sake of meter. I found no textual support to concur.

[148] Kraus is in agreement with two MSS; he omits אֵל and reads "For you do not take pleasure in wickedness" for the sake of meter. I found no textual support to amend the text; this line fits within the constraint of Syntactic Description.

[149] This shift from second-person to third-person singular is probably a mistake. I agree with the NRSV's reading of second-person singular תְּתַעֵב in light of תְּאַבֵּד in the preceeding line.

[150] הוֹשַׁר (Kethibh) is read as הַיְשַׁר (Qerê) 2ms Hiph Impv.

[151] LXX adds κύριε at the end, perhaps for the sake of meter. There is no other textual support for this addition; the MT is retained.

[12] וְיִשְׂמְחוּ כָל־חוֹסֵי בָּךְ
לְעוֹלָם יְרַנֵּנוּ
וְתָסֵךְ עֲלֵימוֹ
וְיַעְלְצוּ בְךָ אֹהֲבֵי שְׁמֶךָ׃
[13] כִּי־אַתָּה תְּבָרֵךְ צַדִּיק יְהוָה
כַּצִּנָּה רָצוֹן תַּעְטְרֶנּוּ׃

[11] But let all who take refuge in you rejoice;
let them ever sing for joy.
Spread your protection over them,
so that those who love your name may exult in you.
[12] For you bless the righteous, O LORD;
you cover them with favor as with a shield.

[2] אֲמָרַי הַאֲזִינָה׀ יְהוָה	122+1	VO+Voc	SI1	The entire poem is addressed to the Deity
בִּינָה הֲגִיגִי׃	122	OV	SI1	
[3] הַקְשִׁיבָה׀ לְקוֹל שַׁוְעִי מַלְכִּי וֵאלֹהָי	123+1	VP+Voc	SD1; SI2	
כִּי־אֵלֶיךָ אֶתְפַּלָּל׃	122	[PV]	SD1; SI2	
[4] יְהוָה בֹּקֶר תִּשְׁמַע קוֹלִי	133 +1	AVP +Voc		
בֹּקֶר אֶעֱרָךְ־לְךָ וַאֲצַפֶּה׃	233	AVP[V]		
[5] כִּי׀ לֹא אֵל־חָפֵץ רֶשַׁע אָתָּה	124	[PredS]	SD2	
לֹא יְגָרֶךָ רָע׃	122	[VS]	SD2	
[6] לֹא־יִתְיַצְּבוּ הוֹלְלִים לְנֶגֶד עֵינֶיךָ	134	VSP		
שָׂנֵאתָ כָּל־פֹּעֲלֵי אָוֶן׃	124	VO	M1	
[7] תְּאַבֵּד דֹּבְרֵי כָזָב	123	VO	M1	
אִישׁ־דָּמִים וּמִרְמָה יְתָעֵב ׀ יְהוָה׃	125	OVS		
[8] וַאֲנִי בְּרֹב חַסְדְּךָ	123	[SP]	SD3	
אָבוֹא בֵיתֶךָ	122	VO	SD3	
אֶשְׁתַּחֲוֶה אֶל־הֵיכַל־קָדְשְׁךָ בְּיִרְאָתֶךָ׃	134	VPhrA		
[9] יְהוָה׀ נְחֵנִי בְצִדְקָתֶךָ	122+1	VP +Voc	SD4	
לְמַעַן שׁוֹרְרָי	022	[Phr]	SD4	
הַיְשַׁר לְפָנַי דַּרְכֶּךָ׃	133	VPO		
[10] כִּי אֵין בְּפִיהוּ נְכוֹנָה׃	133	APV		
קִרְבָּם הַוּוֹת	122	SPred	SI3	
קֶבֶר־פָּתוּחַ גְּרוֹנָם	123	PredS	SI3	
לְשׁוֹנָם יַחֲלִיקוּן׃	122	PV		
[11] הַאֲשִׁימֵם׀ אֱלֹהִים	111+1	V+Voc		
יִפְּלוּ׃ מִמֹּעֲצוֹתֵיהֶם	122	VP		
בְּרֹב פִּשְׁעֵיהֶם הַדִּיחֵמוֹ	123	[PV]	SD5	
כִּי־מָרוּ בָךְ׃	122	[VP]	SD5	
[12] וְיִשְׂמְחוּ כָל־חוֹסֵי בָךְ	134	VSP		
לְעוֹלָם יְרַנֵּנוּ	122	AV		
וְתָסֵךְ עֲלֵימוֹ	122	VO		
וְיַעְלְצוּ בְךָ אֹהֲבֵי שְׁמֶךָ׃	134	VPS		
[13] כִּי־אַתָּה׃ תְּבָרֵךְ צַדִּיק יְהוָה	133+1	SVO+Voc		
כַּצִּנָּה רָצוֹן תַּעְטְרֶנּוּ׃	123	PV		

Line Types: all the lines are delineated within the constraints of zero to two clause predicators, one to four constituents, and one to four units per line. There are seven lines containing two clause predicators, but six of these lines each contain a vocative. The majority of the lines contain one clause predicator, two to three constituents, and two to four units.

1. Clause predicators:
    a) zero clause predicator: 1/32 lines
    b) one clause predicator: 24/32 lines
    c) two clause predicators: 7/32 lines
2. Constituents:
    a) two constituents: 19/32 lines
    b) three constituents: 10/32 lines
    c) four constituents: 3/32 lines
3. Units:
    a) two units: 12/32 lines
    b) three units: 9/32 lines
    c) four units: 10/32 lines
    d) five units: 1/32 lines
4. Vocatives:
    5. Yhwh: four occurrences
    6. King and God: one occurrence
    7. God: one occurrence

Gross Structure

The poem is a monologue addressed to the Deity. I divide this thirty-two-line poem into two halves. The first paragraph contains 18 lines (vv. 2-9) and the second paragraph contains 14 lines (vv. 10-13). Similar to other psalms of individual prayers in the present study, the first person singular prefix and suffix verbal forms and the imperatives with first singular suffix dominate the first half of the poem. In contrast, the "they" (enemies and friends) third person plural prefix and suffix verbal forms dominate the second half. The poem ends with the statements of confidence in the Deity. I further divide each main part of the poem into three smaller paragraphs:

I. First half paragraph (vv. 2-9; 18 lines)
    1. Summons and petition to seek help (v. 2)
    2. Statements of confidence, God will destroy the wicked ones (vv. 3-7)
    3. Vow of faithfulness and petition for a righteous living (v. 5)

II. Second half paragraph (vv. 10-13; 14 lines)
    4. The complaints against the enemies (v. 10)
    5. Petition for the enemies to be destroyed (v. 11)
    6. Wishes for friends (v. 12)
    7. Statement of confidence (v. 13)

Psalm 17

[1] שִׁמְעָה יְהוָה֮ צֶ֫דֶק[152]	[1] Hear a just cause, O LORD;
הַקְשִׁיבָה רִנָּתִי	attend to my cry;
הַאֲזִינָה תְפִלָּתִי	give ear to my prayer
בִּלֹּא שִׂפְתֵי מִרְמָה׃	from lips free of deceit.
[2] מִלְּפָנֶיךָ מִשְׁפָּטִי יֵצֵא	[2] From you let my vindication come;
עֵינֶ֫יךָ תֶּחֱזֶינָה מֵישָׁרִים׃	let your eyes see the right.
[3] בָּחַנְתָּ לִבִּי	[3] If you try my heart,
פָּקַדְתָּ לַ֫יְלָה	if you visit me by night,
צְרַפְתַּנִי בַל־תִּמְצָא זָמֹתִי[153]	if you test me, you will find no wickedness in me;
בַּל־יַעֲבָר־פִּי׃	my mouth does not transgress.
[4] לִפְעֻלוֹת אָדָם בִּדְבַר שְׂפָתֶ֫יךָ	[4] As for what others do, by the word of your lips
אֲנִי שָׁמַרְתִּי אָרְחוֹת פָּרִיץ׃	I have avoided the ways of the violent.
[5] תָּמֹךְ אֲשֻׁרַי בְּמַעְגְּלוֹתֶ֫יךָ	[5] My steps have held fast to your paths;
בַּל־נָמוֹטוּ פְעָמָי׃	my feet have not slipped.
[6] אֲנִי־קְרָאתִ֫יךָ כִּי־תַעֲנֵנִי אֵל	[6] I call upon you, for you will answer me, O God;
הַט־אָזְנְךָ לִי שִׁמְעָ֫ה אִמְרָתִי׃	incline your ear to me, hear my words.
[7] הַפְלֵה חֲסָדֶ֫יךָ	[7] Wondrously show your steadfast love,
[a]מוֹשִׁיעַ חוֹסִים מִמִּתְקוֹמְמִים בִּימִינֶךָ[154]׃	O savior of those who seek refuge from their adversaries at your right hand.
[8] שָׁמְרֵנִי כְּאִישׁוֹן בַּת־עָ֫יִן	[8] Guard me as the apple of the eye;
בְּצֵל כְּנָפֶ֫יךָ תַּסְתִּירֵנִי׃	hide me in the shadow of your wings,
[9] מִפְּנֵי רְשָׁעִים זָוּ שַׁדְּדוּנִי	[9] from the wicked who despoil me,
אֹיְבַי בְּנֶ֫פֶשׁ יַקִּיפוּ עָלָי׃	my deadly enemies who surround me.
[10] חֶלְבָּמוֹ סָגָרוּ	[10] They close their hearts to pity;
פִּימוֹ דִּבְּרוּ בְגֵאוּת׃	with their mouths they speak arrogantly.
[11] אֲשֻׁרֵינוּ עַתָּה סְבָבֻוּנִי	[11] They track me down; now they surround me;
עֵינֵיהֶם יָשִׁיתוּ לִנְטוֹת בָּאָרֶץ׃	they set their eyes to cast me to the ground.
[12] דְּמְיוֹנוֹ כְּאַרְיֵה יִכְסוֹף לִטְרֹוף	[12] They are like a lion eager to tear,
וְכִכְפִיר יֹשֵׁב בְּמִסְתָּרִים׃	like a young lion lurking in ambush.
[13] קוּמָה יְהוָה	[13] Rise up, O LORD,
קַדְּמָה פָנָיו הַכְרִיעֵהוּ	confront them, overthrow them!
פַּלְטָה נַפְשִׁי מֵרָשָׁע חַרְבֶּ֫ךָ[155]׃	By your sword deliver my life from the wicked,

[152] צֶ֫דֶק (noun, sing. absolute) is difficult. The NRSV's rendering "just cause" is satisfactory.

[153] I agree with the NRSV reading this line in accord with the LXX καὶ οὐχ εὑρέθη ἐν ἐμοὶ ἀδικία. The LXX translated 1cs זָמֹתִי as a noun ἀδικία, i.e. the object of the negation clause בַּל־תִּמְצָא.

[154] The order of these four words is difficult. I prefer the NRSV's lineation and translation and interprete this line as a vocative phrase.

[155] חַרְבֶּ֫ךָ "your sword" is taken as an adverbial phrase.

14 מִמְתִים יָדְךָ יְהוָה
מִמְתֵי מֵחֶלֶד חֶלְקָם בַּחַיִּים[156]
וְצָפִינְךָ תְּמַלֵּא בִטְנָם
יִשְׂבְּעוּ בָנִים
וְהִנִּיחוּ יִתְרָם לְעוֹלְלֵיהֶם׃
15 אֲנִי בְּצֶדֶק אֶחֱזֶה פָנֶיךָ
אֶשְׂבְּעָה בְהָקִיץ תְּמוּנָתֶךָ׃

14 from mortals—by your hand, O LORD—
from mortals whose portion in life is in this world.
May their bellies be filled with what you have stored up for them;
may their children have more than enough;
may they leave something over to their little ones.
15 As for me, I shall behold your face in righteousness;
when I awake I shall be satisfied, beholding your likeness.

[156] The meaning of these two lines, v. 14a-b, are uncertain due to textual corruption.

Psalm 17

[1] שִׁמְעָה יְהוָה֙ צֶ֣דֶק	122+1	VO+Voc	M1	The entire poem
הַקְשִׁיבָה רִנָּתִ֑י	122	VO	M1	is addressed to
הַאֲזִינָ֥ה תְפִלָּתִ֗י	122	VO	SD1; M1	the Deity
בְּלֹ֣א שִׂפְתֵ֣י מִרְמָֽה׃	012	[Phr]	SD1	
[2] מִלְּפָנֶ֥יךָ מִשְׁפָּטִ֑י יֵצֵ֥א	133	PSV		
עֵינֶ֥יךָ תֶּחֱזֶ֗נָה מֵישָׁרִֽים׃	133	SVO		
[3] בָּחַ֣נְתָּ לִבִּ֣י	122	VO		
פָּ֭קַדְתָּ לַ֣יְלָה	122	VA		
צְרַפְתַּ֣נִי בַל־תִּמְצָ֑א	233	V[V]		
זַמֹּתִ֥י בַל־יַעֲבָ֥ר־פִּֽי׃	233	V[VS]		
[4] לִפְעֻלּ֣וֹת אָ֭דָם בִּדְבַ֣ר שְׂפָתֶ֑יךָ	014	[Phr]	SD2	
אֲנִ֥י שָׁ֝מַ֗רְתִּי אָרְח֥וֹת פָּרִֽיץ׃	134	SVPhr	SD2	
[5] תָּמֹ֣ךְ אֲשֻׁרַ֣י בְּמַעְגְּלוֹתֶ֑יךָ	133	VSP		
בַּל־נָמ֥וֹטוּ פְּעָמָֽי׃	122	VS		
[6] אֲנִי־קְרָאתִ֥יךָ	122	SV	SD3	
כִּי־תַעֲנֵ֥נִי אֵ֑ל	111+1	[V+Voc]	SD3	
הַט־אָזְנְךָ֖ לִ֣י	123	VO	M2	
שִׁמְעָ֣ה אִמְרָתִֽי׃	122	VO	M2	
[7] הַפְלֵ֣ה חֲסָדֶ֑יךָ	122	VO	M2; SD7	
מוֹשִׁיעַ֮ חוֹסִ֪ים מִמִּתְקוֹמְמִ֫ים בִּ֥ימִינֶֽךָ׃	014	[Voc]	SD7	
[8] שָׁמְרֵ֥נִי כְּאִישׁ֗וֹן בַּת־עָ֑יִן	124	VPhr	SI1	
בְּצֵ֖ל כְּנָפֶ֣יךָ תַּסְתִּירֵֽנִי׃	123	PhrV	SD8; SI1	
[9] מִפְּנֵ֣י רְ֭שָׁעִים זָ֣וּ שַׁדּ֑וּנִי	124	[PhrV]	SD8; M2	
אֹיְבֵ֖י בְּנֶ֣פֶשׁ יַקִּיפ֣וּ עָלָֽי׃	124	[PhrV]	M2	
[10] חֶלְבָּמ֥וֹ סָגָ֑רוּ	122	OV		
פִּ֝֗ימוֹ דִּבְּר֥וּ בְגֵאוּת׃	133	SVP		
[11] אֲשֻׁרֵ֥ינוּ עַתָּ֗ה סְבָבֻ֫וּנִי	123	OV		
עֵינֵיהֶ֥ם יָשִׁ֑יתוּ לִנְטֹ֖ות בָּאָֽרֶץ׃	134	SVP	M3	
[12] דְּמ֥וּנוֹ כָּאַרְיֵ֗ה יִכְסֹ֫וף לִטְרֹ֥וף	134	SVP	M3	
וְכִכְפִ֥יר יֹשֵׁ֗ב בְּמִסְתָּרִֽים׃	133	SVP	M3	
[13] קוּמָ֣ה יְהוָ֑ה	111+1	V+Voc		
קַדְּמָ֥ה פָ֝נָ֗יו הַכְרִיעֵ֥הוּ	233	VOV		
פַּלְטָ֣ה נַ֭פְשִׁי מֵרָשָׁ֑ע חַרְבֶּֽךָ׃	144	VOPhrA	SD9	
[14] מִמְתִ֣ים יָדְךָ֣ יְהוָ֑ה	012+1	[P+Voc]	SD9	
מִמְּתִ֥ים מֵ֝חֶ֗לֶד חֶלְקָ֥ם בַּחַיִּ֑ים	024	[PhrPhr]	SD9	
וּצְפִינְךָ֥ תְמַלֵּ֑א בִּטְנָ֗ם	133	PVO		
יִשְׂבְּעוּ־בָנִ֥ים	122	VS		
וְהִנִּ֥יחוּ יִתְרָ֑ם לְעוֹלְלֵיהֶֽם׃	133	VOP		
[15] אֲנִ֤י בְצֶ֣דֶק אֶחֱזֶ֣ה פָנֶ֑יךָ	134	PVO		
אֶשְׂבְּעָ֥ה בְהָקִ֗יץ תְּמוּנָתֶֽךָ׃	233	VP[V]		

Lineation:

All of the lines in Psalm 17 are delineated within the constraints of zero to two clause predicators, two to four constituents, and one to four units per line. The majority of the lines contain one clause predicator.

1. Clause predicators
    a) zero clause predicator: 4/40 lines
    b) one clause predicator: 28/40 lines
    c) two clause predicators: 8/40 lines
2. Constituents
    a) two constituents: 25/40 lines
    b) three constituents: 14/40 lines
    c) four constituents: 1/40 lines
3. Units
    a) two units: 13/40 lines
    b) three units: 17/40 lines
    c) four units: 10/40 lines
4. Vocatives:
    a) Yhwh: three occurrences
    b) God: one occurrence
    c) Savior: one occurrence

Gross Structure

The poem is a monologue addressed to God. The petitioner prays for divine protection and deliverance for himself and his friends. I divide this forty-line poem into two main paragraphs (vv. 1-9, vv. 10-15). The first-person singular, and second-person singular forms dominate the first half and the ending of the poem. The third-person plural forms , i.e., the enemies, dominate the second half of the poem. I further divide each main paragraph into three smaller paragraphs:

I. First main paragraph (vv. 1-9; 22 lines)

4. Summons and general petition (v. 1)
5. Attestation of innocence (vv. 3-5)
6. Petition for divine protection (v. 6-9)

II. Second main paragraph (vv. 10-15; 18 lines)

8. Complaints against the enemies (v. 7)
9. Petition for God to bring down the enemies and rescue petitioner (v. 13-14b)
10. Wishes for friends (v. 14c-14e)
11. Statement of confidence (v. 15)

Psalm 35

[1] רִיבָה יְהוָה אֶת־יְרִיבַי
לְחַם אֶת־לֹחֲמָי:
[2] הַחֲזֵק מָגֵן וְצִנָּה
וְקוּמָה בְּעֶזְרָתִי:
[3] וְהָרֵק חֲנִית וְסְגֹר לִקְרַאת רדְפַי
אֱמֹר לְנַפְשִׁי
יְשֻׁעָתֵךְ אָנִי:
[4] יֵבֹשׁוּ וְיִכָּלְמוּ
מְבַקְשֵׁי נַפְשִׁי
יִסֹּגוּ אָחוֹר וְיַחְפְּרוּ
חֹשְׁבֵי רָעָתִי:
[5] יִהְיוּ כְמֹץ לִפְנֵי־רוּחַ
וּמַלְאַךְ יְהוָה דוֹחֶה:
[6] יְהִי־דַרְכָּם חֹשֶׁךְ וַחֲלַקְלַקּוֹת
וּמַלְאַךְ יְהוָה רֹדְפָם:
[7] כִּי־חִנָּם טָמְנוּ־לִי שַׁחַת[157] רִשְׁתָּם
חִנָּם חָפְרוּ לְנַפְשִׁי:
[8] תְּבוֹאֵהוּ שׁוֹאָה לֹא־יֵדָע
וְרִשְׁתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר־טָמַן תִּלְכְּדוֹ
בְּשׁוֹאָה יִפָּל־בָּהּ:
[9] וְנַפְשִׁי תָּגִיל בַּיהוָה
תָּשִׂישׂ בִּישׁוּעָתוֹ:
[10] כָּל עַצְמוֹתַי תֹּאמַרְנָה
יְהוָה מִי כָמוֹךָ
מַצִּיל עָנִי מֵחָזָק מִמֶּנּוּ
וְעָנִי וְאֶבְיוֹן מִגֹּזְלוֹ:
[11] יְקוּמוּן עֵדֵי חָמָס
אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יָדַעְתִּי יִשְׁאָלוּנִי:
[12] יְשַׁלְּמוּנִי רָעָה תַּחַת טוֹבָה
שְׁכוֹל לְנַפְשִׁי:
[13] וַאֲנִי בַּחֲלוֹתָם לְבוּשִׁי שָׂק
עִנֵּיתִי בַצּוֹם נַפְשִׁי
וּתְפִלָּתִי עַל־חֵיקִי תָּשׁוּב[158]a:

[1] Contend, O LORD, with those who contend with me;
fight against those who fight against me!
[2] Take hold of shield and buckler,
and rise up to help me!
[3] Draw the spear and javelin against my pursuers;
say to my soul,
"I am your salvation."
[4] Let them be put to shame and dishonor
who seek after my life.
Let them be turned back and confounded
who devise evil against me.
[5] Let them be like chaff before the wind,
with the angel of the LORD driving them on.
[6] Let their way be dark and slippery,
with the angel of the LORD pursuing them.
[7] For without cause they hid their net for me;
without cause they dug a pit for my life.
[8] Let ruin come on them unawares.
And let the net that they hid ensnare them;
let them fall in it—to their ruin.
[9] Then my soul shall rejoice in the LORD,
exulting in his deliverance.
[10] All my bones shall say,
"O LORD, who is like you?
You deliver the weak from those too strong for them,
the weak and needy from those who despoil them."
[11] Malicious witnesses rise up;
they ask me about things I do not know.
[12] They repay me evil for good;
my soul is forlorn.
[13] But as for me, when they were sick, I wore sackcloth;
I afflicted myself with fasting.
I prayed with head bowed on my bosom,

[157] This is a difficult line; שַׁחַת ("pit") is transposed to the next line.
[158] Lit. "My prayer returned upon my bosom."

14 כְּרֵעַ־כְּאָח לִי הִתְהַלָּכְתִּי
כַּאֲבֶל־אֵם קֹדֵר שַׁחוֹתִי׃

15 וּבְצַלְעִי שָׂמְחוּ וְנֶאֱסָפוּ
נֶאֱסְפוּ עָלַי
נֵכִים וְלֹא יָדָעְתִּי
קָרְעוּ וְלֹא־דָמּוּ׃

16 [a]בְּחַנְפֵי לַעֲגֵי מָעוֹג[159]
חָרֹק עָלַי שִׁנֵּימוֹ׃

17 אֲדֹנָי כַּמָּה תִּרְאֶה
הָשִׁיבָה נַפְשִׁי מִשֹּׁאֵיהֶם
מִכְּפִירִים יְחִידָתִי׃

18 אוֹדְךָ בְּקָהָל רָב
בְּעַם עָצוּם אֲהַלְלֶךָּ׃

19 אַל־יִשְׂמְחוּ־לִי אֹיְבַי שֶׁקֶר
שֹׂנְאַי חִנָּם יִקְרְצוּ־עָיִן׃

20 כִּי לֹא שָׁלוֹם יְדַבֵּרוּ
וְעַל רִגְעֵי־אֶרֶץ
דְּבָרֵי מִרְמוֹת יַחֲשֹׁבוּן׃

21 וַיַּרְחִיבוּ עָלַי פִּיהֶם
אָמְרוּ הֶאָח הֶאָח רָאֲתָה עֵינֵינוּ׃

22 רָאִיתָה יְהוָה אַל־תֶּחֱרַשׁ
אֲדֹנָי אַל־תִּרְחַק מִמֶּנִּי׃

23 הָעִירָה וְהָקִיצָה לְמִשְׁפָּטִי
אֱלֹהַי וַאדֹנָי לְרִיבִי׃

24 שָׁפְטֵנִי כְצִדְקְךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהָי
וְאַל־יִשְׂמְחוּ־לִי׃

25 אַל־יֹאמְרוּ בְלִבָּם הֶאָח נַפְשֵׁנוּ
אַל־יֹאמְרוּ בִּלַּעֲנוּהוּ[160]׃

26 [161]יֵבֹשׁוּ וְיַחְפְּרוּ
יַחְדָּו שְׂמֵחֵי רָעָתִי
יִלְבְּשׁוּ־בֹשֶׁת וּכְלִמָּה
הַמַּגְדִּילִים עָלָי׃

14 as though I grieved for a friend or a brother;
I went about as one who laments for a mother, bowed down and in mourning.
15 But at my stumbling they gathered in glee,
they gathered together against me;
ruffians whom I did not know
tore at me without ceasing;
16 they impiously mocked more and more,
gnashing at me with their teeth.
17 How long, O LORD, will you look on?
Rescue me from their ravages,
my life from the lions!
18 Then I will thank you in the great congregation;
in the mighty throng I will praise you.
19 Do not let my treacherous enemies rejoice over me,
or those who hate me without cause wink the eye.
20 For they do not speak peace,
but they conceive deceitful words
against those who are quiet in the land.
21 They open wide their mouths against me;
they say, "Aha, Aha, our eyes have seen it."
22 You have seen, O LORD; do not be silent!
O Lord, do not be far from me!
23 Wake up! Bestir yourself for my defense,
for my cause, my God and my Lord!
24 Vindicate me, O LORD, my God, according to your righteousness,
and do not let them rejoice over me.
25 Do not let them say to themselves, "Aha, we have our heart's desire."
Do not let them say, "We have swallowed you up."
26 Let all those who rejoice at my calamity
be put to shame and confusion;
let those who exalt themselves against me
be clothed with shame and dishonor.

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159 Or in a superlative sense "the worst of mockery."
160 Lit. "him."
161 NRSV transposes these four lines of v. 26 to fit standard English idioms; I retain the MT.

27 יָרֹנּוּ וְיִשְׂמְחוּ֮ חֲפֵצֵי צִדְקִי
וְיֹאמְרוּ תָמִיד ׀ יִגְדַּל יְהוָה
הֶחָפֵץ שְׁלוֹם עַבְדּוֹ׃
28 וּלְשׁוֹנִי תֶּהְגֶּה צִדְקֶךָ
כָּל־הַיּוֹם תְּהִלָּתֶךָ׃

27 Let those who desire my vindication shout for joy and be glad,
and say evermore, “Great is the LORD,
who delights in the welfare of his servant.”
28 Then my tongue shall tell of your righteousness
and of your praise all day long.

Psalm 35

רִיבָ֣ה יְ֭הוָה אֶת־יְרִיבָ֑י	122+1	VO+Voc	M1	The entire
לֹ֝חֲמָ֗י׃	122	VO	M1	psalm is
[2] הַחֲזֵ֣ק מָ֭גֵן וְצִנָּ֑ה	123	VO		addressed o
וְקוּמָ֖ה בְּעֶזְרָתִֽי׃	122	[VP]		the Deity
[3] וְהָ֣רֵק חֲנִ֣ית וְסְגֹ֣ר	123	VO	SD1	
לִקְרַ֣את רדְפָ֑י	122	[VO]	SD1	
אֱמֹ֖ר לְנַפְשִׁ֣י	122	VO	SD2	
יְשׁוּעָתֵ֣ךְ אָ֔נִי׃	022	[SPred]	SD2	
[4] יֵבֹ֣שׁוּ וְיִכָּלְמ֗וּ	222	VV	SD3	
מְבַקְשֵׁ֣י נַפְשִׁ֑י	022	[Phr]	SD3	
יִסֹּ֣גוּ אָח֣וֹר וְיִחְפְּרֻ֔וּ	133	VAV	SD4	
חֹשְׁבֵ֖י רָעָתִֽי׃	022	[Phr]	SD4	
[5] יִֽהְיוּ֮ כְּמֹ֪ץ לִפְנֵי־ר֫וּחַ	133	VOP		
וּמַלְאַ֥ךְ יְהוָ֗ה דּוֹחֶֽה׃	123	SV		
[6] יְהִי־דַרְכָּ֣ם חֹ֭שֶׁךְ וַחֲלַקְלַקּ֑וֹת	133	VSP		
וּמַלְאַ֖ךְ יְהוָ֣ה רֹדָֽפָם׃	123	SV		
[7] כִּי־חִנָּ֣ם טָ֭מְנוּ־לִ֣י רִשְׁתָּ֑ם	144	AVPO	M2	
חִנָּ֖ם חָפְר֣וּ לְנַפְשִֽׁי׃ שׁחת	144	AVPO	M2	
[8] תְּבוֹאֵ֣הוּ שׁוֹאָ֣ה ל֭וֹא־יֵדָ֑ע	233	VS[V]		
וְרִשְׁתּ֥וֹ אֲשֶׁר־טָ֝מַ֗ן תִּלְכְּדֶ֑נּוּ	234	SV[V]		
בְּשׁוֹאָ֖ה יִפָּל־בָּֽהּ׃	133	PVO		
[9] וְנַפְשִׁ֥י תָּגִ֗יל בַּיהוָ֑ה	133	SVP		
תָּשִׂ֖ישׂ בִּישׁוּעָתֽוֹ׃	122	VP		
[10] כָּל־עַצְמוֹתַ֥י תֹּאמַ֗רְנָה	123	SV	SD8	
יְהוָ֥ה מִי־כָ֑מוֹךָ	122+1	[SP+Voc]	SD8	
מַצִּ֣יל עָנִ֣י מֵחָזָ֣ק מִמֶּ֑נּוּ	134	[VOP]	SD8	
וְעָנִ֖י וְאֶבְי֣וֹן מִגֹּזְלֽוֹ׃	023	[OP]	SD8	
[11] יְקוּמ֣וּן עֵדֵי־חָ֑מָס	123	VS		
אֲשֶׁ֖ר לֹא־יָדָ֣עְתִּי יִשְׁאָלֽוּנִי׃	233	OV[V]		
[12] יְשַׁלְּמ֣וּנִי רָ֭עָה תַּ֣חַת טוֹבָ֑ה	134	VOP	SD9	
שְׁכ֖וֹל לְנַפְשִֽׁי׃	012	[Phr]	SD9	
[13] וַאֲנִ֗י בַּחֲלוֹתָ֥ם לְבוּשִׁ֑י שָׂ֝ק	134	SPredP		
עִנֵּ֣יתִי בַצּ֣וֹם נַפְשִׁ֑י	133	VPO		
וּתְפִלָּתִ֖י עַל־חֵיקִ֣י תָּשֽׁוּב׃	133	SPV		
[14] כְּרֵ֣עַ־כְּ֭אָח לִ֣י הִתְהַלָּ֑כְתִּי	134	PV	M3	
כַּאֲבֶל־אֵ֥ם קֹדֵ֗ר שְׁחֹ֣תִי׃	134	PV	M3	
[15] וּבְצַלְעִ֣י שָׂמְח֣וּ וְנֶאֱסָ֑פוּ	233	PVV		
נֶ֭אֱסְפוּ עָלַ֣י	122	[VO]		
נֵכִ֥ים וְלֹ֗א יָדָ֫עְתִּ֥י	122	OV		
קָרְע֥וּ וְלֹא־דָ֑מּוּ׃	122	[VV]		
[16] בְּחַנְפֵ֣י לַ֭עֲגֵי מָעֹ֑וג	023	[Phr]		
חָרַ֖ק עָלַ֣י שִׁנֵּימוֹ׃	123	VOS		

[17] אֲדֹנָי֮ כַּמָּה תִּרְאֶה	122+1	OV+Voc	
הָשֵׁיבָה נַפְשִׁי מִשֹּׁאֵיהֶם	133	VOP	G1
מִכְּפִירִים יְחִידָתִי:	022	[OP]	G1
[18] אֹורְדִ בְּקָהָל רָב	123	VP	SI1
בְּעַם עָצוּם אֲהַלְלֶךָּ:	123	PV	SI1
[19] אַל־יִשְׂמְחוּ־לִי אֹיְבַי שֶׁקֶר	134	VOS	G2
שֹׂנְאַי חִנָּם יִקְרְצוּ־עָיִן:	134	SVO	G2
[20] כִּי לֹא שָׁלֹום יְדַבֵּרוּ	122	OV	SD10
וְעַל רִגְעֵי־אֶרֶץ	012	[Phr]	SD10
דְּבֵרֵי מִרְמֹות יַחְשֹׁבוּן:	123	OV	
[21] וַיִּרְחֲיבוּ עָלַי פִּיהֶם	123	VPO	
אָמְרוּ הֶאָח הֶאָח רָאֲתָה עֵינֵינוּ:	245	V[PVS]	
[22] רָאִיתָה יְהוָה אַל־תֶּחֱרַשׁ	222+1	V[V]Voc	
אֲדֹנָי אַל־תִּרְחַק מִמֶּנִּי:	122+1	VP+Voc	
[23] הָעִירָה וְהָקִיצָה לְמִשְׁפָּטִי	133	VVP	SD11
אֱלֹהַי וַאדֹנָי לְרִיבִי:	011+Voc	[Phr]+Voc	SD11
[24] שָׁפְטֵנִי כְצִדְקְךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהָי	122	VP+Voc	
וְאַל־יִשְׂמְחוּ־לִי:	122	VO	
[25] אַל־יֹאמְרוּ בְלִבָּם הֶאָח נַפְשֵׁנוּ	144	VP[PV]	
אַל־יֹאמְרוּ בִּלַּעְנוּהוּ:	122	V[V]	
[26] יֵבֹשׁוּ וְיַחְפְּרוּ	122	VV	
יַחְדָּו שְׂמֵחֵי רָעָתִי	123	VAO	
יִלְבְּשׁוּ־בֹשֶׁת וּכְלִמָּה	123	VPP	SD12
הַמַּגְדִּילִים עָלָי:	122	[VO]	SD12
[27] יָרֹנּוּ וְיִשְׂמְחוּ חֲפֵצֵי צִדְקִי	134	VVS	
וְיֹאמְרוּ תָמִיד יִגְדַּל יְהוָה	234	V[AVS]	
הֶחָפֵץ שְׁלֹום עַבְדֹּו:	123	VP	
[28] וּלְשֹׁונִי תֶּהְגֶּה צִדְקֶךָ	133	SVO	SD13
כָּל־הַיֹּום תְּהִלָּתֶךָ:	023	[AO]	SD13

Lineation:

Psalm 35 contains no lineation difficulties that affect its surface structure; most of the lines are delineated within the constraints of zero to two clause predicators, one to four constituents, and one to five units per line. The majority of the lines contain one clause predicator, two to three constituents, and two to four units.

1. Clause predicators
    a) zero clause predicator: 9/71 lines
    b) one clause predicator: 51/71 lines
    c) two clause predicators: 11/71 lines
2. Constituents
    a) one constituent: 2/71 lines
    b) two constituents: 37/71 lines
    c) three constituents: 29/71 lines
    d) four constituents: 3/71 lines
3. Units
    a) two units: 22/71 lines
    b) three units: 35/71 lines
    c) four units: 13/71 lines
    d) five units: 1/71 lines
4. Vocatives:
    a) Yhwh: four occurrences
    b) Lord: two occurrences

c) My God and my Lord: one occurrence

d) Yhwh my God: one occurrence

Gross Structure

The poem is a monologue addressed to the Deity. I divide this seventy-one-line poem into ten paragraphs:

1. First paragraph (vv. 1-3; 7 lines): summons and petition to seek help in fighting against the pursuers.
2. Second paragraph (vv. 4-8; 13 lines): curses against the enemies.
3. Third paragraph (vv. 9-10; 6 lines): praises.
4. Fourth paragraph (vv. 11-14; 9 lines): complaints about betrayed by the enemies.
5. Fifth paragraph (vv. 15-16; 6 lines): complaints about the enemies.
6. Sixth paragraph (vv. 17-18; 5 lines): petition for deliverance and promise of praise.
7. Seventh paragraph (vv. 19-21; 7 lines): imprecations and complaints against enemies.
8. Eighth paragraph (vv. 22-24; 6 lines): petition for divine judgment.
9. Ninth paragraph (vv. 25-26; 6 lines): imprecations against enemies.
10. Tenth paragraph (vv. 27-28; 5 lines): wishes for friends and vow of praise.

Psalm 43

[1] שָׁפְטֵנִי אֱלֹהִים	[1] Vindicate me, O God,
וְרִיבָה רִיבִי מִגּוֹי לֹא־חָסִיד	and defend my cause against an ungodly people;
מֵאִישׁ־מִרְמָה וְעַוְלָה תְּפַלְּטֵנִי:	from those who are deceitful and unjust deliver me!
[2] כִּי־אַתָּה אֱלֹהֵי מָעוּזִּי	[2] For you are the God in whom I take refuge;
לָמָּה זְנַחְתָּנִי	why have you cast me off?
לָמָּה־קֹדֵר אֶתְהַלֵּךְ	Why must I walk about mournfully
בְּלַחַץ אוֹיֵב:	because of the oppression of the enemy?
[3] שְׁלַח־אוֹרְךָ וַאֲמִתְּךָ	[3] O send out your light and your truth;
הֵמָּה יַנְחֻונִי	let them lead me;
יְבִיאוּנִי אֶל־הַר־קָדְשְׁךָ	let them bring me to your holy hill
וְאֶל־מִשְׁכְּנוֹתֶיךָ:	and to your dwelling.
[4] וְאָבוֹאָה אֶל־מִזְבַּח אֱלֹהִים	[4] Then I will go to the altar of God,
אֶל־אֵל שִׂמְחַת גִּילִי	to God my exceeding joy;
וְאוֹדְךָ בְכִנּוֹר אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהָי:	and I will praise you with the harp, O God, my God.
[5] מַה־תִּשְׁתּוֹחֲחִי נַפְשִׁי	[5] Why are you cast down, O my soul,
וּמַה־תֶּהֱמִי עָלָי	and why are you disquieted within me?
הוֹחִילִי לֵאלֹהִים	Hope in God;
כִּי־עוֹד אוֹדֶנּוּ	for I shall again praise him,
יְשׁוּעֹת פָּנַי וֵאלֹהָי:	my help and my God.

[162] This psalm contains no textual difficulties that affect its lineation and line structures.

Psalm 43

[1] שָׁפְטֵנִי אֱלֹהִים	111+1	V+Voc		God
וְרִיבָה רִיבִי מִגּוֹי לֹא־חָסִיד	133	VOP		God
מֵאִישׁ־מִרְמָה וְעַוְלָה תְפַלְּטֵנִי:	124	PV		God
[2] כִּי־אַתָּה ו אֱלֹהֵי מָעוּזִי	123	SPred		God
לָמָּה זְנַחְתָּנִי	122	[PV]		God
לָמָּה־קֹדֵר אֶתְהַלֵּךְ	123	PV	SD1	God
בְּלַחַץ אוֹיֵב:	012	[Phr]	SD1	God
[3] שְׁלַח־אוֹרְךָ וַאֲמִתֶּךָ	123	VO		God
הֵמָּה יַנְחוּנִי	122	[SV]		God
יְבִיאוּנִי אֶל־הַר־קָדְשְׁךָ	123	[VP]	SD2; G1	God
וְאֶל־מִשְׁכְּנוֹתֶיךָ:	011	[Phr]	SD2; G1	God
[4] וְאָבוֹאָה ו אֶל־מִזְבַּח אֱלֹהִים	123	VO	G2	God
אֶל־אֵ֥ל שִׂמְחַת גִּילִי	022	[OPhr]	G2	God
וְאוֹדְךָ בְכִנּוֹר אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהָי:	122+Voc	VP+Voc		God
[5] מַה־תִּשְׁתּוֹחֲחִי ו נַפְשִׁי֮	122+Voc	SV+Voc		Self
וּמַה־תֶּהֱמִי עָלָי	133	SVP		Self
הוֹחִילִי לֵאלֹהִים	122	VP		Self
כִּי־עוֹד אוֹדֶנּוּ	122	AV		Self
יְשׁוּעֹת֮ פָּנַי֒ וֵאלֹהָי:	022	[Phr]		Self

Lineation:

All of the lines are delineated within the constraints of zero to two clause predicators, one to four constituents, and one to four units per line. The majority of the lines contain one clause predicator, two constituents, and two to three units.

1. Clause predicators
    a) zero clause predicator: 4/19 lines
    b) one clause predicator: 12/19 lines
    c) two clause predicators: 3/19 lines
2. Constituents
    a) one constituent: 2/19 lines
    b) two constituents: 13/19 lines
    c) three constituents: 4/19 lines
3. Units
    a) two units: 9/19 lines
    b) three units: 9/19 lines
    c) four units: 1/19 lines
4. Vocatives:
    a) God: two occurrences
    b) Self: one occurrence

Gross Structure:

I divide this nineteen-line poem into three paragraphs. The poem is a monologue addressed to God in the first two paragraphs (vv. 1-2; 3-4); the last paragraph is the psalmist's self-reflection (v. 5).

I. First paragraph (vv. 1-2; 7 lines)

1. Summons and petition to seek vindication addressed to the Deity (v. 1)
2. Complaints (v. 2)

II. Second paragraph (vv. 3-4; 7 lines)

1. Petition (v. 3)
2. Praise (v. 4)

II. Third paragraph (v. 5; 5 lines): self-addressed statement of confidence and promise of praise.

Psalm 51

[3] חָנֵּנִי אֱלֹהִים כְּחַסְדֶּךָ	[1] Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love;
כְּרֹב רַחֲמֶיךָ מְחֵה פְשָׁעָי:	according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions.
[4] הֶרֶב[163] כַּבְּסֵנִי מֵעֲוֹנִי	[2] Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,
וּמֵחַטָּאתִי טַהֲרֵנִי:	and cleanse me from my sin.
[5] כִּי־פְשָׁעַי אֲנִי אֵדָע	[3] For I know my transgressions,
וְחַטָּאתִי נֶגְדִּי תָמִיד:	and my sin is ever before me.
[6] לְךָ לְבַדְּךָ חָטָאתִי	[4] Against you, you alone, have I sinned,
וְהָרַע בְּעֵינֶיךָ עָשִׂיתִי	and done what is evil in your sight,
לְמַעַן[164] תִּצְדַּק בְּדָבְרֶךָ	so that you are justified in your sentence
תִּזְכֶּה בְשָׁפְטֶךָ:	and blameless when you pass judgment.
[7] הֵן־בְּעָוֹן חוֹלָלְתִּי	[5] Indeed, I was born guilty,
וּבְחֵטְא יֶחֱמַתְנִי אִמִּי:	a sinner when my mother conceived me.
[8] הֵן־אֱמֶת חָפַצְתָּ בַּטֻּחוֹת	[6] You desire truth in the inward being;
וּבְסָתֻם חָכְמָה תוֹדִיעֵנִי:	therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart.
[9] תְּחַטְּאֵנִי בְאֵזוֹב וְאֶטְהָר	[7] Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;
תְּכַבְּסֵנִי וּמִשֶּׁלֶג אַלְבִּין:	wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.
[10] תַּשְׁמִיעֵנִי שָׂשׂוֹן וְשִׂמְחָה	[8] Let me hear joy and gladness;
תָּגֵלְנָה עֲצָמוֹת דִּכִּיתָ:	let the bones that you have crushed rejoice.
[11] הַסְתֵּר פָּנֶיךָ מֵחֲטָאָי	[9] Hide your face from my sins,
וְכָל־עֲוֹנֹתַי מְחֵה:	and blot out all my iniquities.
[12] לֵב טָהוֹר בְּרָא־לִי אֱלֹהִים	[10] Create in me a clean heart, O God,
וְרוּחַ נָכוֹן חַדֵּשׁ בְּקִרְבִּי:	and put a new and right spirit within me.
[13] אַל־תַּשְׁלִיכֵנִי מִלְּפָנֶיךָ	[11] Do not cast me away from your presence,
וְרוּחַ קָדְשְׁךָ אַל־תִּקַּח מִמֶּנִּי:	and do not take your holy spirit from me.
[14] הָשִׁיבָה לִּי שְׂשׂוֹן יִשְׁעֶךָ	[12] Restore to me the joy of your salvation,
וְרוּחַ נְדִיבָה תִסְמְכֵנִי:	and sustain in me a willing spirit.
[15] אֲלַמְּדָה פֹשְׁעִים דְּרָכֶיךָ	[13] Then I will teach transgressors your ways,
וְחַטָּאִים אֵלֶיךָ יָשׁוּבוּ:	and sinners will return to you.
[16] הַצִּילֵנִי מִדָּמִים	[14] Deliver me from bloodshed, O God,
אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהֵי תְשׁוּעָתִי	O God of my salvation,
תְּרַנֵּן לְשׁוֹנִי צִדְקָתֶךָ:	and my tongue will sing aloud of your deliverance.

[163] To be read as הַרְבֵּה, infinitive absolute, conveying an adverbial sense "thoroughly."
[164] לְמַעַן can be rendered to convey a sense of result "thus/therefore"

17 אֲדֹנָי שְׂפָתַי תִּפְתָּח
וּפִי יַגִּיד תְּהִלָּתֶךָ׃
18 כִּי לֹא־תַחְפֹּץ זֶבַח
וְאֶתְּנָה עוֹלָה לֹא תִרְצֶה׃

19 זִבְחֵי אֱלֹהִים רוּחַ נִשְׁבָּרָה
לֵב־נִשְׁבָּר וְנִדְכֶּה אֱלֹהִים לֹא תִבְזֶה׃

20 הֵיטִיבָה בִרְצוֹנְךָ אֶת־צִיּוֹן
תִּבְנֶה חוֹמוֹת יְרוּשָׁלָם׃
21 אָז תַּחְפֹּץ זִבְחֵי־צֶדֶק
עוֹלָה וְכָלִיל
אָז יַעֲלוּ עַל־מִזְבַּחֲךָ פָרִים׃

15 O Lord, open my lips,
and my mouth will declare your praise.
16 For you have no delight in sacrifice;
if I were to give a burnt offering, you would not be pleased.

17 The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit;
a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

18 Do good to Zion in your good pleasure;
rebuild the walls of Jerusalem,
19 then you will delight in right sacrifices,
in burnt offerings and whole burnt offerings;
then bulls will be offered on your altar.

Psalm 51

חָנֵּנִי אֱלֹהִים כְּחַסְדֶּךָ [3]	122+1	VP+Voc		The entire poem is
כְּרֹב רַחֲמֶיךָ מְחֵה פְשָׁעָי:	134	P[VO]		addressed to the
הַרְבֵּה כַּבְּסֵנִי מֵעֲוֹנִי [4]	123	AVP	SD2	Deity
וּמֵחַטָּאתִי טַהֲרֵנִי:	122	PV	SD2	
כִּי־פְשָׁעַי אֲנִי אֵדָע [5]	123	[OSV]	SD2	
וְחַטָּאתִי נֶגְדִּי תָמִיד:	123	[SPred]	SD2	
לְךָ לְבַדְּךָ חָטָאתִי [6]	123	PPV		
וְהָרַע בְּעֵינֶיךָ עָשִׂיתִי	133	OPV		
לְמַעַן תִּצְדַּק בְּדָבְרֶךָ	123	PVP		
תִּזְכֶּה בְשָׁפְטֶךָ:	122	[VP]		
הֵן־בְּעָוֹן חוֹלָלְתִּי [7]	122	PV		
וּבְחֵטְא יֶחֱמַתְנִי אִמִּי:	133	PVS		
הֵן־אֱמֶת חָפַצְתָּ בַטֻּחוֹת [8]	133	PVP		
וּבְסָתֻם חָכְמָה תוֹדִיעֵנִי:	133	POV		
תְּחַטְּאֵנִי בְאֵזוֹב וְאֶטְהָר [9]	233	VP[V]	M2	
תְּכַבְּסֵנִי וּמִשֶּׁלֶג אלבין:	233	VP[V]	M2	
תַּשְׁמִיעֵנִי שָׂשׂוֹן וְשִׂמְחָה [10]	123	VO		
תָּגֵלְנָה עֲצָמוֹת דִּכִּיתָ:	233	[VS]V		
הַסְתֵּר פָּנֶיךָ מֵחֲטָאָי [11]	123	VOP		
וְכָל־עֲוֹנֹתַי מְחֵה:	123	OV		
לֵב טָהוֹר בְּרָא־לִי אֱלֹהִים [12]	133+1	OVP+Voc	G1	
וְרוּחַ נָכוֹן חַדֵּשׁ בְּקִרְבִּי:	134	OP	G1	
אַל־תַּשְׁלִיכֵנִי מִלְּפָנֶיךָ [13]	122	VP		
וְרוּחַ קָדְשְׁךָ אַל־תִּקַּח מִמֶּנִּי:	134	OVP		
הָשִׁיבָה לִּי שְׂשׂוֹן יִשְׁעֶךָ [14]	134	VPP		
וְרוּחַ נְדִיבָה תִסְמְכֵנִי:	133	PPV		
אֲלַמְּדָה פּשְׁעִים דְּרָכֶיךָ [15]	133	VOP		
וְחַטָּאִים אֵלֶיךָ יָשׁוּבוּ:	133	SPV		
הַצִּילֵנִי מִדָּמִים [16]	122	VP	SD4	
אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהֵי תְּשׁוּעָתִי	123	VocPhr	SD4	
תְּרַנֵּן לְשׁוֹנִי צִדְקָתֶךָ:	133	[VSP]	SD4	
אֲדֹנָי שְׂפָתַי תִּפְתָּח [17]	122+1	Voc+OV	SD5	
וּפִי יַגִּיד תְּהִלָּתֶךָ:	133	[SVP]	SD5	
כִּי לֹא־תַחְפֹּץ זֶבַח וְאֶתֵּנָה [18]	233	VO[V]		
עוֹלָה לֹא תִרְצֶה:	122	OV		
זִבְחֵי אֱלֹהִים רוּחַ נִשְׁבָּרָה [19]	124	SPred	SD6; M6	
לֵב־נִשְׁבָּר וְנִדְכֶּה	012	PredS	SD6; M6	
אֱלֹהִים לֹא תִבְזֶה:	122	VocV		
הֵיטִיבָה בִרְצוֹנְךָ אֶת־צִיּוֹן [20]	133	VPO		
תִּבְנֶה חוֹמוֹת יְרוּשָׁלָם:	123	VO		
אָז תַּחְפֹּץ זִבְחֵי־צֶדֶק [21]	124	VP	SD7	
עוֹלָה וְכָלִיל	012	[Phr]	SD7	
אָז יַעֲלוּ עַל־מִזְבַּחֲךָ פָרִים:	134	VPO		

Psalm 51 contains no textual difficulties that affect its surface structure; most of the lines are delineated within the constraints of zero to two clause predicators, one to four constituents, and one to four units per line. The majority of the lines contain one clause predicator, two to three constituents, and two to four units.

1. Clause predicators
    a) zero clause predicator: 2/43 lines
    b) one clause predicator: 34/43 lines
    c) two clause predicators: 7/43 lines
2. Constituents
    a) one constituent: 2/43 lines
    b) two constituents: 20/43 lines
    c) three constituents: 20/43 lines
    d) four constituents: 1/43 lines
3. Units
    a) two units: 9/43 lines
    b) three units: 26/43 lines
    c) four units: 8/43 lines
4. Vocatives:
    a) God: four occurrences
    b) Lord: one occurrence

Gross Structure

I divide this forty-three-line poem into three paragraphs:

I. First main paragraph (vv. 3-7; 12 lines)

1. Summonss and petition to seek cleansing from sin (vv. 3-5)
2. Confession of sin (vv. 6-7)

II. Second main paragraph (vv. 8-15; 16 lines)

1. Petition for cleansing from sin (vv. 8-11)
2. Petition for new spirit (vv. 12-14)
3. Vow of service (v. 15)

III. Third main paragraph (vv. 16-21; 15 lines)

1. Petition for new life (v. 16a)
2. Promise of praise and offering (vv. 16b-19)
3. Petition for the rebuilding of Zion (v. 20)
4. Promise of praise (v. 21)

Psalm 55

[2] הַאֲזִינָה אֱלֹהִים תְּפִלָּתִי	[1] Give ear to my prayer, O God;
וְאַל־תִּתְעַלַּם מִתְּחִנָּתִי:	do not hide yourself from my supplication.
[3] הַקְשִׁיבָה לִּי וַעֲנֵנִי	[2] Attend to me, and answer me;
[165]אָרִיד בְּשִׂיחִי וְאָהֳמָה:	I am troubled in my complaint.
[4] מִקּוֹל אוֹיֵב	I am distraught [3] by the noise of the enemy,
מִפְּנֵי עֲקַת רָשָׁע	because of the clamor of the wicked.
כִּי־יָמִיטוּ עָלַי אָוֶן	For they bring trouble upon me,
וּבְאַף יִשְׂטְמוּנִי:	and in anger they cherish enmity against me.
[5] לִבִּי יָחִיל בְּקִרְבִּי	[4] My heart is in anguish within me,
וְאֵימוֹת מָוֶת נָפְלוּ עָלָי:	the terrors of death have fallen upon me.
[6] יִרְאָה וָרַעַד יָבֹא בִי	[5] Fear and trembling come upon me,
וַתְּכַסֵּנִי פַּלָּצוּת:	and horror overwhelms me.
[7] וָאֹמַר מִי־יִתֶּן־לִי	[6] And I say, "O that I had wings like a dove!
אֵבֶר כַּיּוֹנָה אָעוּפָה וְאֶשְׁכֹּנָה:	I would fly away and be at rest;
[8] הִנֵּה אַרְחִיק נָדֹד	[7] truly, I would flee far away;
אָלִין בַּמִּדְבָּר סֶלָה:	I would lodge in the wilderness; *Selah*
[9] אָחִישָׁה מְפָלָט לִי	[8] I would hurry to find a shelter for myself
מֵרוּחַ סֹעָה מִסָּעַר:	from the raging wind and tempest."
[10] בַּלַּע אֲדֹנָי פַּלַּג לְשׁוֹנָם	[9] Confuse, O Lord, confound their speech;
כִּי־רָאִיתִי חָמָס וְרִיב בָּעִיר:	for I see violence and strife in the city.
[11] יוֹמָם וָלַיְלָה יְסוֹבְבֻהָ עַל־חוֹמֹתֶיהָ	[10]Day and night they go around it on its walls,
וְאָוֶן וְעָמָל בְּקִרְבָּהּ:	and iniquity and trouble are within it;
[12] הַוּוֹת בְּקִרְבָּהּ	[11] ruin is in its midst;
וְלֹא־יָמִישׁ מֵרְחֹבָהּ תּוֹךְ וּמִרְמָה:	oppression and fraud do not depart from its marketplace.
[13] כִּי לֹא־אוֹיֵב יְחָרְפַנִי וְאֶשָּׂא	[12] It is not enemies who taunt me, I could bear that;
לֹא־מְשַׂנְאִי עָלַי הִגְדִּיל	it is not adversaries who deal insolently with me—
וְאֶסָּתֵר מִמֶּנּוּ:	I could hide from them.
[14] וְאַתָּה אֱנוֹשׁ כְּעֶרְכִּי	[13] But it is you, my equal,
אַלּוּפִי וּמְיֻדָּעִי:	my companion, my familiar friend,
[15] אֲשֶׁר יַחְדָּו נַמְתִּיק סוֹד	[14] with whom I kept pleasant company;
בְּבֵית אֱלֹהִים נְהַלֵּךְ בְּרֶגֶשׁ:	we walked in the house of God with the throng.
[16] יַשִּׁימָוֶת עָלֵימוֹ	[15] Let death come upon them;
יֵרְדוּ שְׁאוֹל חַיִּים	let them go down alive to Sheol;
כִּי־רָעוֹת בְּמְגוּרָם בְּקִרְבָּם:	for evil is in their homes and in their hearts.

[165] The NRSV unnecessarily transposes וְאָהֳמָה to the next line. The MT's lineation reads:
"I am troubled in my complaint; and I am distraught
by the noise of the enemy."

17 אֲנִי אֶל־אֱלֹהִים אֶקְרָא
וַיהוָה יוֹשִׁיעֵנִי:
18 עֶרֶב וָבֹקֶר וְצָהֳרַיִם
אָשִׂיחָה וְאֶהֱמֶה
וַיִּשְׁמַע קוֹלִי:
19 פָּדָה בְשָׁלוֹם נַפְשִׁי מִקְּרָב־לִי
כִּי־בְרַבִּים הָיוּ עִמָּדִי:
20 יִשְׁמַע אֵל וְיַעֲנֵם[166]
וְיֹשֵׁב קֶדֶם סֶלָה
אֲשֶׁר אֵין חֲלִיפוֹת לָמוֹ
וְלֹא יָרְאוּ אֱלֹהִים:
21 שָׁלַח יָדָיו בְּשִׁלֹּמָיו
חִלֵּל בְּרִיתוֹ[167]:
22 חָלְקוּ מַחְמָאֹת פִּיהוּ
וְקֶרֶב־לִבּוֹ
רַכּוּ דְבָרָיו מִשֶּׁמֶן
וְהֵמָּה פְתִיחוֹת:
23 הַשְׁלֵךְ עַל־יְהוָה יְהָבְךָ[168]
וְהוּא יְכַלְכְּלֶךָ
לֹא־יִתֵּן לְעוֹלָם מוֹט לַצַּדִּיק:
24 וְאַתָּה אֱלֹהִים תּוֹרִדֵם לִבְאֵר שַׁחַת
אַנְשֵׁי דָמִים וּמִרְמָה
לֹא־יֶחֱצוּ יְמֵיהֶם
וַאֲנִי אֶבְטַח־בָּךְ:

16 But I call upon God,
and the LORD will save me.
17 Evening and morning and at noon
I utter my complaint and moan,
and he will hear my voice.
18 He will redeem me unharmed from the battle that I wage,
for many are arrayed against me.
19 God, who is enthroned from of old, *Selah*
will hear, and will humble them.
because they do not change,
and do not fear God.
20 My companion laid hands on a friend
and violated a covenant with me
21 with speech smoother than butter,
but with a heart set on war;
with words that were softer than oil,
but in fact were drawn swords.
22 Cast your burden on the LORD,
and he will sustain you;
he will never permit the righteous to be moved.
23 But you, O God, will cast them down
into the lowest pit;
the bloodthirsty and treacherous
shall not live out half their days.
But I will trust in you.

[166] NRSV's lineation and word order do not agree with the MT. Lit. "God will hear and will humble them; who is enthroned from of old."
[167] NRSV supplies "with me." Lit. "He laid hands on his peacemaker; and violated his covenant."
[168] Or "Cast what he has given you."

Psalm 55

[2] הַאֲזִינָה אֱלֹהִים תְּפִלָּתִי	122+1	VO+Voc		God
וְאַל־תִּתְעַלַּם מִתְּחִנָּתִי׃	122	[VP]		God
[3] הַקְשִׁיבָה לִּי וַעֲנֵנִי	133	VO[V]		God
אָרִיד בְּשִׂיחִי וְאָהִימָה׃	133	VP[V]	SD2	God
[4] מִקּוֹל אוֹיֵב	012	[Phr]	SD2	God
מִפְּנֵי עָקַת רָשָׁע	013	[Phr]	SD2	God
כִּי־יָמִיטוּ עָלַי אָוֶן	133	[VPO]	SD2	God
וּבְאַף יִשְׂטְמוּנִי׃	122	[PV]	SD2	God
[5] לִבִּי יָחִיל בְּקִרְבִּי	123	SPred		God
וְאֵימוֹת מָוֶת נָפְלוּ עָלָי׃	133	SVO	M1	God
[6] יִרְאָה וָרַעַד יָבֹא בִּי	133	SVO	M1	God
וַתְּכַסֵּנִי פַּלָּצוּת׃	122	VS		God
[7] וָאֹמַר מִי־יִתֶּן־לִי	244	V[SVO]		God
אֵבֶר כַּיּוֹנָה אָעוּפָה וְאֶשְׁכֹּנָה׃	244	PV[V]		God
[8] הִנֵּה אַרְחִיק נָדֹד	122	VA		God
אָלִין בַּמִּדְבָּר סֶלָה׃	122	VP		God
[9] אָחִישָׁה מִפָּלָט לִי	122	VP	SD3	God
מֵרוּחַ סַּעַה מָסָּעַר׃	023	[Phr]	SD3	God
[10] בַּלַּע אֲדֹנָי פַּלַּג לְשׁוֹנָם	233+1	VVO+Voc	SD4	God
כִּי־רָאִיתִי חָמָס וְרִיב בָּעִיר׃	134	[VOP]	SD4	God
[11] יוֹמָם וָלַיְלָה יְסוֹבְבֻהָ עַל־חוֹמֹתֶיהָ	134	PVO		God
וָאָוֶן וְעָמָל בְּקִרְבָּהּ׃	123	SPred		God
[12] הַוּוֹת בְּקִרְבָּהּ	122	SPred		God
וְלֹא־יָמִישׁ מֵרְחֹבָהּ תּוֹךְ וּמִרְמָה׃	134	[VPS]		God
[13] כִּי לֹא־אוֹיֵב יְחָרְפֵנִי וְאֶשָּׂא	223	SV[V]		God
לֹא־מְשַׂנְאִי עָלַי הִגְדִּיל	223	S[OV]	SD5	God
וְאֶסָּתֵר מִמֶּנּוּ׃	122	[VP]	SD5	God
[14] וְאַתָּה אֱנוֹשׁ כְּעֶרְכִּי	133	SPred	SD6	Enemy
אַלּוּפִי וּמְיֻדָּעִי׃	012	[Phr]	SD6	Enemy
[15] אֲשֶׁר יַחְדָּו נמְתִּיק סוֹד	134	AVO	SD6	Enemy
בְּבֵית אֱלֹהִים נְהַלֵּךְ בֶּרֹגֶשׁ׃	134	PVP	SD6	Enemy
[16] יְשִׁימָוֶת עֲלֵימוֹ	122	VP	M5	Overhearers
יֵרְדוּ שְׁאוֹל חַיִּים	123	VP	SD9; M5	Overhearers
כִּי רָעוֹת בִּמְגוּרָם בְּקִרְבָּם׃	123	[SPred]	SD9	Overhearers
[17] אֲנִי אֶל־אֱלֹהִים אֶקְרָא	133	SPV		Overhearers
וַיהוָה יוֹשִׁיעֵנִי׃	122	[SV]		Overhearers
[18] עֶרֶב וָבֹקֶר וְצָהֳרַיִם	013	[Phr]		Overhearers
אָשִׂיחָה וְאֶהֱמֶה	222	VV		Overhearers
וַיִּשְׁמַע קוֹלִי׃	122	[VO]		Overhearers

[19] פֶּ֤דָה בְשָׁלֹ֨ום וַ֘נְפְשִׁי֤ מִקְּרָב־לִ֗י	144	VPOP	SD10	Overhearers
כִּֽי־בְרַבִּ֥ים הָיָ֗וּ עִמָּדִֽי׃	133	[SVO]	SD10	Overhearers
[20] יִשְׁמַ֣ע אֵ֣ל וְיַעֲנֵ֑ם	133	VS[V]		Overhearers
וְיֹשֵׁ֥ב קֶ֝֗דֶם סֶֽלָה	122	VP	SD11	Overhearers
אֲשֶׁ֤ר אֵין־חֲלִיפֹ֨ות ׀ לָ֗מֹו	123	[SV]	SD11	Overhearers
וְלֹ֣א יָרְא֣וּ אֱלֹהִ֑ים׃	122	[VO]	SD11	Overhearers
[21] שָׁלַ֣ח יָ֭דָיו בִּשְׁלֹמָ֑יו	133	VOP		Overhearers
חִלֵּ֥ל בְּרִיתֹֽו׃	122	VO		Overhearers
[22] חָלְק֣וּ ׀ מֵחְמָ֣אַת פִּ֑יו	123	VP		Overhearers
וְקֶ֖רֶב־לֹּ֣ו	122	SPred		Overhearers
רַכּ֣וּ דְבָרָ֣יו מִשֶּׁ֑מֶן	133	VSP		Overhearers
וְהֵ֖מָּה פְּתִיחֹֽות׃	122	[VO]		Overhearers
[23] הַשְׁלֵךְ֮ עַל־יְהוָ֪ה יְ֫הָבֶךָ֥	133	VPO		Overhearers
וְה֥וּא יְכַלְכְּלֶ֑ךָ	122	SV		Overhearers
לֹא־יִתֵּ֖ן לְעֹולָ֣ם מֹ֣וט לַצַּדִּֽיק׃	134	VPhrO		Overhearers
[24] וְאַתָּ֤ה אֱלֹהִ֨ים ׀ תֹּורְדֵ֗ם לִבְאֵ֥ר שַׁ֝חַת	134+1	SVPhr+Voc		Overhearers
אַנְשֵׁ֣י דָ֭מִים וּמִרְמָ֑ה	023	Phr	SD18	Overhearers
לֹא־יֶחֱצ֖וּ יְמֵיהֶ֑ם	122	[Vo]	SD18	Overhearers
וַאֲנִ֥י אֶבְטַח־בָּֽךְ׃	133	SVO		Overhearers

Psalm 55 contains no textual difficulties that affect its surface structure; most of the lines are delineated within the constraints of zero to two clause predicators, one to four constituents, and one to four units per line. The majority of the lines contain one clause predicator, two to three constituents, and two to four units.

1. Clause predicators
    a) zero clause predicator: 6/58 lines
    b) one clause predicator: 45/58 lines
    c) two clause predicators: 6/58 lines
    d) three clause predicators: 1/58 lines
2. Constituents
    a) one constituent: 4/58 lines
    b) two constituents: 29/58 lines
    c) three constituents: 20/58 lines
    d) four constituents: 5/58 lines
3. Units
    a) two units: 21/58 lines
    b) three units: 26/58 lines
    c) four units: 10/58 lines
    d) five units: 1/58 lines
4. Vocatives:
    a) God: two occurrences
    b) Lord: one occurrence

Gross Structure

I divide this fifty-eight-line poem into eight paragraphs:

I. First paragraph (vv. 2-4; 8 lines)

1. Summons and petition (v. 2)
2. Complaints about current crisis (vv. 3-4)

II. Second paragraph (vv. 5-9; 10 lines)

1. Complaints about current condition (vv. 5-6)
2. Desire to escape (vv. 7-9)

III. Third paragraph (vv. 10-13; 9 lines)

1. Petition for enemies to be punished (vv. 10-12)
2. The enemy is in the midst of the community (v. 13)

IV. Fourth paragraph (vv. 14-16; 7 lines)

1. Enemy is identified as former friend (vv. 14-15)
2. Imprecations against enemies (v. 16)

V. Fifth paragraph (vv. 17-20b; 9 lines)

1. Vow to keep on praying (vv. 17-18)
2. Confidence God will hear prayers (vv. 19-20)

VI. Sixth paragraph (vv. 21-22; 8 lines): description of the ungodly

VII. Seventh paragraph (vv. 23-24; 7 lines): statement of confidence in God.

Psalm 56

[2] חָנֵּנִי אֱלֹהִים	[1] Be gracious to me, O God,
כִּי־שְׁאָפַנִי אֱנוֹשׁ	for people trample on me;
כָּל־הַיּוֹם לוֹחֵם יְלָחֲצֵנִי׃	all day long foes oppress me;
[3] שָׁאֲפוּ שׁוֹרְרַי כָּל־הַיּוֹם	[2] my enemies trample on me all day long,
כִּי־רַבִּים לֹחֲמִים לִי מָרוֹם[169]׃	for many fight against me. O Most High,
[4] יוֹם אִירָא	[3] when I am afraid,
אֲנִי אֵלֶיךָ אֶבְטָח׃	I put my trust in you.
[5] בֵּאלֹהִים אְהַלֵּל דְּבָרוֹ	[4] In God, whose word I praise,
בֵּאלֹהִים בָּטַחְתִּי לֹא אִירָא	in God I trust; I am not afraid;
מַה־יַּעֲשֶׂה בָשָׂר לִי׃	what can flesh do to me?
[6] כָּל־הַיּוֹם דְּבָרַי יְעַצֵּבוּ	[5] All day long they seek to injure my cause;
עָלַי כָּל־מַחְשְׁבֹתָם לָרָע׃	all their thoughts are against me for evil.
[7] יָגוּרוּ וְרָשָׁתוּ	[6] They stir up strife, they lurk,
הֵמָּה עֲקֵבַי יִשְׁמֹרוּ	they watch my steps.
כַּאֲשֶׁר קִוּוּ נַפְשִׁי׃	As they hoped to have my life,
[8] עַל־אָוֶן פַּלֵּט[170]־לָמוֹ	[7] so repay them for their crime;
בְּאַף עַמִּים הוֹרֵד אֱלֹהִים׃	in wrath cast down the peoples, O God!
[9] נדִי סָפַרְתָּה אָתָּה	[8] You have kept count of my tossings;
שִׂימָה דְמָעָתִי בְנֹאדֶךָ	put my tears in your bottle.
הֲלֹא בְסִפְרָתֶךָ׃	Are they not in your record?
[10] אָז יָשׁוּבוּ אוֹיְבַי אָחוֹר	[9] Then my enemies will retreat
בְּיוֹם אֶקְרָא	in the day when I call.
זֶה־יָדַעְתִּי[171]	This I know,
כִּי־אֱלֹהִים לִי׃	that God is for me.
[11] בֵּאלֹהִים אֲהַלֵּל דָּבָר	[10] In God, whose word I praise,
בַּיהוָה אֲהַלֵּל דָּבָר׃	in the LORD, whose word I praise,
[12] בֵּאלֹהִים בָּטַחְתִּי לֹא אִירָא	[11] in God I trust; I am not afraid.
מַה־יַּעֲשֶׂה אָדָם לִי׃	What can a mere mortal do to me?
[13] עָלַי אֱלֹהִים נְדָרֶיךָ	[12] My vows to you I must perform, O God;
אֲשַׁלֵּם תּוֹדֹת לָךְ׃	I will render thank offerings to you.
[14] כִּי הִצַּלְתָּ נַפְשִׁי מִמָּוֶת	[13] For you have delivered my soul from death,
הֲלֹא רַגְלַי מִדֶּחִי	and my feet from falling,
לְהִתְהַלֵּךְ לִפְנֵי אֱלֹהִים	so that I may walk before God
בְּאוֹר הַחַיִּים׃	in the light of life.

[169] The meaning of מָרוֹם is difficult to assess. NRSV renders it as a vocative in light of אֱלֹהִים in v. 2.
[170] This line is difficult; NRSV reads פָּלַס ("weight out/recompense).
[171] Or "By this I know."

Psalm 56

חָנֵּנִי אֱלֹהִים [2]	111+1	V+Voc	SD1	God
כִּי־שָׁאֲפַנִי אֱנָוֹשׁ	122	[SV]	SD1	God
כָּל־הַיּוֹם לוֹחֵם יְלָחֲצֵנִי׃	134	[PVV]	SD1	God
שָׁאֲפוּ שׁוֹרְרַי כָּל־הַיּוֹם [3]	134	VSP	SD2	God
כִּי־רַבִּים לוֹחֲמִים לִי מָרוֹם׃	134	[SVO]	SD2	God
יוֹם אִירָא [4]	122	PV		God
אֲנִי אֵלֶיךָ אֶבְטָח׃	133	[SOV]		God
בֵּאלֹהִים אֲהַלֵּל דְּבָרוֹ [5]	133	PVO		Overhearer
בֵּאלֹהִים בָּטַחְתִּי לֹא אִירָא	233	PV[AV]	R1	Overhearer
מַה־יַּעֲשֶׂה בָשָׂר לִי׃	124	VSO	R2	Overhearer
כָּל־הַיּוֹם דְּבָרַי יְעַצֵּבוּ [6]	134	POV		Overhearer
עָלַי כָּל־מַחְשְׁבֹתָם לָרָע׃	134	PredSP		Overhearer
יָגוּרוּ וְרָשָׁתוּ [7]	222	VV		Overhearer
הֵמָּה עֲקֵבַי יִשְׁמֹרוּ	133	SVO	SD3	Overhearer
כַּאֲשֶׁר קִוּוּ נַפְשִׁי׃	133	[PVO]	SD3	Overhearer
עַל־אָוֶן פַּלֵּט־לָמוֹ [8]	133	PVO		God
בְּאַף עַמִּים הוֹרֵד אֱלֹהִים׃	133+1	POV+Voc		God
נדי סָפַרְתָּה אָתָּה [9]	133	OVS		God
שִׂימָה דִמְעָתִי בְנֹאדֶךָ	133	VOP		God
הֲלֹא בְסִפְרָתֶךָ׃	122	[PredP]		God
אָז יָשֻׁובוּ אוֹיְבַי אָחוֹר [10]	133	VSA	SD4	Overhearer
בְּיוֹם אֶקְרָא	122	[PV]	SD4	Overhearer
זֶה־יָּדַעְתִּי	122	AV	SD5	Overhearer
כִּי־אֱלֹהִים לִי׃	122	[SPred]	SD5	Overhearer
בֵּאלֹהִים אֲהַלֵּל דָּבָר [11]	133	PVO	M1	Overhearer
בַּיהוָה אֲהַלֵּל דָּבָר׃	133	PVO	M1	Overhearer
בֵּאלֹהִים בָּטַחְתִּי לֹא אִירָא [12]	233	PV[V]	R1	Overhearer
מַה־יַּעֲשֶׂה אָדָם לִי׃	134	VSO	R2	Overhearer
עָלַי אֱלֹהִים נְדָרֶיךָ [13]	122+1	PredS+Voc		God
אֲשַׁלֵּם תּוֹדֹת לָךְ׃	133	VOP		God
כִּי הִצַּלְתָּ נַפְשִׁי מִמָּוֶת [14]	133	VOP		God
הֲלֹא רַגְלַי מִדֶּחִי	123	AOP	SD9	God
לְהִתְהַלֵּךְ לִפְנֵי אֱלֹהִים	123	[VP]	SD9	God
בְּאוֹר הַחַיִּים׃	012	[Phr]	SD9	God

Psalm 56 contains no textual difficulties that affect its surface structure; most of the lines are delineated within the constraints of zero to two clause predicators, one to four constituents, and one to four units per line. The majority of the lines contain one clause predicator, two to three constituents, and two to three units.

1. Clause predicators
    a) zero clause predicator: 1/34 lines
    b) one clause predicator: 27/34 lines
    c) two clause predicators: 6/34 lines
2. Constituents
    a) one constituent: 1/34 lines
    b) two constituents: 12/34 lines
    c) three constituents: 20/34 lines
    d) four constituents: 1/34 lines
3. Units
    a) two units: 9/34 lines
    b) three units: 22/34 lines
    c) four units: 3/34 lines
4. Vocatives: God (three occurrences)

Gross Structure

The poem has a well balance direction of address, alternating between the addressees. I divide this thirty-four-line poem into six paragraphs:

I. First paragraph (vv. 2-3; 5 lines)

1. Summons and petition (v. 2)
2. Reason for petition (v. 3)

II. Second paragraph (vv. 4-5; 5 lines): statements of confidence in God.

III. Third paragraph (vv. 6-7; 5 lines): complaints against enemies.

IV. Fourth paragraph (vv. 8-9; 5 lines)

1. Petition for enemy to be punished (v. 8)
2. Motivation to move God (v. 9)

V. Fifth paragraph (vv. 10-12; 8 lines): statements of confidence in God.

VI. Sixth paragraph (vv. 13-14; 6 lines): praise for prayer is heard.

Psalm 59

[2] הַצִּילֵנִי מֵאֹיְבָי וֵאלֹהָי
מִמִּתְקוֹמְמַי תְּשַׂגְּבֵנִי׃
[3] הַצִּילֵנִי מִפְּעָלֵי אָוֶן
וּמֵאַנְשֵׁי דָמִים הוֹשִׁיעֵנִי׃
[4] כִּי הִנֵּה אָרְבוּ לְנַפְשִׁי
יָגוּרוּ עָלַי עַזִּים
לֹא־פִשְׁעִי וְלֹא־חַטָּאתִי יְהוָה׃
[5] בְּלִי־עָוֹן יְרוּצוּן וְיִכּוֹנָנוּ
עוּרָה לִקְרָאתִי וּרְאֵה׃
[6] וְאַתָּה יְהוָה־אֱלֹהֵי־צְבָאוֹת[172]
אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
הָקִיצָה לִפְקֹד כָּל־הַגּוֹיִם
אַל־תָּחֹן כָּל־בֹּגְדֵי אָוֶן סֶלָה׃
[7] יָשׁוּבוּ לָעֶרֶב
יֶהֱמוּ כַכֶּלֶב
וְיסֹובְבוּ עִיר׃
[8] הִנֵּה־ יַבִּיעוּן בְּפִיהֶם
חֲרָבוֹת בְּשִׂפְתוֹתֵיהֶם
כִּי־מִי שֹׁמֵעַ׃
[9] וְאַתָּה יְהוָה תִּשְׂחַק־לָמוֹ
תִּלְעַג לְכָל־גּוֹיִם׃
[10] עֻזּוֹ אֵלֶיךָ אֶשְׁמֹרָה
כִּי־אֱלֹהִים מִשְׂגַּבִּי[173]׃
[11] אֱלֹהַי חַסְדּוֹ יְקַדְּמֵנִי
אֱלֹהִים יַרְאֵנִי בְשׁוּרָרָי׃
[12] אַל־תַּהַרְגֵם־ פֶּן־יִשְׁכְּחוּ עַמִּי
הֲנִיעֵמוֹ בְחֵילְךָ וְהוֹרִידֵמוֹ
מָגִנֵּנוּ אֲדֹנָי׃
[13] חַטַּאת־פִּימוֹ דְּבַר־שְׂפָתֵימוֹ
וְיִלָּכְדוּ בְגְאוֹנָם
וּמֵאָלָה וּמִכַּחַשׁ יְסֻפָּרוּ׃
[14] כַּלֵּה בְחֵמָה׳
כַּלֵּה וְאֵינֵמוֹ וְיֵדְעוּ
כִּי־אֱלֹהִים מֹשֵׁל בְּיַעֲקֹב[174]
לְאַפְסֵי הָאָרֶץ סֶלָה׃

[1] Deliver me from my enemies, O my God;
protect me from those who rise up against me.
[2] Deliver me from those who work evil;
from the bloodthirsty save me.
[3] Even now they lie in wait for my life;
the mighty stir up strife against me.
For no transgression or sin of mine, O LORD,
[4] for no fault of mine, they run and make ready.
Rouse yourself, come to my help and see!
[5] You, LORD God of hosts, are God of Israel.

Awake to punish all the nations;
spare none of those who treacherously plot evil. *Selah*
[6] Each evening they come back,
howling like dogs
and prowling about the city.
[7] There they are, bellowing with their mouths,
with sharp words on their lips—
for "Who," they think, "will hear us?"
[8] But you laugh at them, O LORD;
you hold all the nations in derision.
[9] O my strength, I will watch for you;
for you, O God, are my fortress.
[10] My God in his steadfast love will meet me;
my God will let me look in triumph on my enemies.
[11] Do not kill them, or my people may forget;
make them totter by your power, and bring them down,
O Lord, our shield.
[12] For the sin of their mouths, the words of their lips,
let them be trapped in their pride.
For the cursing and lies that they utter,
[13] consume them in wrath;
consume them until they are no more.
Then it will be known to the ends of the earth
that God rules over Jacob.

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[172] Read as a single line "You, LORD of hosts, are God of Israel." אֱלֹהֵי is omitted in favor of the divine name יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת.

[173] I read this line as a nominal verbless clause "for God is my fortress," in light of the following lines. The same for v.18b.

[174] Lit. "Then it will be known that God rules over Jacob, to the ends of the earth."

15 וְיָשֻׁבוּ לָעֶרֶב
יֶהֱמוּ כַכָּלֶב
וְיסֹובְבוּ עִיר׃
16 הֵמָּה יְנוּעֻון לֶאֱכֹל
אִם־לֹא יִשְׂבְּעוּ וַיָּלִינוּ׃

14 Each evening they come back,
howling like dogs
and prowling about the city.
15 They roam about for food,
and growl if they do not get their fill.

17 וַאֲנִי אָשִׁיר עֻזֶּךָ
וַאֲרַנֵּן לַבֹּקֶר חַסְדֶּךָ
כִּי־הָיִיתָ מִשְׂגָּב לִי
וּמָנוֹס בְּיוֹם צַר־לִי׃
18 עֻזִּי אֵלֶיךָ אֲזַמֵּרָה
כִּי־אֱלֹהִים מִשְׂגַּבִּי
אֱלֹהֵי חַסְדִּי׃

16 But I will sing of your might;
I will sing aloud of your steadfast love in the morning.
For you have been a fortress for me
and a refuge in the day of my distress.
17 O my strength, I will sing praises to you,
for you, O God, are my fortress,
the God who shows me steadfast love.

Psalm 59

2 הַצִּילֵנִי מֵאֹיְבַי אֱלֹהָי	122+1	VP+Voc	SI1	God
מִמִּתְקוֹמְמַי תְּשַׂגְּבֵנִי׃	122	PV	SI1	God
3 הַצִּילֵנִי מִפֹּעֲלֵי אָוֶן	123	VPhr	SD1; SI2	God
וּמֵאַנְשֵׁי דָמִים הוֹשִׁיעֵנִי׃	123	PhrV	SD1; SI2	God
4 כִּי הִנֵּה אָרְבוּ לְנַפְשִׁי	123	[VO]	SD1	God
יָגוּרוּ עָלַי עַזִּים	133	VOS		God
לֹא־פִשְׁעִי וְלֹא־חַטָּאתִי יְהוָה׃	022+1	[PhrPhr+Voc]		God
5 בְּלִי־עָוֹן יְרוּצוּן וְיִכּוֹנָנוּ	234	PhrVV		God
עוּרָה לִקְרָאתִי וּרְאֵה׃	233	VPV		God
6 וְאַתָּה יְהוָה־אֱלֹהִים צְבָאוֹת	123+1	SPred+Voc		God
אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל				God
הָקִיצָה לִפְקֹד כָּל־הַגּוֹיִם	134	VVO		God
אַל־תָּחֹן כָּל־בֹּגְדֵי אָוֶן סֶלָה׃	124	VPhr		God
7 יָשׁוּבוּ לָעֶרֶב	122	VP	M3; R1	God
יֶהֱמוּ כַכָּלֶב	122	[VP]	M3; R2	God
וְיסֹובְבוּ עִיר׃	122	[VO]	R3	God
8 הִנֵּה־ו יַבִּיעוּן בְּפִיהֶם	123	VP		God
חֲרָבוֹת בִּשְׂפָתוֹתֵיהֶם	122	SPred		God
כִּי־מִי שֹׁמֵעַ׃	122	[SV]		God
9 וְאַתָּה יְהוָה תִּשְׂחַק־לָמוֹ	133+1	SVO+Voc		God
תִּלְעַג לְכָל־גּוֹיִם׃	123	VP		God
10 עֻזּוֹ אֵלֶיךָ אֶשְׁמָרָה	133	PPV		Overhearers
כִּי־אֱלֹהִים מִשְׂגַּבִּי׃	122	[SPred]		Overhearers
11 אֱלֹהֵי חַסְדּוֹ יְקַדְּמֵנִי	123	SV		Overhearers
אֱלֹהִים יַרְאֵנִי בְשׁוּרָרָי׃	133	SVP		Overhearers
12 אַל־תַּהַרְגֵם־ו פֶּן־יִשְׁכְּחוּ עַמִּי	133	V[VS]		God
הֲנִיעֵמוֹ בְחֵילְךָ וְהוֹרִידֵמוֹ	133	VPV		God
מָגִנֵּנוּ אֲדֹנָי׃	012	Voc		God
13 חַטַּאת־פִּימוֹ דְּבַר־שְׂפָתֵימוֹ	024	[PhrPhr]		God
וְיִלָּכְדוּ בְגְאוֹנָם	122	VP		God
וּמֵאָלָה וּמִכַּחַשׁ יְסֻפָּרוּ׃	133	[PPV]		God
14 כַּלֵּה בְחֵמָה׀	122	VP		God
כַּלֵּה וְאֵינֵמוֹ וְיֵדְעוּ	133	VPV		God
כִּי־אֱלֹהִים מֹשֵׁל בְּיַעֲקֹב	133	[SVO]	SD2	Overhearers
לְאַפְסֵי הָאָרֶץ סֶלָה׃	012	[Phr]	SD2	Overhearers

וְיָשֻׁובוּ לָעֶרֶב [15]	122	VP	R1	God
יְהֱמֻוּ כַכָּלֶב	122	VP	R2	God
וְיסֹובְבוּ עִיר׃	122	VO	R3	God
הֵמָּה יְנִועֻון לֶאֱכָל [16]	133	SV[V]		God
אִם־לֹא יִשְׂבָּעוּ וַיָּלִינוּ׃	122	V[V]		God
וַאֲנִי אָשִׁיר עֻזֶּךָ [17]	133	SVO		God
וַאֲרַנֵּן לַבֹּקֶר חַסְדֶּךָ	133	VPO	SD9	God
כִּי־הָיִיתָ מִשְׂגָּב לִי	123	[VP]	SD9	God
וּמָנֹוס בְּיֹום צַר־לִי׃	024	[PPhr]	SD9	God
עֻזִּי אֵלֶיךָ אֲזַמֵּרָה [18]	122+1	OV+Voc	SD10	God
כִּי־אֱלֹהִים מִשְׂגַּבִּי	122	[SPred]	SD10	Overhearers
אֱלֹהֵי חַסְדִּי׃	012	[Phr]	SD10	Overhearers

Psalm 59 contains no textual difficulties that affect its surface structure; most of the lines are delineated within the constraints of zero to two clause predicators, one to four constituents, and two to five units per line. The majority of the lines contain one clause predicator, two to three constituents, and two to three units.

1. Clause predicators
    a) zero clause predicator: 4/46 lines
    b) one clause predicator: 37/46 lines
    c) two clause predicators: 5/46 lines
2. Constituents
    a) one constituent: 2/46 lines
    b) two constituents: 27/46 lines
    c) three constituent: 16/46 lines
    d) four constituent: 1/46 lines
3. Units
    a) two units: 18/46 lines
    b) three units: 22/46 lines
    c) four units: 5/46 lines
    d) five units: 1/46
4. Vocatives:
    a) God: one occurrence
    b) Yhwh: two occurrences
    c) Lord: one occurrence

d) Yhwh God of hosts: one occurrence

Gross Structure: I divide this forty-six-line poem into seven paragraphs:

I. First paragraph (vv. 2-4; 7 lines)

a) Summons and petition (v. 2)

b) Reasons for petition (vv. 3-4)

II. Second paragraph (vv. 5-6; 5 lines): petition and motivation.

III. Third paragraph (vv. 7-8; 6 lines)

1. Refrain: report of the enemies' activities (v. 7)

2. Complaints against enemies (v. 8)

IV. Fourth paragraph (vv. 9-12; 9 lines)

1. Statement of confidence (vv. 9-11)

2. Petition for God to punish the enemies (v. 12)

V. Fifth paragraph (vv. 13-14; 7 lines)

1. Complaints against the enemies (v. 13)

2. Petition for God to punish the enemies (v. 14)

VI. Sixth paragraph (vv. 15-16; 5 lines)

1. Refrain: report of the enemies' activities (v. 15)

2. Complaints against enemies (v. 16)

VII. Seventh paragraph (vv. 17-18; 7 lines): praise

Psalm 61

[2] שִׁמְעָה אֱלֹהִים רִנָּתִי	[1] Hear my cry, O God;
הַקְשִׁיבָה תְּפִלָּתִי:	listen to my prayer.
[3] מִקְצֵה הָאָרֶץ	[2] From the end of the earth
אֵלֶיךָ אֶקְרָא בַּעֲטֹף לִבִּי	I call to you when my heart is faint.
בְּצוּר־יָרוּם מִמֶּנִּי תַנְחֵנִי[175]:	Lead me to the rock that is higher than I;
[4] כִּי־הָיִיתָ מַחְסֶה לִי	[3] for you are my refuge,
מִגְדַּל־עֹז מִפְּנֵי אוֹיֵב:	a strong tower against the enemy.
[5] אָגוּרָה בְאָהָלְךָ עוֹלָמִים	[4] Let me abide in your tent forever,
אֶחֱסֶה בְסֵתֶר כְּנָפֶיךָ סֶלָה:	find refuge under the shelter of your wings. *Selah*
[6] כִּי־אַתָּה אֱלֹהִים שָׁמַעְתָּ לִנְדָרָי	[5] For you, O God, have heard my vows;
נָתַתָּ יְרֻשַּׁת יִרְאֵי שְׁמֶךָ:	you have given me the heritage of those who fear your name.
[7] יָמִים עַל־יְמֵי־מֶלֶךְ תּוֹסִיף	[6] Prolong the life of the king;
שְׁנוֹתָיו כְּמוֹ־דֹר וָדֹר:	may his years endure to all generations!
[8] יֵשֵׁב עוֹלָם לִפְנֵי אֱלֹהִים	[7] May he be enthroned forever before God;
חֶסֶד וֶאֱמֶת מַן יְנַצְּרֵהוּ:	appoint steadfast love and faithfulness to watch over him!
[9] כֵּן אֲזַמְּרָה שִׁמְךָ לָעַד	[8] So I will always sing praises to your name,
לְשַׁלְּמִי נְדָרַי יוֹם ו יוֹם:	as I pay my vows day after day.

[175] Or in the jussive sense. “May you lead me,”

Psalm 61

[2] שִׁמְעָה אֱלֹהִים רִנָּתִי	122+1	VO+Voc	M1	The entire psalm is
הַקְשִׁיבָה תְּפִלָּתִי:	122	VO	M1	addressed to the
[3] מִקְצֵה הָאָרֶץ	012	[Phr]	SD1	Deity
אֵלֶיךָ אֶקְרָא בַּעֲטֹף לִבִּי	244	PV[Phr]	SD1	
בְּצוּר־יָרוּם מִמֶּנִּי תַנְחֵנִי:	124	PhrV	SD2	
[4] כִּי־הָיִיתָ מַחְסֶה לִי	123	[VO]	SD2; G1	
מִגְדַּל־עֹז מִפְּנֵי אוֹיֵב:	024	[Phr]	SD2; G1	
[5] אָגוּרָה בְאָהָלְךָ עוֹלָמִים	133	VP	M2	
אֶחֱסֶה בְסֵתֶר כְּנָפֶיךָ סֶלָה:	123	VP	M2	
[6] כִּי־אַתָּה אֱלֹהִים שָׁמַעְתָּ לִנְדָרָי	133+1	SVO+Voc		
נָתַתָּ יְרֻשַּׁת יִרְאֵי שְׁמֶךָ:	124	VO		
[7] יָמִים עַל־יְמֵי־מֶלֶךְ תּוֹסִיף	134	OPV		
שְׁנוֹתָיו כְּמוֹ־דֹר וָדֹר:	124	SPred		
[8] יֵשֵׁב עוֹלָם לִפְנֵי אֱלֹהִים	134	VAP		
חֶסֶד וֶאֱמֶת מַן יְנַצְּרֵהוּ:	234	OV[V]		
[9] כֵּן אֲזַמְּרָה שִׁמְךָ לָעַד	133	VOP	SD3; M3	
לְשַׁלְּמִי נְדָרַי יוֹם יוֹם:	134	[VOP]	SD3; M3	

Psalm 61 contains no textual difficulties that affect its surface structure; most of the lines are delineated within the constraints of zero to two clause predicators, one to four constituents, and one to four units per line. The majority of the lines contain one clause predicator, two to three constituents, and two to three units.

1. Clause predicators
    a) zero clause predicator: 2/17 lines
    b) one clause predicator: 11/17 lines
    c) two clause predicators: 4/17 lines
2. Constituents
    a) one constituent: 1/17 lines
    b) two constituents: 7/17 lines
    c) three constituents: 6/17 lines
    d) four constituents: 3/17 lines
3. Units
    a) two units: 2/17 lines
    b) three units: 4/17 lines
    c) four units: 11/17 lines
4. Vocatives: God (two occurrences)

Gross Structure: I divide this seventeen-line poem into two main paragraphs:

I. First paragraph (vv. 2-5; 9 lines): summons and petition for help and protection

II. Second main paragraph (vv. 6-9; 8 lines): petition for the king and promise of praise.

Psalm 64

[2] שְׁמַע־אֱלֹהִים קוֹלִי בְשִׂיחִי
מִפַּחַד אוֹיֵב תִּצֹּר חַיָּי׃
[3] תַּסְתִּירֵנִי מִסּוֹד מְרֵעִים
מֵרִגְשַׁת פֹּעֲלֵי אָוֶן׃
[4] אֲשֶׁר שָׁנְנוּ כַחֶרֶב לְשׁוֹנָם
דָּרְכוּ חִצָּם דָּבָר מָר׃
[5] לִירוֹת בַּמִּסְתָּרִים תָּם
פִּתְאֹם יֹרֶהוּ וְלֹא יִירָאוּ׃
[6] יְחַזְּקוּ־לָמוֹ דָּבָר רָע
יְסַפְּרוּ לִטְמֹן מוֹקְשִׁים
אָמְרוּ[176]
מִי יִרְאֶה־לָּמוֹ[177]׃
[7] יַחְפְּשׂוּ־עוֹלֹת[178]
תַּמְנוּ חֵפֶשׂ מְחֻפָּשׂ
וְקֶרֶב אִישׁ וְלֵב עָמֹק׃
[8] וַיֹּרֵם אֱלֹהִים חֵץ פִּתְאֹום
הָיוּ מַכּוֹתָם׃
[9] וַיַּכְשִׁילוּהוּ עָלֵימוֹ לְשׁוֹנָם[179]
יִתְנֹדְדוּ כָּל־רֹאֵה בָם׃
[10] וַיִּירְאוּ כָּל־אָדָם
וַיַּגִּידוּ פֹּעַל אֱלֹהִים
וּמַעֲשֵׂהוּ הִשְׂכִּילוּ׃
[11] יִשְׂמַח צַדִּיק בַּיהוָה
וְחָסָה בּוֹ
וְיִתְהַלְלוּ כָּל־יִשְׁרֵי־לֵב׃

[1] Hear my voice, O God, in my complaint;
preserve my life from the dread enemy.
[2] Hide me from the secret plots of the wicked,
from the scheming of evildoers,
[3] who whet their tongues like swords,
who aim bitter words like arrows,
[4] shooting from ambush at the blameless;
they shoot suddenly and without fear.
[5] They hold fast to their evil purpose;
they talk of laying snares secretly,
thinking,
"Who can see us?
[6] Who can search out our crimes?
We have thought out a cunningly conceived plot."
For the human heart and mind are deep.
[7] But God will shoot his arrow at them;
they will be wounded suddenly.
[8] Because of their tongue he will bring them to ruin;
all who see them will shake with horror.
[9] Then everyone will fear;
they will tell what God has brought about,
and ponder what he has done.
[10] Let the righteous rejoice in the LORD
and take refuge in him.
Let all the upright in heart glory.

[176] Lit. "And they say;" this quotation marker is interpreted as prose.
[177] Lit. "them."
[178] Or "They search out crimes."
[179] Or "They will bring him to ruin, their tongue being against them"

Psalm 64

[2] שְׁמַע־אֱלֹהִים קוֹלִי בְשִׂיחִי	123+1	VO+Voc		God
מִפַּחַד אוֹיֵב תִּצֹּר חַיָּי:	133	PVO		God
[3] תַּסְתִּירֵנִי מִסּוֹד מְרֵעִים	123	VPhr	SD1;G1	God
מֵרִגְשַׁת פֹּעֲלֵי אָוֶן:	013	[Phr]	SD1;G1	God
[4] אֲשֶׁר שָׁנְנוּ כַחֶרֶב לְשׁוֹנָם	134	[VPO]	SD1; M1	God
דָּרְכוּ חִצָּם דָּבָר מָר:	134	[VPO]	SD1; M1	God
[5] לִירוֹת בַּמִּסְתָּרִים תָּם	133	[VPO]	SD1; M1	God
פִּתְאֹם יֹרֻהוּ וְלֹא יִירָאוּ:	234	AVV		God
[6] יְחַזְּקוּ־לָמוֹ דָּבָר רָע	134	VOP		God
יְסַפְּרוּ לִטְמֹן מוֹקְשִׁים	133	VVO		God
אָמְרוּ		prose		
מִי יִרְאֶה־לָּמוֹ:	133	[SVO]		God
[7] יַחְפְּשׂוּ־עוֹלֹת	122	VO		God
תַּמְנוּ חֵפֶשׂ מְחֻפָּשׂ	123	[VO]		God
וְקֶרֶב אִישׁ וְלֵב עָמֹק:	124	SPred		God
[8] וַיֹּרֵם אֱלֹהִים חֵץ פִּתְאֹום	144	VSOA		Overhearers
הָיוּ מַכּוֹתָם:	122	VP		Overhearers
[9] וַיַּכְשִׁילוּהוּ עָלֵימוֹ לְשׁוֹנָם	133	VPO		Overhearers
יִתְנֹדְדוּ כָּל־רֹאֵה בָם:	123	VS		Overhearers
[10] וַיִּירְאוּ כָּל־אָדָם	122	VS		Overhearers
וַיַּגִּידוּ פֹּעַל אֱלֹהִים	123	VO		Overhearers
וּמַעֲשֵׂהוּ הִשְׂכִּילוּ:	122	OV		Overhearers
[11] יִשְׂמַח צַדִּיק בַּיהוָה	133	VSP		Overhearers
וְחָסָה בוֹ	122	[VP]		Overhearers
וְיִתְהַלְלוּ כָּל־יִשְׁרֵי־לֵב:	123	VS		Overhearers

Line Types: all the lines are delineated within the constraints of zero to two clause predicators, one to four constituents, and two to four units per line. The majority of the lines contain one clause predicator, two to three constituents, and two to three units.

1. Clause predicators
    a) zero clause predicator: 1/24 lines
    b) one clause predicator: 20/24 lines
    c) two clause predicators: 3/24 lines
2. Constituents:
    a) one constituent: 1/24 lines
    b) two constituents: 10/24 lines
    c) three constituents: 12/24 lines
    d) four constituents: 1/24 lines
3. Units
    a) two units: 5/24 lines
    b) three units: 12/24 lines
    c) four units: 7/24 lines
4. Vocatives: God (one occurrence)

Gross Structure: I divide this twenty-four-line poem into four paragraphs:

I. First paragraph (vv. 2-3; 4 lines): summons and petition to seek protection.

II. Second paragraph (vv. 4-7; 10 lines): complaint against the enemies.

III. Third paragraph (vv. 8-9; 4 lines): God will punish the enemies.

IV. Fourth paragraph (vv. 10-11; 6 lines): praise.

Psalm 69

[2] הוֹשִׁיעֵנִי אֱלֹהִים
כִּי בָאוּ מַיִם עַד־נָפֶשׁ[180]:
[3] טָבַעְתִּי בִּיוֵן מְצוּלָה
וְאֵין מָעֳמָד
בָּאתִי בְמַעֲמַקֵּי־מָיִם
וְשִׁבֹּלֶת שְׁטָפָתְנִי:
[4] יָגַעְתִּי בְקָרְאִי נִחַר גְּרוֹנִי
כָּלוּ עֵינַי מְיַחֵל לֵאלֹהָי:
[5] רַבּוּ מִשַּׂעֲרוֹת רֹאשִׁי שֹׂנְאַי חִנָּם
עָצְמוּ מַצְמִיתַי אֹיְבַי שֶׁקֶר
אֲשֶׁר לֹא־גָזָלְתִּי אָז אָשִׁיב:
[6] אֱלֹהִים אַתָּה יָדַעְתָּ לְאִוַּלְתִּי
וְאַשְׁמוֹתַי מִמְּךָ לֹא־נִכְחָדוּ:
[7] אַל־יֵבֹשׁוּ בְיִ קֹוֶיךָ
אֲדֹנָי יְהוִֹה צְבָאוֹת
אַל־יִכָּלְמוּ בִי מְבַקְשֶׁיךָ
אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:
[8] כִּי־עָלֶיךָ נָשָׂאתִי חֶרְפָּה
כִּסְּתָה כְלִמָּה פָנָי:
[9] מוּזָר הָיִיתִי לְאֶחָי
וְנָכְרִי לִבְנֵי אִמִּי:
[10] כִּי־קִנְאַת בֵּיתְךָ אֲכָלָתְנִי
וְחֶרְפּוֹת חוֹרְפֶיךָ נָפְלוּ עָלָי:
[11] וָאֶבְכֶּה בַצּוֹם נַפְשִׁי[181]
וַתְּהִי לַחֲרָפוֹת לִי:
[12] וָאֶתְּנָה לְבוּשִׁי שָׂק
וָאֱהִי לָהֶם לְמָשָׁל:
[13] יָשִׂיחוּ בִי יֹשְׁבֵי שָׁעַר
וְנִגְינוֹת שׁוֹתֵי שֵׁכָר[182]:

[1] Save me, O God,
for the waters have come up to my neck.
[2] I sink in deep mire,
where there is no foothold;
I have come into deep waters,
and the flood sweeps over me.
[3] I am weary with my crying; my throat is parched.
My eyes grow dim with waiting for my God.
[4] More in number than the hairs of my head
are those who hate me without cause;
many are those who would destroy me,
my enemies who accuse me falsely.
What I did not steal must I now restore?
[5] O God, you know my folly;
the wrongs I have done are not hidden from you.
[6] Do not let those who hope in you be put to shame
because of me,
O Lord GOD of hosts;
do not let those who seek you be dishonored because of
me,
O God of Israel.
[7] It is for your sake that I have borne reproach,
that shame has covered my face.
[8] I have become a stranger to my kindred,
an alien to my mother's children.
[9] It is zeal for your house that has consumed me;
the insults of those who insult you have fallen on me.
[10] When I humbled my soul with fasting,
they insulted me for doing so.
[11] When I made sackcloth my clothing,
I became a byword to them.
[12] I am the subject of gossip for those who sit in the gate,
and the drunkards make songs about me.

[180] Or "For the waters have came upon me."
[181] Or "I wept, with fasting my soul," or "I made my soul mourn with fasting."
[182] Lit. "And the songs of the drunkards."

14 וַאֲנִי תְפִלָּתִי־לְךָ[183] יְהוָה עֵת רָצוֹן	13 But as for me, my prayer is to you, O LORD. At an acceptable time, O God,
אֱלֹהִים בְּרָב־חַסְדֶּךָ	in the abundance of your steadfast love, answer me.
עֲנֵנִי בֶּאֱמֶת יִשְׁעֶךָ:	With your faithful help [14] rescue me [*sic*]
15 הַצִּילֵנִי מִטִּיט וְאַל־אֶטְבָּעָה	from sinking in the mire;
אִנָּצְלָה מִשֹּׂנְאַי וּמִמַּעֲמַקֵּי־מָיִם[183]:	let me be delivered from my enemies and from the deep waters.
16 אַל־תִּשְׁטְפֵנִי שִׁבֹּלֶת מַיִם[184]	15 Do not let the flood sweep over me,
וְאַל־תִּבְלָעֵנִי מְצוּלָה	or the deep swallow me up,
וְאַל־תֶּאְטַר־עָלַי בְּאֵר פִּיהָ:	or the Pit close its mouth over me.
17 עֲנֵנִי יְהוָה כִּי־טוֹב חַסְדֶּךָ	16 Answer me, O LORD, for your steadfast love is good;
כְּרֹב רַחֲמֶיךָ פְּנֵה אֵלָי:	according to your abundant mercy, turn to me.
18 וְאַל־תַּסְתֵּר פָּנֶיךָ מֵעַבְדֶּךָ	17 Do not hide your face from your servant,
כִּי־צַר־לִי מַהֵר עֲנֵנִי:	for I am in distress—make haste to answer me.
19 קָרְבָה אֶל־נַפְשִׁי גְאָלָהּ	18 Draw near to me, redeem me,
לְמַעַן אֹיְבַי פְּדֵנִי:	set me free because of my enemies.
20 אַתָּה יָדַעְתָּ חֶרְפָּתִי וּבָשְׁתִּי וּכְלִמָּתִי[185]	19 You know the insults I receive, and my shame and dishonor;
נֶגְדְּךָ כָּל־צוֹרְרָי:	my foes are all known to you.
21 חֶרְפָּה שִׁבְּרָה לִבִּי וָאָנוּשָׁה	20 Insults have broken my heart, so that I am in despair.
וָאֲקַוֶּה לָנוּד וָאַיִן	I looked for pity, but there was none;
וְלַמְנַחֲמִים וְלֹא מָצָאתִי:	and for comforters, but I found none.
22 וַיִּתְּנוּ בְּבָרוּתִי רֹאשׁ	21 They gave me poison for food,
וְלִצְמָאִי יַשְׁקוּנִי חֹמֶץ:	and for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.
23 יְהִי־שֻׁלְחָנָם לִפְנֵיהֶם לְפָח וְלִשְׁלוֹמִים	22 Let their table be a trap for them,
לְמוֹקֵשׁ:	a snare for their allies.
24 תֶּחְשַׁכְנָה עֵינֵיהֶם מֵרְאוֹת	23 Let their eyes be darkened so that they cannot see,
וּמָתְנֵיהֶם תָּמִיד הַמְעַד:	and make their loins tremble continually.
25 שְׁפָךְ־עֲלֵיהֶם זַעְמֶךָ	24 Pour out your indignation upon them,
וַחֲרוֹן אַפְּךָ יַשִּׂיגֵם:	and let your burning anger overtake them.

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[183] NRSV's lineation and translation for vv. 14-15 do not agree with the BHS and the MT. My lineation of these six lines conform to the MT's disjunctive accents and thus agree with the NASB below:

[14 (13 NASB)] But as for me, my prayer is to You, O LORD,
at an acceptable time, O God,
in the greatness of Your lovingkindness,
[15 (14 NASB)] Answer me with Your saving truth.
Deliver me from the mire and do not let me sink;
May I be delivered from my foes and from the deep waters.

[184] Or in the jussive sense:
May the flood not sweep over me;
nor the deep swallow me up.

[185] NRSV unnessessarily scans v. 15b into two lines. I retain the MT's break: "You know my reproach and my shame and my dishonor."

26 תְּהִי־טִירָתָם נְשַׁמָּה
בְּאָהֳלֵיהֶם אַל־יִהְיֶה יוֹשֵׁב:
27 כִּי־אַתָּה אֲשֶׁר־הִכִּיתָ רָדָפוּ
וְאֶל־מַכְאוֹב חֲלָלֶיךָ יְסַפֵּרוּ:[186]
28 תְּנָה־עָוֹן עַל־עֲוֹנָם
וְאַל־יָבֹאוּ בְּצִדְקָתֶךָ:
29 יִמָּחוּ מִסֵּפֶר חַיִּים
וְעִם צַדִּיקִים אַל־יִכָּתֵבוּ[187]:
30 וַאֲנִי עָנִי וְכוֹאֵב
יְשׁוּעָתְךָ אֱלֹהִים תְּשַׂגְּבֵנִי[188187]:
31 אֲהַלְלָה שֵׁם־אֱלֹהִים בְּשִׁיר
וַאֲגַדְּלֶנּוּ בְתוֹדָה:
32 וְתִיטַב לַיהוָה מִשּׁוֹר
פָּר מַקְרִן מַפְרִיס:
33 רָאוּ עֲנָוִים יִשְׂמָחוּ
דֹּרְשֵׁי אֱלֹהִים וִיחִי לְבַבְכֶם:
34 כִּי־שֹׁמֵעַ אֶל־אֶבְיוֹנִים יְהוָה
וְאֶת־אֲסִירָיו לֹא בָזָה:
35 יְהַלְלוּהוּ שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ
יַמִּים וְכָל־רֹמֵשׂ בָּם:
36 כִּי אֱלֹהִים ׀ יוֹשִׁיעַ צִיּוֹן
וְיִבְנֶה עָרֵי יְהוּדָה
וְיָשְׁבוּ שָׁם וִירֵשׁוּהָ:
37 וְזֶרַע עֲבָדָיו יִנְחָלוּהָ
וְאֹהֲבֵי שְׁמוֹ יִשְׁכְּנוּ־בָהּ:

25 May their camp be a desolation;
let no one live in their tents.
26 For they persecute those whom you have struck down,
and those whom you have wounded, they attack still more.
27 Add guilt to their guilt;
may they have no acquittal from you.
28 Let them be blotted out of the book of the living;
let them not be enrolled among the righteous.
29 But I am lowly and in pain;
let your salvation, O God, protect me.
30 I will praise the name of God with a song;
I will magnify him with thanksgiving.
31 This will please the LORD more than an ox
or a bull with horns and hoofs.
32 Let the oppressed see it and be glad;
you who seek God, let your hearts revive.
33 For the LORD hears the needy,
and does not despise his own that are in bonds.
34 Let heaven and earth praise him,
the seas and everything that moves in them.
35 For God will save Zion
and rebuild the cities of Judah;
and his servants shall live there and possess it;
36 the children of his servants shall inherit it,
and those who love his name shall live in it.

[186] Lit. "And they tell of the pain of those whom you have wounded."
[187] Lit. "And may they not come into your righteousness."
[188] Or "Let your salvation set me securely on high."

Psalm 69

[2] הוֹשִׁיעֵנִי אֱלֹהִים	111+1	V+Voc	SD1	God
כִּי בָאוּ מַיִם עַד־נָפֶשׁ׃	133	[VSP]	SD1	God
[3] טָבַעְתִּי בִּיוֵן מְצוּלָה	123	VP	SD2	God
וְאֵין מָעָמָד	012	[Phr]	SD2	God
בָּאתִי בְמַעֲמַקֵּי־מָיִם	123	VP		God
וְשִׁבֹּלֶת שְׁטָפָתְנִי׃	122	SV		God
[4] יָגַעְתִּי בְקָרְאִי נִחַר גְּרוֹנִי	244	VP[VS]	SI1	God
כָּלוּ עֵינַי מְיַחֵל לֵאלֹהָי׃	244	VS[VP]	SI1	God
[5] רַבּוּ מִשַּׂעֲרוֹת רֹאשִׁי שֹׂנְאַי חִנָּם	135	VPS		God
עָצְמוּ מַצְמִיתַי אֹיְבַי שֶׁקֶר	134	VS[Phr]		God
אֲשֶׁר לֹא־גָזָלְתִּי אָז אָשִׁיב׃	234	OV[V]		God
[6] אֱלֹהִים אַתָּה יָדַעְתָּ לְאִוַּלְתִּי	133+1	SVO+Voc		God
וְאַשְׁמוֹתַי מִמְּךָ לֹא־נִכְחָדוּ׃	133	SPV		God
[7] אַל־יֵבֹשׁוּ בְיִן קֹוֶיךָ	133	VPS	M3	God
אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה צְבָאוֹת	113	Voc	M4	God
אַל־יִכָּלְמוּ בִי מְבַקְשֶׁיךָ	133	VPS	M3	God
אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל׃	112	Voc	M4	God
[8] כִּי־עָלֶיךָ נָשָׂאתִי חֶרְפָּה	133	PVO		God
כִּסְּתָה כְלִמָּה פָנָי׃	133	SVO		God
[9] מוּזָר הָיִיתִי לְאֶחָי	133	OVP	SD4; G1	God
וְנָכְרִי לִבְנֵי אִמִּי׃	122	[OP]	SD4; G1	God
[10] כִּי־קִנְאַת בֵּיתְךָ אֲכָלָתְנִי	123	[SV]	SD4	God
וְחֶרְפּוֹת חוֹרְפֶיךָ נָפְלוּ עָלָי׃	134	[SVO]	SD4	God
[11] וָאֶבְכֶּה בַצּוֹם נַפְשִׁי	123	VPhr		God
וַתְּהִי לַחֲרָפוֹת לִי׃	133	VPO	M6	God
[12] וָאֶתְּנָה לְבוּשִׁי שָׂק	133	VPO	M6	God
וָאֱהִי לָהֶם לְמָשָׁל׃	133	VPO	M6	God
[13] יָשִׂיחוּ בִי יֹשְׁבֵי שָׁעַר	134	VOPhr		God
וּנְגִינוֹת שׁוֹתֵי שֵׁכָר׃	013	Phr		God
[14] וַאֲנִי תְפִלָּתִי־לְךָ	133	SVO	SD5	God
יְהוָה עֵת רָצוֹן	012+1	[Phr+Voc]	SD5	God
אֱלֹהִים בְּרָב־חַסְדֶּךָ	012+1	[Phr+Voc]	SD6	God
עֲנֵנִי בֶּאֱמֶת יִשְׁעֶךָ׃	123	VPhr	SD6	God
[15] הַצִּילֵנִי מִטִּיט וְאַל־אֶטְבָּעָה	233	VP[V]		God
אִנָּצְלָה מִשֹּׂנְאַי וּמִמַּעֲמַקֵּי־מָיִם׃	134	VP[Phr]		God
[16] אַל־תִּשְׁטְפֵנִי שִׁבֹּלֶת מַיִם	123	VPhr		God
וְאַל־תִּבְלָעֵנִי מְצוּלָה	122	VS		God
וְאַל־תֶּאְטַר־עָלַי בְּאֵר פִּיהָ׃	144	VPSO		God
[17] עֲנֵנִי יְהוָה כִּי־טוֹב חַסְדֶּךָ	133+1	V[PredS]+Voc		God
כְּרֹב רַחֲמֶיךָ פְּנֵה אֵלָי׃	134	PhrVO		God

וְאַל־תַּסְתֵּר פָּנֶיךָ מֵעַבְדֶּךָ [18]	133	VOP		God
כִּי־צַר־לִי מַהֵר עֲנֵנִי׃	244	SPred[AV]		God
קָרְבָה אֶל־נַפְשִׁי גְּאָלָהּ [19]	233	VP[V]		God
לְמַעַן אֹיְבַי פְּדֵנִי׃	123	PhrV		God
אַתָּה יָדַעְתָּ חֶרְפָּתִי וּבָשְׁתִּי וּכְלִמָּתִי [20]	135	SVO		God
נֶגְדְּךָ כָּל־צוֹרְרָי׃	123	PredS		God
חֶרְפָּה֩ שָׁבְרָה לִבִּי וָאָנ֨וּשָׁה [21]	234	SVO[V]		God
וָאֲקַוֶּה לָנ֨וּד וָאַ֤יִן	133	VPA		God
וְלַמְנַחֲמִים וְלֹא מָצָאתִי׃	122	PV		God
וַיִּתְּנ֣וּ בְבָרוּתִ֣י רֹאשׁ [22]	133	VPO	M8	God
וְלִצְמָאִ֣י יַשְׁקוּנִ֣י חֹ֑מֶץ	133	PVO	M8	God
יְהִי־שֻׁלְחָנָם לִפְנֵיהֶם לְפָ֫ח [23]	144	VSPO	SD7	God
וְלִשְׁלוֹמִים לְמוֹקֵשׁ׃	022	SO	SD7	God
תֶּחְשַׁכְנָה עֵינֵיהֶם מֵרְאוֹת [24]	133	VSP		God
וּמָתְנֵיהֶם תָּמִיד הַמְעַד׃	133	SAV		God
שְׁפָךְ־עֲלֵיהֶם זַעְמֶךָ [25]	133	OPV		God
וַחֲרוֹן אַפְּךָ יַשִּׂיגֵם׃	123	SV		God
תְּהִי־טִירָתָם נְשַׁמָּה [26]	133	VSO		God
בְּאָהֳלֵיהֶם אַל־יְהִי יֹשֵׁב׃	133	PVS		God
כִּי־אַתָּה אֲשֶׁר־הִכִּיתָ רָדָפוּ [27]	234	SO[VV]		God
וְאֶל־מַכְאוֹב חֲלָלֶיךָ יְסַפֵּרוּ׃	123	PhrV		God
תְּנָה־עָוֹן עַל־עֲוֹנָם [28]	133	[VOP]		God
וְאַל־יָבֹאוּ בְּצִדְקָתֶךָ׃	122	VP		God
יִמָּחוּ מִסֵּפֶר חַיִּים [29]	123	VPhr		God
וְעִם צַדִּיקִים אַל־יִכָּתֵבוּ׃	122	PhrV		God
וַאֲנִי עָנִי וְכוֹאֵב [30]	123	[SPred]		God
יְשׁוּעָתְךָ אֱלֹהִים תְּשַׂגְּבֵנִי׃	122+1	SV+Voc		God
אֲהַלְלָה שֵׁם־אֱלֹהִים בְּשִׁיר [31]	134	VOP		Overhearers
וַאֲגַדְּלֶנּוּ בְתוֹדָה׃	122	[VP]		Overhearers
וְתִיטַב לַיהוָה מִשּׁוֹר [32]	122	VP		Overhearers
פָּר מַקְרִן מַפְרִיס׃	024	[Phr]		Overhearers
רָאוּ עֲנָוִים יִשְׂמָחוּ [33]	233	VS[V]		Overhearers
דֹּרְשֵׁי אֱלֹהִים וִיחִי לְבַבְכֶם׃	122+1	VP+Voc		Overhearers
כִּי־שֹׁמֵעַ אֶל־אֶבְיוֹנִים יְהוָה [34]	133	[VOS]		Overhearers
וְאֶת־אֲסִירָיו לֹא בָזָה׃	122	[OV]		Overhearers
יְהַלְלוּהוּ שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ [35]	123	VS	G3	Overhearers
יַמִּים וְכָל־רֹמֵשׂ בָּם׃	014	[Phr]	G3	Overhearers
כִּי אֱלֹהִים֩ יוֹשִׁ֨יעַ צִיּ֜וֹן [36]	133	SVO		Overhearers
וְיִבְנֶה עָרֵי יְהוּדָה	123	[VO]		Overhearers
וְיָשְׁבוּ שָׁם וִירֵשׁוּהָ׃	133	[VAV]		Overhearers
וְזֶרַע עֲבָדָיו יִנְחָלוּהָ [37]	123	SV		Overhearers
וְאֹהֲבֵי שְׁמוֹ יִשְׁכְּנוּ־בָהּ׃	134	SVO		Overhearers

Line Types: all the lines are delineated within the constraints of zero to two clause predicators, one to four constituents, and two to fiver units per line. The majority of the lines contain one clause predicator, two to three constituents, and two to four units.

1. Clause predicators
    a) zero clause predicator: 5/82 lines
    b) one clause predicator: 63/82 lines
    c) two clause predicators: 14/82 lines
2. Constituents:
    a) one constituent: 5/82 lines
    b) two constituents: 30/82 lines
    c) three constituents: 40/82 lines
    d) four constituents: 7/82
3. Units
    a) two units: 12/82 lines
    b) three units: 49/82 lines
    c) four units: 19/82 lines
    d) five units: 2/82 lines
4. Vocatives
    a) God: four occurrences
    b) Lord Yhwh of hosts: one occurrences
    c) God of Israel: one occurrences
    d) Yhwh: two occurrences

Gross Structure

I divide this poem into eight paragraphs:

I. First paragraph (vv. 2-4; 8 lines): summons and petition for deliverance from deep water.

II. Second paragraph (vv. 5-7; 9 lines): complaint against the enemies, and hope for deliverance.

III. Third paragraph (vv. 8-13; 12 lines): complaints about current crisis.

IV. Fourth paragraph (vv. 14-16; 9 lines): petition for deliverance from deep water and enemies.

V. Fifth paragraph (vv. 17-19; 6 lines): summons and petition to seek deliverance.

VI. Sixth paragraph (vv. 20-22; 7 lines): complaint about suffering.

VII. Seventh paragraph (vv. 23-30a; 15 lines): curses against the enemies.

VIII. Eighth paragraph (vv. 30b-37; 16 lines): praise and confidence.

Psalm 70

[2] אֱלֹהִים לְהַצִּילֵנִי	Be pleased, O God, to deliver me.
יְהוָה לְעָזְרָתִי חוּשָׁה:	O LORD, make haste to help me!
[3] יֵבֹשׁוּ וְיַחְפְּרוּ	[2] Let those be put to shame and confusion
מְבַקְשֵׁי נַפְשִׁי	who seek my life.
יִסֹּגוּ אָחוֹר וְיִכָּלְמוּ	Let those be turned back and brought to dishonor
חֲפֵצֵי רָעָתִי:	who desire to hurt me.
[4] יָשׁוּבוּ עַל־עֵקֶב בָּשְׁתָּם[189]	[3] Let those who say, "Aha, Aha!"
הָאֹמְרִים הֶאָח[190] הֶאָח:	turn back because of their shame.
[5] יָשִׂישׂוּ וְיִשְׂמְחוּ בְךָ	[4] Let all who seek you
כָּל־מְבַקְשֶׁיךָ	rejoice and be glad in you.
וְיֹאמְרוּ תָמִיד יִגְדַּל אֱלֹהִים[191]	Let those who love your salvation
אֹהֲבֵי יְשׁוּעָתֶךָ:	say evermore, "God is great!"
[6] וַאֲנִי עָנִי וְאֶבְיוֹן	[5] But I am poor and needy;
אֱלֹהִים חוּשָׁה־לִּי	hasten to me, O God!
עֶזְרִי וּמְפַלְטִי אַתָּה	You are my help and my deliverer;
יְהוָה אַל־תְּאַחַר:	O LORD, do not delay!

[189] Lit. Let them turn back because of their shame those who say, "Aha, Aha!" .

[190] Lit. Let them rejoice and be glad in you, all who seek you

[191] Lit. Let them say evermore, "God is great!" Those who love your salvation

Psalm 70

[2] אֱלֹהִים לְהַצִּילֵנִי	111+1	[P]+Voc	G1	The entire poem
יְהוָה לְעָזְרָתִי חוּשָׁה:	122+1	PV+Voc	G1	is addressed to
[3] יֵבֹשׁוּ וְיַחְפְּרוּ֙	222	VV	SD1	the Deity
מְבַקְשֵׁי נַפְשִׁי	012	[Phr]	SD1	
יִסֹּגוּ אָחוֹר וְיִכָּלְמוּ	233	VAV	SD2	
חֲפֵצֵי רָעָתִי:	123	[Phr]	SD2	
[4] יָשׁוּבוּ עַל־עֵקֶב בָּשְׁתָּם	123	VPhr	SD3	
הָאֹמְרִים הֶאָח֥ו הֶאָח:	113	[Phr]	SD3	
[5] יָשִׂישׂוּ וְיִשְׂמְחוּ֙	233	VV	SD4	
בְּךָ֔ כָּל־מְבַקְשֶׁיךָ	012	[Phr]	SD4	
וְיֹאמְרוּ תָמִיד יִגְדַּל אֱלֹהִים	144	VA[PredS]	SD5	
אֹהֲבֵי יְשׁוּעָתֶךָ:	012	[Phr]	SD5	
[6] וַאֲנִ֣י עָנִ֣י וְאֶבְיוֹן֮	123	SPred		
אֱלֹהִים חוּשָׁה־לִּי	122+1	VO+Voc		
עֶזְרִי וּמְפַלְטִי אַתָּה	123	PredS		
יְהוָה אַל־תְּאַחַר:	111+1	V+Voc		

Line Types: all the lines are delineated into the constraints of zero to two clause predicators, one to four constituents, and two to five units per line. The majority of the lines contains one to two clause predicators, two to three constituents, and two to four units.

1. Clause predicators
    a) zero clause predicator: 2/16 lines
    b) one clause predicator: 7/16 lines
    c) two clause predicators: 7/16 lines
2. Constituents
    a) one constituent: 2/16 lines
    b) two constituents: 7/16 lines
    c) three constituents: 7/16 lines
3. Units
    a) two units: 6/16 lines
    b) three units: 8/16 lines
    c) four units: 2/16 lines
4. Vocatives:
    a) God: two occurrences
    b) Yhwh: two occurrences

Gross Structure: I divide this sixteen-line poem into two four paragraphs:

I. First paragraph (v. 2; 2 lines): summons and petition to seek help.

II. Second paragraph (vv. 3-4; 6 lines): curses against the enemies.

III. Third paragraph (v. 5; 4 lines) blessing for friends

IV. Fourth paragraph (v. 6; 4 lines): petition for help.

Psalm 86

[1] הַטֵּה־יְהוָה אָזְנְךָ עֲנֵנִי	[1] Incline your ear, O LORD, and answer me,
כִּי־עָנִי וְאֶבְיוֹן אָנִי:	for I am poor and needy.
[2] שָׁמְרָה נַפְשִׁי כִּי־חָסִיד אָנִי	[2] Preserve my life, for I am devoted to you;
[192]הוֹשַׁע עַבְדְּךָ אַתָּה אֱלֹהַי	save your servant who trusts in you.
הַבּוֹטֵחַ אֵלֶיךָ:	You are my God; [3] be gracious to me, O Lord,
[3] חָנֵּנִי אֲדֹנָי	
כִּי אֵלֶיךָ אֶקְרָא כָל־הַיּוֹם:	for to you do I cry all day long.
[4] שַׂמַּח נֶפֶשׁ עַבְדֶּךָ	[4] Gladden the soul of your servant,
כִּי אֵלֶיךָ אֲדֹנָי נַפְשִׁי אֶשָּׂא:	for to you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.
[5] כִּי־אַתָּה אֲדֹנָי טוֹב וְסַלָּח	[5] For you, O Lord, are good and forgiving,
וְרַב־חֶסֶד לְכָל־קֹרְאֶיךָ:	abounding in steadfast love to all who call on you.
[6] הַאֲזִינָה יְהוָה תְּפִלָּתִי	[6] Give ear, O LORD, to my prayer;
וְהַקְשִׁיבָה בְּקוֹל תַּחֲנוּנוֹתָי:	listen to my cry of supplication.
[7] בְּיוֹם צָרָתִי אֶקְרָאֶךָּ כִּי תַעֲנֵנִי:	[7] In the day of my trouble I call on you,
	for you will answer me.
[8] אֵין־כָּמוֹךָ בָאֱלֹהִים אֲדֹנָי	[8] There is none like you among the gods, O Lord,
וְאֵין כְּמַעֲשֶׂיךָ:	nor are there any works like yours.
[9] כָּל־גּוֹיִם אֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתָ יָבוֹאוּ	[9] All the nations you have made shall come
וְיִשְׁתַּחֲווּ לְפָנֶיךָ אֲדֹנָי	and bow down before you, O Lord,
וְיכַבְּדוּ לִשְׁמֶךָ:	and shall glorify your name.
[10] כִּי־גָדוֹל אַתָּה	[10] For you are great
וְעֹשֵׂה נִפְלָאוֹת	and do wondrous things;
אַתָּה אֱלֹהִים לְבַדֶּךָ:	you alone are God.
[11] הוֹרֵנִי יְהוָה דַּרְכֶּךָ	[11] Teach me your way, O LORD,
אֲהַלֵּךְ בַּאֲמִתֶּךָ	that I may walk in your truth;
יַחֵד לְבָבִי לְיִרְאָה שְׁמֶךָ:	give me an undivided heart to revere your name.
[12] אוֹדְךָ אֲדֹנָי אֱלֹהַי בְּכָל־לְבָבִי	[12] I give thanks to you, O Lord my God, with my whole heart,
וַאֲכַבְּדָה שִׁמְךָ לְעוֹלָם:	and I will glorify your name forever.
[13] כִּי־חַסְדְּךָ גָדוֹל עָלָי	[13] For great is your steadfast love toward me;
וְהִצַּלְתָּ נַפְשִׁי מִשְּׁאוֹל תַּחְתִּיָּה:	you have delivered my soul from the depths of Sheol.
[14] אֱלֹהִים זֵדִים קָמוּ־עָלַי	[14] O God, the insolent rise up against me;
וַעֲדַת עָרִיצִים בִּקְשׁוּ נַפְשִׁי	a band of ruffians seeks my life,
וְלֹא שָׂמוּךָ לְנֶגְדָּם:	and they do not set you before them.

[192] NRSV's lineation for vv. 2b-3a is different from the MT. My lineation agrees with the MT and concurs with the NASB's translation where the phrase אַתָּה אֱלֹהַי is taken as a vocative phrase:

Preserve my soul, for I am a godly man;
O You my God, save Your servant who trusts in You.
Be gracious to me, O Lord,

15 וְאַתָּה אֲדֹנָי אֵל־רַחוּם וְחַנּוּן
אֶרֶךְ אַפַּיִם וְרַב־חֶסֶד וֶאֱמֶת׃

15 But you, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and
faithfulness.

16 פְּנֵה אֵלַי וְחָנֵּנִי
תְּנָה־עֻזְּךָ לְעַבְדֶּךָ
וְהוֹשִׁיעָה לְבֶן־אֲמָתֶךָ׃

16 Turn to me and be gracious to me;
give your strength to your servant;
save the child of your serving girl.

17 עֲשֵׂה־עִמִּי אוֹת לְטוֹבָה
וְיִרְאוּ שֹׂנְאַי וְיֵבֹשׁוּ
כִּי־אַתָּה יְהוָה עֲזַרְתַּנִי וְנִחַמְתָּנִי׃

17 Show me a sign of your favor,
so that those who hate me may see it and be put to shame,
because you, LORD, have helped me and comforted me.

Psalm 86

[1] הַטֵּה־יְהוָה אָזְנְךָ֥ עֲנֵ֑נִי	133+1	VOV+Voc	SD1	The entire
כִּי־עָנִ֖י וְאֶבְי֣וֹן אָנִֽי׃	123	[PredS]	SD1	psalm is
[2] שָׁמְרָה נַפְשִׁי֮ כִּי־חָסִ֪יד אָ֫נִי	244	VO[PredS]		addressed to
הוֹשַׁ֣ע עַבְדְּךָ֣ אַתָּ֣ה אֱלֹהַ֑י	244	VO[SPred]	SD3	the Deity
הַבּוֹטֵ֖חַ אֵלֶֽיךָ׃	122	[Phr]	SD3	
[3] חָנֵּ֣נִי אֲדֹנָ֑י	111+1	V+Voc	SD4	
כִּ֣י אֵלֶ֣יךָ אֶקְרָ֔א כָּל־הַיּֽוֹם׃	134	[PVP]	SD4	
[4] שַׂמֵּ֥חַ נֶ֝֗פֶשׁ עַבְדֶּ֑ךָ	123	VO	SD5	
כִּ֣י אֵלֶ֣יךָ אֲדֹנָ֑י נַפְשִׁ֖י אֶשָּֽׂא׃	133+1	[POV]+Voc	SD5	
[5] כִּי־אַתָּ֣ה אֲדֹנָ֣י טָ֭וֹב וְסַלָּ֑ח	123+1	[SPred]+Voc	SD5	
וְרַב־חֶ֥סֶד לְכָל־קֹרְאֶֽיךָ׃	024	[PhrPhr]	SD5	
[6] הַאֲזִ֣ינָה יְ֭הוָה תְּפִלָּ֑תִי	122+1	VO+Voc		
וְהַקְשִׁ֥יבָה בְּקוֹל֖ תַּחֲנוּנוֹתָֽי׃	123	VO		
[7] בְּי֣וֹם צָ֭רָתִי אֶקְרָאֶ֑ךָּ כִּי֥ תַעֲנֵֽנִי׃	233	PhrV[V]		
[8] אֵין־כָּמ֣וֹךָ בָאֱלֹהִ֣ים ׀ אֲדֹנָ֑י	123+1	APhr+Voc		
וְאֵ֖ין כְּמַעֲשֶׂ֣יךָ׃	122	[AP]		
[9] כָּל־גּוֹיִ֗ם ׀ אֲשֶׁ֣ר עָשִׂ֣יתָ	124	OV		
יָבֹ֣אוּ ׀ וְיִשְׁתַּחֲו֣וּ לְפָנֶ֣יךָ אֲדֹנָ֑י	133+1	[VVP+Voc]		
וְיכַבְּד֥וּ לִשְׁמֶֽךָ׃	122	[VO]		
[10] כִּי־גָד֣וֹל אַ֭תָּה	122	PredS		
וְעֹשֵׂ֣ה נִפְלָא֑וֹת	122	[VO]		
אַתָּ֖ה אֱלֹהִ֣ים לְבַדֶּֽךָ׃	123	[SPred]		
[11] הֹורֵ֣נִי יְ֭הוָה ׀ דַּרְכֶּ֑ךָ	122+1	VO+Voc	SD10	
אֲהַלֵּ֖ךְ בַּאֲמִתֶּ֣ךָ	122	[VP]	SD10	
יַחֵ֣ד לְבָבִ֣י לְיִרְאָ֔ה שְׁמֶֽךָ׃	134	VO[Phr]		
[12] אוֹדְךָ֣ אֲדֹנָ֣י אֱלֹהַ֣י בְּכָל־לְבָבִ֑י	123+Voc	VPhr		
וַאֲכַבְּדָ֖ה שִׁמְךָ֣ לְעוֹלָֽם׃	133	VOP		
[13] כִּי־חַסְדְּךָ֣ גָ֭דוֹל עָלָ֑י	123	[SPred]		
וְהִצַּלְתָּ֥ נַפְשִׁ֗י מִשְּׁאֹ֥ול תַּחְתִּיָּֽה׃	134	[VOPhr]		
[14] אֱלֹהִ֣ים ׀ זֵדִ֣ים קָ֭מוּ־עָלַ֑י	133+1	SVO+Voc		
וַעֲדַ֥ת עָרִיצִ֗ים בִּקְשׁ֥וּ נַפְשִׁ֑י	134	SVO		
וְלֹ֖א שָׂמ֣וּךָ לְנֶגְדָּֽם׃	122	[VP]		
[15] וְאַתָּ֣ה אֲדֹנָ֣י אֵל־רַח֣וּם וְחַנּ֑וּן	124+1	SPred+Voc		
אֶ֥רֶךְ אַפַּ֗יִם וְרַב־חֶ֫סֶד וֶאֱמֶֽת׃	025	[PhrPhr]		
[16] פְּנֵ֣ה אֵלַ֣י וְחָנֵּ֑נִי	233	VOV		
תְּנָה־עֻזְּךָ֥ לְעַבְדֶּ֗ךָ	133	VOP		
וְהוֹשִׁ֥יעָה לְבֶן־אֲמָתֶֽךָ׃	123	VO		
[17] עֲשֵׂה־עִמִּ֥י אֹ֗ות לְט֫וֹבָ֥ה	133	VPO		
וְיִרְא֣וּ שֹׂנְאַ֣י וְיֵבֹ֑שׁוּ	133	VSV		
כִּי־אַתָּ֣ה יְ֭הוָה עֲזַרְתַּ֣נִי וְנִחַמְתָּֽנִי׃	133+1	SVV+Voc		

Line Types: all the lines are delineated into the constraints of zero to two clause predicators, one to four constituents, and two to four units per line. The majority of the lines contain one to two clause predicators, two to three constituents, and two to four units.

1. Clause predicators
    a) zero clause predicator: 2/40 lines
    b) one clause predicator: 23/40 lines
    c) two clause predicators: 15/40 lines
2. Constituents
    a) two constituents: 19/40 lines
    b) three constituents: 16/40 lines
    c) four constituents: 5/40 lines
3. Units
    a) two units: 10/40 lines
    b) three units: 15/40 lines
    c) four units: 14/40 lines
    d) five units: 1/40 lines
4. Vocatives:
    a) God: two occurrences
    b) Yhwh: three occurrences
    c) Lord: six occurrences

Gross Structure: I divide this forty-line poem into two three paragraphs:

I. First paragraph (vv. 1-7; 14 lines): summons and petition to seek mercy and protection.

II. Second paragraph (vv. 8-13; 15 lines): praise.

III. Third paragraph (vv. 14-17; 11 lines) complaint against the enemies and petition for deliverance.

Psalm 102

[2] יְהוָה שִׁמְעָה תְפִלָּתִי	[1] Hear my prayer, O LORD;
וְשַׁוְעָתִי אֵלֶיךָ תָּבוֹא:	let my cry come to you.
[3] אַל־תַּסְתֵּר פָּנֶיךָ מִמֶּנִּי	[2] Do not hide your face from me
בְּיוֹם צַר לִי	in the day of my distress.
הַטֵּה־אֵלַי אָזְנֶךָ	Incline your ear to me;
בְּיוֹם אֶקְרָא מַהֵר עֲנֵנִי:	answer me speedily in the day when I call.
[4] כִּי־כָלוּ בָעָשָׁן יָמָי	[3] For my days pass away like smoke,
וְעַצְמוֹתַי כְּמוֹקֵד נָחָרוּ:	and my bones burn like a furnace.
[5] הוּכָּה־כָעֵשֶׂב וַיִּבַשׁ לִבִּי	[4] My heart is stricken and withered like grass;
כִּי־שָׁכַחְתִּי[193] מֵאֲכֹל לַחְמִי:	I am too wasted to eat my bread.
[6] מִקּוֹל אַנְחָתִי[194]	[5] Because of my loud groaning
דָּבְקָה עַצְמִי[195] לִבְשָׂרִי:	my bones cling to my skin.
[7] דָּמִיתִי לְקָאַת מִדְבָּר	[6] I am like an owl of the wilderness,
הָיִיתִי כְּכוֹס חָרָבוֹת:	like a little owl of the waste places.
[8] שָׁקַדְתִּי וָאֱהְיֶה	[7] I lie awake;
כְּצִפּוֹר בּוֹדֵד עַל־גָּג:	I am like a lonely bird on the housetop.
[9] כָּל־הַיּוֹם חֵרְפוּנִי אוֹיְבָי	[8] All day long my enemies taunt me;
מְהוֹלָלַי בִּי נִשְׁבָּעוּ[196]:	those who deride me use my name for a curse.
[10] כִּי־אֵפֶר כַּלֶּחֶם אָכָלְתִּי	[9] For I eat ashes like bread,
וְשִׁקֻּוַי בִּבְכִי מָסָכְתִּי:	and mingle tears with my drink,
[11] מִפְּנֵי־זַעַמְךָ וְקִצְפֶּךָ	[10] because of your indignation and anger;
כִּי נְשָׂאתַנִי וַתַּשְׁלִיכֵנִי:	for you have lifted me up and thrown me aside.
[12] יָמַי כְּצֵל נָטוּי	[11] My days are like an evening shadow;
וַאֲנִי כָּעֵשֶׂב אִיבָשׁ:	I wither away like grass.
[13] וְאַתָּה יְהוָה לְעוֹלָם תֵּשֵׁב	[12] But you, O LORD, are enthroned forever;
וְזִכְרְךָ לְדֹר וָדֹר:	your name endures to all generations.
[14] אַתָּה תָקוּם תְּרַחֵם צִיּוֹן	[13] You will rise up and have compassion on Zion,
כִּי־עֵת לְחָנְנָהּ	for it is time to favor it;
כִּי־בָא מוֹעֵד:	the appointed time has come.
[15] כִּי־רָצוּ עֲבָדֶיךָ אֶת־אֲבָנֶיהָ	[14] For your servants hold its stones dear,
וְאֶת־עֲפָרָהּ יְחֹנֵנוּ:	and have pity on its dust.

[193] Lit. "I forget to eat my food."
[194] The editors of the BHS suggests that a verb has probable omitted in this line therefore the 3+3 meter is corrupted. I retain the MT.
[195] Lit. "My bone clings to my skin."
[196] Lit. "those who deride me have sworn by me."

16 וְיִירְאוּ[197] גּוֹיִם אֶת־שֵׁם יְהוָה
וְכָל־מַלְכֵי הָאָרֶץ אֶת־כְּבוֹדֶךָ׃
17 כִּי־בָנָה יְהוָה צִיּוֹן
נִרְאָה בִּכְבוֹדוֹ׃
18 פָּנָה אֶל־תְּפִלַּת הָעַרְעָר
וְלֹא־בָזָה אֶת־תְּפִלָּתָם׃
19 תִּכָּתֵב זֹאת לְדוֹר אַחֲרוֹן
וְעַם נִבְרָא יְהַלֶּל־יָהּ׃
20 כִּי־הִשְׁקִיף מִמְּרוֹם קָדְשׁוֹ[198]
יְהוָה מִשָּׁמַיִם אֶל־אֶרֶץ הִבִּיט׃
21 לִשְׁמֹעַ אֶנְקַת אָסִיר
לְפַתֵּחַ בְּנֵי תְמוּתָה׃
22 לְסַפֵּר בְּצִיּוֹן שֵׁם יְהוָה
וְתִהִלָּתוֹ בִּירוּשָׁלָם׃
23 בְּהִקָּבֵץ עַמִּים יַחְדָּו וּמַמְלָכוֹת
לַעֲבֹד אֶת־יְהוָה׃
24 עִנָּה בַדֶּרֶךְ כֹּחִי
קִצַּר יָמָי׃
25 אֹמַר[199]
אֵלִי אַל־תַּעֲלֵנִי בַּחֲצִי יָמָי

בְּדוֹר דּוֹרִים שְׁנוֹתֶיךָ׃
26 לְפָנִים הָאָרֶץ יָסַדְתָּ
וּמַעֲשֵׂה יָדֶיךָ שָׁמָיִם׃
27 הֵמָּה יֹאבֵדוּ וְאַתָּה תַּעֲמֹד
וְכֻלָּם כַּבֶּגֶד יִבְלוּ
כַּלְבּוּשׁ תַּחֲלִיפֵם וְיַחֲלֹפוּ׃
28 וְאַתָּה־הוּא[200]
וּשְׁנוֹתֶיךָ לֹא יִתָּמּוּ׃
29 בְּנֵי־עֲבָדֶיךָ יִשְׁכֹּונוּ
וְזַרְעָם לְפָנֶיךָ יִכּוֹן׃

15 The nations will fear the name of the LORD,
and all the kings of the earth your glory.
16 For the LORD will build up Zion;
he will appear in his glory.
17 He will regard the prayer of the destitute,
and will not despise their prayer.
18 Let this be recorded for a generation to come,
so that a people yet unborn may praise the LORD:
19 that he looked down from his holy height,
from heaven the LORD looked at the earth,
20 to hear the groans of the prisoners,
to set free those who were doomed to die;
21 so that the name of the LORD may be declared in Zion,
and his praise in Jerusalem,
22 when peoples gather together,
and kingdoms, to worship the LORD.
23 He has broken my strength in midcourse;
he has shortened my days.
24 "O my God," I say, "do not take me away
at the midpoint of my life,
you whose years endure
throughout all generations."
25 Long ago you laid the foundation of the earth,
and the heavens are the work of your hands.
26 They will perish, but you endure;
they will all wear out like a garment.
You change them like clothing, and they pass away;
27 but you are the same, and your years have no end.

28 The children of your servants shall live secure;
their offspring shall be established in your presence.

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[197] A few Mss read וְיִרְאוּ ("and they will see"); the MT stands.

[198] The editors of the BHS suggest that the *athnach* be moved to the divine name; perhaps due to 4+3 meter. I retain the MT.

[199] I retain the MT's lineation. The quotation marker אֹמַר is scanned as prose and v. 25b is interpreted as a verbless clause:

"O my God,do not take me away at the midpoint of my life,
Your years are throughout all generations."

[200] NRSV scans v. 28 as a single line. I retain the MT's lineation.

Psalm 102

יְהוָה שִׁמְעָה תְפִלָּתִי [2]	122+1	VO+Voc		Yhwh
וְשַׁוְעָתִי אֵלֶיךָ תָּבוֹא׃	133	SPV		Yhwh
אַל־תַּסְתֵּר פָּנֶיךָ מִמֶּנִּי [3]	133	VOP		Yhwh
בְּיוֹם צַר לִי	013	[Phr]		Yhwh
הַטֵּה־אֵלַי אָזְנֶךָ	133	VPO		Yhwh
בְּיוֹם אֶקְרָא מַהֵר עֲנֵנִי׃	144	PV[AV]	SD1	Yhwh
כִּי־כָלוּ בָעָשָׁן יָמָי [4]	133	[VPS]	SD1	Yhwh
וְעַצְמוֹתַי כְּמוֹקֵד נָחָרוּ׃	133	SPhrV	SD1	Yhwh
הוּכָּה־כָעֵשֶׂב וַיִּבַשׁ לִבִּי [5]	244	VPVS	SD2	Yhwh
כִּי־שָׁכַחְתִּי מֵאֲכֹל לַחְמִי׃	233	VVO	SD2	Yhwh
מִקּוֹל אַנְחָתִי [6]	012	[Phr]	SD3	Yhwh
דָּבְקָה עַצְמִי לִבְשָׂרִי׃	133	VSO	SD3	Yhwh
דָּמִיתִי לְקָאַת מִדְבָּר [7]	123	VPhr	M1	Yhwh
הָיִיתִי כְּכוֹס חָרָבוֹת׃	123	VPhr	M1	Yhwh
שָׁקַדְתִּי וָאֱהְיֶה [8]	222	VV	SD3	Yhwh
כְּצִפּוֹר בּוֹדֵד עַל־גָּג׃	023	[PhrP]	SD3	Yhwh
כָּל־הַיּוֹם חֵרְפוּנִי אוֹיְבָי [9]	134	PhrVS		Yhwh
מְהוֹלָלַי בִּי נִשְׁבָּעוּ׃	133	SOV		Yhwh
כִּי־אֵפֶר כַּלֶּחֶם אָכָלְתִּי [10]	133	OPV	M2	Yhwh
וְשִׁקֻּוַי בִּבְכִי מָסָכְתִּי׃	133	OPV	M2	Yhwh
מִפְּנֵי־זַעַמְךָ וְקִצְפֶּךָ [11]	023	[PhrPhr]		Yhwh
כִּי נְשָׂאתַנִי וַתַּשְׁלִיכֵנִי׃	222	[VV]		Yhwh
יָמַי כְּצֵל נָטוּי [12]	123	SPred		Yhwh
וַאֲנִי כָּעֵשֶׂב אִיבָשׁ׃	133	SPV		Yhwh
וְאַתָּה יְהוָה לְעוֹלָם תֵּשֵׁב [13]	133	SPV+Voc		Yhwh
וְזִכְרְךָ לְדֹר וָדֹר׃	123	SPred		Yhwh
אַתָּה תָקוּם תְּרַחֵם צִיּוֹן [14]	244	SV[VO]		Yhwh
כִּי־עֵת לְחָנְנָהּ	122	[SV]		Yhwh
כִּי־בָא מוֹעֵד׃	122	[VS]		Yhwh
כִּי־רָצוּ עֲבָדֶיךָ אֶת־אַבְנֶיהָ [15]	133	VSO		Overhearers
וְאֶת־עֲפָרָהּ יְחֹנֵנוּ׃	122	[OV]		Overhearers
וְיִרְאוּ גוֹיִם אֶת־שֵׁם יְהוָה [16]	134	VSO	SD5; G1	Overhearers
וְכָל־מַלְכֵי הָאָרֶץ אֶת־כְּבוֹדֶךָ׃	134	[SO]	SD5; G1	Overhearers
כִּי־בָנָה יְהוָה צִיּוֹן [17]	133	[VSO]		Overhearers
נִרְאָה בִּכְבוֹדוֹ׃	122	SP		Overhearers
פָּנָה אֶל־תְּפִלַּת הָעַרְעָר [18]	123	VO	M3	Overhearers
וְלֹא־בָזָה אֶת־תְּפִלָּתָם׃	123	[VO]	M3	Overhearers
תִּכָּתֵב זֹאת לְדוֹר אַחֲרוֹן [19]	134	SVPhr		Overhearers
וְעַם נִבְרָא יְהַלֶּל־יָהּ׃	134	SVO		Overhearers

כִּי־הִשְׁקִיף מִמְּרוֹם קָדְשׁוֹ	123	VPhr		Overhearers
יְהוָה מִשָּׁמַיִם אֶל־אֶרֶץ הִבִּיט׃	144	SPOV	SD7	Overhearers
לִשְׁמֹעַ אֶנְקַת אָסִיר	123	[VO]	SD7; M4	Overhearers
לְפַתֵּחַ בְּנֵי תְמוּתָה׃	123	[VO]	SD7; M4	Overhearers
לְסַפֵּר בְּצִיּוֹן שֵׁם יְהוָה	134	[VPO]	SD7; G2	Overhearers
וּתְהִלָּתוֹ בִּירוּשָׁלָם׃	022	[OP]	SD7; G2	Overhearers
בְּהִקָּבֵץ עַמִּים יַחְדָּו וּמַמְלָכוֹת	133	PSV	SD8	Overhearers
לַעֲבֹד אֶת־יְהוָה׃	122	[VO]	SD8	Overhearers
עִנָּה בַדֶּרֶךְ כֹּחוֹ	133	VPO		Overhearers
קִצַּר יָמָי׃	122	VO		Overhearers
אֹמַר	Prose	Prose		
אֵלִי אַל־תַּעֲלֵנִי בַּחֲצִי יָמָי	123+1	VPhr+Voc		Yhwh
בְּדוֹר דּוֹרִים שְׁנוֹתֶיךָ׃	123	SPred		Yhwh
לָפָנִים הָאָרֶץ יָסַדְתָּ	133	POV		Yhwh
וּמַעֲשֵׂה יָדֶיךָ שָׁמָיִם׃	123	SPred		Yhwh
הֵמָּה יֹאבֵדוּ וְאַתָּה תַּעֲמֹד	244	SVSV		Yhwh
וְכֻלָּם כַּבֶּגֶד יִבְלוּ	133	SPV		Yhwh
כַּלְבוּשׁ תַּחֲלִיפֵם וְיַחֲלֹפוּ׃	133	PV[V]		Yhwh
וְאַתָּה־הוּא	122	SPred		Yhwh
וּשְׁנוֹתֶיךָ לֹא יִתָּמּוּ׃	122	SV		Yhwh
בְּנֵי־עֲבָדֶיךָ יִשְׁכֹּנוּ	122	SV		Yhwh
וְזַרְעָם לְפָנֶיךָ יִכּוֹן׃	133	SPV		Yhwh

Line Types: all the lines are delinated within zero to two clause predicators, one to four constituents, and two to five units per line. The majority of the lines contain one clause predicator, two to three constituents, and two to four units.

1. Clause predicators:
    a) zero clause predicator: 4/58 lines
    b) one clause predicator: 45/58 lines
    c) two clause predicators: 9/58 lines
2. Constituents
    a) one constituent: 1/58 lines
    b) two constituents: 22/58 lines
    c) three constituents: 28/58 lines
    d) four constituents: 7/58 lines
3. Units
    a) two units: 10/58 lines
    b) three units: 33/58 lines
    c) four units: 14/58 lines
    d) five units: 1/58 lines
4. Vocatives:
    a) Yhwh: two occurrences
    b) God: one occurrence

Gross Structure

I divide this fifty-eight-line poem into three main paragraphs:

I. First paragraph (vv. 2-12; 23 lines): this paragraph opens with the summons and general petition for favorable hearing. The main focus is the complaints: complaints about the suffering, complaint against the enemies, and complaint against the Deity.

a) summons, petition to seek favorable hearing (vv. 2-3).

b) complaint about the enduring suffering (vv. 4-8).

c) complaint against the Deity (vv. 11-12)

II. Second paragraph (vv. 13-23; 22 lines): this paragraph contains praise and petition elements. The main focus of the paragraph is Zion.

a) petition to seek rebuilding of Zion (vv. 13-17)

b) motivations and praise (vv. 18-23).

III. Third paragraph (vv. 24-29; 13 lines): this paragraph contains complaint, petition, and praise motifs.

a) complaint about peril of life (v. 24)

b) petition for life to be spared (v. 25)

c) praise (vv. 26-28)

d) wishes for the survival of the descendants (v. 29)

Psalm 140

2 חַלְּצֵנִי יְהוָה מֵאָדָם רָע	1 Deliver me, O LORD, from evildoers;
מֵאִישׁ חֲמָסִים תִּנְצְרֵנִי׃	protect me from those who are violent,
3 אֲשֶׁר חָשְׁבוּ רָעוֹת בְּלֵב	2 who plan evil things in their minds
כָּל־יוֹם יָגוּרוּ מִלְחָמוֹת׃	and stir up wars continually.
4 שָׁנְנוּ לְשׁוֹנָם כְּמוֹ־נָחָשׁ	3 They make their tongue sharp as a snake's,
חֲמַת עַכְשׁוּב תַּחַת שְׂפָתֵימוֹ סֶלָה׃	and under their lips is the venom of vipers. *Selah*
5 שָׁמְרֵנִי יְהוָה מִּידֵי רָשָׁע	4 Guard me, O LORD, from the hands of the wicked;
מֵאִישׁ חֲמָסִים תִּנְצְרֵנִי	protect me from the violent
אֲשֶׁר חָשְׁבוּ לִדְחוֹת פְּעָמָי[201]׃	who have planned my downfall.
6 טָמְנוּ־גֵאִים פַּח לִי	5 The arrogant have hidden a trap for me,
וַחֲבָלִים פָּרְשׂוּ רֶשֶׁת לְיַד־מַעְגָּל	and with cords they have spread a net,
מֹקְשִׁים שָׁתוּ־לִי סֶלָה׃	along the road they have set snares for me. *Selah*
7 אָמַרְתִּי לַיהוָה[202]	6 I say to the LORD, "You are my God;
אֵלִי אָתָּה	
הַאֲזִינָה יְהוָה קוֹל תַּחֲנוּנָי׃	give ear, O LORD, to the voice of my supplications."
8 יְהוִה אֲדֹנָי עֹז יְשׁוּעָתִי	7 O LORD, my Lord, my strong deliverer,
סַכֹּתָה לְרֹאשִׁי בְּיוֹם נָשֶׁק׃	you have covered my head in the day of battle.
9 אַל־תִּתֵּן יְהוָה מַאֲוֵי רָשָׁע	8 Do not grant, O LORD, the desires of the wicked;
זְמָמוֹ אַל־תָּפֵק יָרוּמוּ סֶלָה׃	do not further their evil plot. *Selah*
10 רֹאשׁ מְסִבָּי	9 Those who surround me lift up their heads;
עְמַל שְׂפָתֵימוֹ יְכַסֻּמוֹ׃	let the mischief of their lips overwhelm them!
11 יְמִיטוּ עֲלֵיהֶם גֶּחָלִים[203]	10 Let burning coals fall on them!
בָּאֵשׁ יַפְּלֵם	Let them be flung into pits, no more to rise!
בְּמַהֲמֹרוֹת בַּל־יָקוּמוּ׃	
12 אִישׁ לָשׁוֹן בַּל־יִכּוֹן בָּאָרֶץ	11 Do not let the slanderer be established in the land;
אִישׁ־חָמָס רָע יְצוּדֶנּוּ לְמַדְחֵפוֹת׃	let evil speedily hunt down the violent!
13 יָדַעְתִּי כִּי־יַעֲשֶׂה יְהוָה דִּין עָנִי	12 I know that the LORD maintains the cause of the needy,
מִשְׁפַּט אֶבְיוֹנִים׃	and executes justice for the poor.
14 אַךְ צַדִּיקִים יוֹדוּ לִשְׁמֶךָ	13 Surely the righteous shall give thanks to your name;
יֵשְׁבוּ יְשָׁרִים אֶת־פָּנֶיךָ׃	the upright shall live in your presence.

[201] NASB: "Who have purposed to trip up my feet."

[202] I interprete the direct quotation phrase אָמַרְתִּי לַיהוָה as prose:

I say to the LORD,
"You are my God;
give ear, O LORD, to the voice of my supplications."

[203] *Qere* יָמִיטוּ (may they waiver); but it might be best to read it in light of the LXX πεσοῦνται (they will fall). I scan v. 11 in accord with the NASB:

May burning coals fall upon them;
May they be cast into the fire,
Into deep pits from which they cannot rise.

Psalm 140

[2] חַלְּצֵנִי יְהוָה מֵאָדָם רָע	123+1	VPhr+Voc	M1	God
מֵאִישׁ חֲמָסִים תִּנְצְּרֵנִי׃	123	VPhr	M1; SD1; R1	God
[3] אֲשֶׁר חָשְׁבוּ רָעוֹת בְּלֵב	014	[Phr]	SD1	God
כָּל־יוֹם יָגוּרוּ מִלְחָמוֹת׃	134	PVO		God
[4] שָׁנְנוּ לְשׁוֹנָם כְּמוֹ־נָחָשׁ	134	VOP		God
חֲמַת עַכְשׁוּב תַּחַת שְׂפָתֵימוֹ סֶלָה׃	124	SPred		God
[5] שָׁמְרֵנִי יְהוָה מִּידֵי רָשָׁע	123+1	VP+Voc		God
מֵאִישׁ חֲמָסִים תִּנְצְּרֵנִי	123	VPhr	SD2; M2; R1	God
אֲשֶׁר חָשְׁבוּ לִדְחוֹת פְּעָמָי׃	014	[Phr]	SD2; M2	God
[6] טָמְנוּ־גֵאִים פַּח לִי	134	VSO		God
וַחֲבָלִים פָּרְשׂוּ רֶשֶׁת לְיַד־מַעְגָּל	145	[OVOP]		God
מֹקְשִׁים שָׁתוּ־לִי סֶלָה׃	133	[OVP]		God
[7] אָמַרְתִּי לַיהוָה	Prose	Prose	Prose	Overhearer
אֵלִי אָתָּה	122	PredS		Overhearer
הַאֲזִינָה יְהוָה קוֹל תַּחֲנוּנָי׃	123+1	[VO+Voc]		Overhearer
[8] יְהוִה אֲדֹנָי עֹז יְשׁוּעָתִי	024	Voc		Overhearer
סַכֹּתָה לְרֹאשִׁי בְּיוֹם נָשֶׁק׃	134	[VOP]		Overhearer
[9] אַל־תִּתֵּן יְהוָה מַאֲוַיֵי רָשָׁע	123+1	VPhr+Voc		Overhearer
זְמָמוֹ אַל־תָּפֵק יָרוּמוּ סֶלָה׃	233	OV[V]		Overhearer
[10] רֹאשׁ מְסִבָּיו	012	[Phr]		Overhearer
עְמַל שְׂפָתֵימוֹ יְכַסֻּמוֹ׃	123	PhrV		Overhearer
[11] יִמֹּיטוּ עֲלֵיהֶם גֶּחָלִים	123	VPS		Overhearer
בָּאֵשׁ יַפְּלֵם	122	PV		Overhearer
בְּמַהֲמֹרוֹת בַּל־יָקוּמוּ׃	122	[PV]		Overhearer
[12] אִישׁ לָשׁוֹן בַּל־יִכּוֹן בָּאָרֶץ	134	SVP	M5	Overhearer
אִישׁ־חָמָס רָע יְצוּדֶנּוּ לְמַדְחֵפוֹת׃	135	SVP	M5	Overhearer
[13] יָדַעְתִּי כִּי־יַעֲשֶׂה יְהוָה דִּין עָנִי	245	V[VSO]	G1	Overhearer
מִשְׁפַּט אֶבְיוֹנִים׃	012	[Phr]	G1	Overhearer
[14] אַךְ צַדִּיקִים יוֹדוּ לִשְׁמֶךָ	134	SVP	M6	God
יֵשְׁבוּ יְשָׁרִים אֶת־פָּנֶיךָ׃	133	VSP	M6	God

Line Types: all the lines are delineated into the constraints of zero to two clause predicators, one to four constituents, and two to five units per line. The majority of the lines contain one clause predicator, two to three constituents, and two to five units.

1. Clause predicators:
    d) zero clause predicator: 5/29 lines
    e) one clause predicator: 18/29 lines
    f) two clause predicators: 6/29 lines
2. Constituents
    e) one constituent: 4/29 lines
    f) two constituents: 9/29 lines
    g) three constituents: 14/29 lines
    h) four constituents: 2/29 lines
3. Units
    e) two units: 5/29 lines
    f) three units: 7/29 lines
    g) four units: 14/29 lines
    h) five units: 3/29 lines
4. Vocatives:
    c) Yhwh: four occurrences
    d) Yhwh my Lord the strength of salvation: one occurrence

Gross Structure

I divide this twenty-nine-line poem into five paragraphs:

I. First paragraph (vv. 2-4; 6 lines):

d) summons, petition to seek protection (v. 2)

e) complaint against the enemies (v. 3)

II. Second paragraph (vv. 5-6; 6 lines)

c) petition to seek protection (v. 4)

d) complaint against the enemies.

III. Third paragraph (vv. 7-9; 6 lines)

e) summons and petition for prayer be heard (vv. 7-8)

f) petition against the enemies (v. 8)

IV. Fourth paragraph (vv. 10-12; 7 lines): curses against the enemies

IV. Fifth paragraph (vv. 13-14; 4 lines)

a) statements of confidence (v. 13)

b) praise (v. 14)

Psalm 141[204]

יְהוָה קָרָאתִיךָ חוּשָׁה לִּי [1]
הַאֲזִינָה קוֹלִי בְּקָרְאִי־לָךְ׃
תִּכּוֹן תְּפִלָּתִי קְטֹרֶת לְפָנֶיךָ [2]
מַשְׂאַת כַּפַּי מִנְחַת־עָרֶב׃

שִׁיתָה יְהוָה שָׁמְרָה לְפִי [3]
נְצֹרָה עַל־דַּל שְׂפָתָי׃
אַל־תַּט־לִבִּי לְדָבָר־ [4]
רָע לְהִתְעוֹלֵל עֲלִלוֹת בְּרָשָׁע
אֶת־אִישֵׁי פֹעֲלֵי־אָוֶן
וּבַל־אֶלְחַם בְּמַנְעַמֵּיהֶם׃

יֶהֱלְמֵנִי־צַדִּיק חֶסֶד [5]
וְיוֹכִיחֵנִי שֶׁמֶן רֹאשׁ
אַל־יָנִי רֹאשִׁי
כִּי־עוֹד וּתְפִלָּתִי בְּרָעוֹתֵיהֶם׃
נִשְׁמְטוּ בִידֵי־סֶלַע שֹׁפְטֵיהֶם [6]
וְשָׁמְעוּ אִמָרַי כִּי נָעֲמוּ׃
כְּמוֹ פֹלֵחַ וּבֹקֵעַ בָּאָרֶץ [7]
נִפְזְרוּ עַצְמֵינוּ לְפִי שְׁאוֹל׃

כִּי אֵלֶיךָ יְהוִה אֲדֹנָי עֵינָי [8]
בְּכָה חָסְיתִי אַל־תְּעַר נַפְשִׁי׃
שָׁמְרֵנִי מִיְדֵי פַח יָקְשׁוּ לִי [9]
וּמֹקְשׁוֹת פֹּעֲלֵי אָוֶן׃
יִפְּלוּ בְמַכְמֹרָיו רְשָׁעִים [10]
יַחַד אָנֹכִי עַד־אֶעֱבוֹר׃

[1] I call upon you, O LORD; come quickly to me;
give ear to my voice when I call to you.
[2] Let my prayer be counted as incense before you,
and the lifting up of my hands as an evening sacrifice.

[3] Set a guard over my mouth, O LORD;
keep watch over the door of my lips.
[4] Do not turn my heart to any evil,
to busy myself with wicked deeds
in company with those who work iniquity;
do not let me eat of their delicacies.

[5] Let the righteous strike me;
let the faithful correct me.
Never let the oil of the wicked anoint my head,
for my prayer is continually against their wicked deeds.
[6] When they are given over to those who condemn them,
then they shall learn that my words were pleasant.
[7] Like a rock that one breaks apart and shatters on the land,
so shall their bones be strewn at the mouth of Sheol.

[8] But my eyes are turned toward you, O GOD, my Lord;
in you I seek refuge; do not leave me defenseless.
[9] Keep me from the trap that they have laid for me,
and from the snares of evildoers.
[10] Let the wicked fall into their own nets,
while I alone escape.

[204] My lineation for this psalm agrees with the NRSV.

Psalm 141

[1] יְהוָה קָרָאתִיךָ חוּשָׁה לִּי	223+1	V[VP]+Voc		The entire poem is
הַאֲזִינָה קוֹלִי בְּקָרְאִי־לָךְ׃	124	VO		addressed to the
[2] תִּכּוֹן תְּפִלָּתִי קְטֹרֶת לְפָנֶיךָ	134	VOP	SD1; G1	Deity
מַשְׂאַת כַּפַּי מִנְחַת־עָרֶב׃	024	[Phr]	SD1; G1	
[3] שִׁיתָה יְהוָה שָׁמָרָה לְפִי	133+1	VOP+Voc		
נְצֹרָה עַל־דַּל שְׂפָתָי׃	123	VO		
[4] אַל־תַּט־לִבִּי לְדָבָר	134	VOP	SD2	
רָע לְהִתְעוֹלֵל עֲלִלוֹת בְּרָשָׁע	123	[VO]	SD2	
אֶת־אִישֵׁי פֹּעֲלֵי־אָוֶן	023	[Phr]	SD2	
וּבַל־אֶלְחַם בְּמַנְעַמֵּיהֶם׃	122	[VO]		
[5] יֶהֱלְמֵנִי־צַדִּיק וְחֶסֶד	133	VSP	M1	
וְיוֹכִיחֵנִי שֶׁמֶן רֹאשׁ	133	[VSP]	M1	
אַל־יָנִי רֹאשִׁי	122	[VS]		
כִּי־עוֹד וּתְפִלָּתִי בְּרָעוֹתֵיהֶם׃	133	[ASPred]		
[6] נִשְׁמְטוּ בִידֵי־סֶלַע שֹׁפְטֵיהֶם	134	VPS		
וְשָׁמְעוּ אֲמָרַי כִּי נָעֲמוּ׃	233	VO[V]		
[7] כְּמוֹ פֹלֵחַ וּבֹקֵעַ בָּאָרֶץ	234	VVO		
נְפוּזְרוּ עַצְמֵינוּ לְפִי שְׁאוֹל׃	134	VSP		
[8] כִּי אֵלֶיךָ יְהוִה אֲדֹנָי עֵינָי	123+1	PredS+Voc		
בָּכָה חָסְיתִי אַל־תְּעַר נַפְשִׁי׃	234	OV[VO]		
[9] שָׁמְרֵנִי מִיְדֵי פַח יָקְשׁוּ לִי	235	VP[VO]	G2	
וּמֹקְשׁוֹת פֹּעֲלֵי אָוֶן׃	023	[Phr]	G2	
[10] יִפְּלוּ בְמַכְמֹרָיו רְשָׁעִים	133	VPS		
יַחַד אָנֹכִי עַד־אֶעֱבֹור׃	134	[ASV]		

Line Types: all the lines are delineated into the constraints of zero to three clause predicators, two to four constituents, and two to five units per line. The majority of the lines contain one clause to two predicators, two to three constituents, and three to four units.

1. Clause predicators
    a) zero clause predicator: 3/24 lines
    b) one clause predicator: 14/24 lines
    c) two clause predicators: 6/24 lines
    d) three clause predicator: 1/24 lines
2. Constituents
    a) two constituents: 8/24 lines
    b) three constituents: 15/24 lines
    c) four constituents: 1/24 lines
3. Units
    a) two units: 2/24 lines
    b) three units: 9/24 lines
    c) four units: 12/24 lines
    d) five units: 1/24 lines
4. Vocatives: Yhwh (three occurrences)

Gross Structure: I divide this twenty-four- line poem into four paragraphs:

I. First paragraph (vv. 1-2; 4 lines): summons and petition to seek favorable hearing.

II. Second main paragraph (vv. 3-4; 6 lines): petition to seek obedience to a godly

life.

III. Third paragraph (vv. 5-7; 8 lines): imprecation/complaint.

IV. Fourth paragraph (vv. 9-10; 6 lines): petition to seek protection and enemies to be punished.

Psalm 143[205]

[1] יְהוָה֙ שְׁמַ֣ע תְּפִלָּתִ֔י	[1] Hear my prayer, O LORD;
הַאֲזִ֥ינָה אֶל־תַּחֲנוּנַ֖י	give ear to my supplications in your faithfulness;
בֶּאֱמֻנָתְךָ֥ עֲנֵ֖נִי בְּצִדְקָתֶֽךָ׃	answer me in your righteousness.
[2] וְאַל־תָּבֹ֣וא בְמִשְׁפָּ֣ט אֶת־עַבְדֶּ֑ךָ	[2] Do not enter into judgment with your servant,
כִּ֥י לֹא־יִצְדַּ֖ק לְפָנֶ֣יךָ כָּל־חָֽי׃	for no one living is righteous before you.
[3] כִּֽי־רָדַ֣ף אוֹיֵ֣ב נַפְשִׁ֑י	[3] For the enemy has pursued me,
דִּכָּ֥א לָאָ֝֗רֶץ חַיָּתִ֑י	crushing my life to the ground,
הוֹשִׁיבַ֥נִי בְמַחֲשַׁכִּ֗ים כְּמֵתֵ֥י עוֹלָֽם׃	making me sit in darkness like those long dead.
[4] וַתִּתְעַטֵּ֣ף עָלַ֣י רוּחִ֑י	[4] Therefore my spirit faints within me;
בְּתוֹכִ֖י יִשְׁתּוֹמֵ֣ם לִבִּֽי׃	my heart within me is appalled.
[5] זָ֭כַרְתִּי יָמִ֣ים מִקֶּ֑דֶם	[5] I remember the days of old,
הָגִ֥יתִי בְכָל־פָּעֳלֶ֗ךָ	I think about all your deeds,
בְּמַעֲשֵׂ֣ה יָ֭דֶיךָ אֲשׂוֹחֵ֑חַ׃	I meditate on the works of your hands.
[6] פֵּרַ֣שְׂתִּי יָדַ֣י אֵלֶ֑יךָ	[6] I stretch out my hands to you;
נַפְשִׁ֥י כְאֶ֝֗רֶץ עֲיֵפָ֥ה לָךְ֥ סֶֽלָה׃	my soul thirsts for you like a parched land. *Selah*
[7] מַהֵ֣ר עֲנֵ֣נִי יְהוָ֑ה	[7] Answer me quickly, O LORD;
כָּלְתָ֖ה רוּחִ֣י	my spirit fails.
אַל־תַּסְתֵּ֣ר פָּנֶ֣יךָ מִמֶּ֑נִּי	Do not hide your face from me,
וְנִמְשַׁלְתִּ֥י עִם־יֹרְדֵ֖י בֽוֹר׃	or I shall be like those who go down to the Pit.
[8] הַשְׁמִ֣יעֵ֣נִי בַבֹּ֣קֶר חַסְדֶּ֑ךָ	[8] Let me hear of your steadfast love in the morning,
כִּֽי־בְךָ֖ בָּטָ֣חְתִּי	for in you I put my trust.
הוֹדִיעֵ֣נִי דֶ֭רֶךְ־זוּ אֵלֵ֑ךְ	Teach me the way I should go,
כִּֽי־אֵלֶ֖יךָ נָשָׂ֣אתִי נַפְשִֽׁי׃	for to you I lift up my soul.
[9] הַצִּילֵ֣נִי מֵאֹיְבַ֣י יְהוָ֑ה	[9] Save me, O LORD, from my enemies;
אֵלֶ֖יךָ כִּסִּ֣תִי׃	I have fled to you for refuge.
[10] לַמְּדֵ֣נִי לַ֭עֲשׂוֹת רְצוֹנֶ֑ךָ	[10] Teach me to do your will,
כִּֽי־אַתָּ֥ה אֱלוֹהָ֗י	for you are my God.
רוּחֲךָ֣ טוֹבָ֣ה תַּנְחֵ֑נִי	Let your good spirit lead me
בְּאֶ֖רֶץ מִישׁוֹר׃	on a level path.
[11] לְמַ֣עַן־שִׁמְךָ֣ יְהוָ֣ה תְּחַיֵּ֑נִי	[11] For your name's sake, O LORD, preserve my life.
בְּצִדְקָתְךָ֥ תוֹצִ֖יא מִצָּרָ֣ה נַפְשִֽׁי׃	In your righteousness bring me out of trouble.
[12] וּבְחַסְדֶּ֣ךָ תַּצְמִ֣ית אֹיְבָ֑י	[12] In your steadfast love cut off my enemies,
וְהַאֲבַדְתָּ֥ כָּל־צֹרְרֵ֖י נַפְשִׁ֑י	and destroy all my adversaries,
כִּ֖י אֲנִ֣י עַבְדֶּֽךָ׃	for I am your servant.

[205] My lineation agrees with NRSV.

Psalm 143

יְהוָה֙ שְׁמַ֣ע תְּפִלָּתִ֔י [1]	122+1	VO+Voc	M1	The entire poem
הַאֲזִ֥ינָה אֶל־תַּחֲנוּנָ֖י	122	VO	M1	is addressed to
בֶּאֱמֻנָתְךָ֣ עֲנֵ֔נִי בְּצִדְקָתֶֽךָ׃	133	PVP		the Deity
וְאַל־תָּבֹ֣וא בְמִשְׁפָּט֮ אֶת־עַבְדֶּךָ֒ [2]	133	VPO	SD1	
כִּ֣י לֹא־יִצְדַּ֣ק לְפָנֶ֔יךָ כָּל־חָֽי׃	134	[VPS]	SD1	
כִּ֤י רָדַף֙ אוֹיֵ֔ב נַפְשִׁ֑י [3]	133	VSO		
דִּכָּ֥א לָאָ֖רֶץ חַיָּתִ֑י	133	VPS		
הוֹשִׁיבַ֥נִי בְמַחֲשַׁכִּ֖ים כְּמֵתֵ֥י עוֹלָֽם׃	134	VPPhr		
וַתִּתְעַטֵּ֣ף עָלַ֔י רוּחִ֑י [4]	133	VPS		
בְּתוֹכִ֖י יִשְׁתּוֹמֵ֣ם לִבִּֽי׃	133	PVS		
זָכַ֣רְתִּי יָמִ֣ים מִקֶּ֔דֶם [5]	123	VO	M2	
הָגִ֥יתִי בְכָל־פָּעֳלֶ֑ךָ	123	VO	M2	
בְּמַעֲשֵׂ֖ה יָדֶ֣יךָ אֲשׂוֹחֵֽחַ׃	123	VO	M2	
פָּרַ֣שְׂתִּי יָדַ֔י אֵלֶ֖יךָ [6]	133	VOP	G1	
נַפְשִׁ֥י כְאֶֽרֶץ־עֲיֵפָ֖ה לְךָ֣ סֶֽלָה׃	034	[Phr]	G1	
מַהֵ֣ר עֲנֵ֔נִי יְהוָ֖ה [7]	122+1	AV+Voc		
כָּלְתָ֣ה רוּחִ֑י	122	[VS]		
אַל־תַּסְתֵּ֣ר פָּנֶ֔יךָ מִמֶּ֑נִּי	133	VOP		
וְנִמְשַׁלְתִּ֥י עִם־יֹרְדֵ֖י בֽוֹר׃	123	VP		
הַשְׁמִיעֵ֤נִי בַבֹּ֨קֶר֙ חַסְדֶּ֔ךָ [8]	133	VAO	SD2	
כִּֽי־בְךָ֥ בָטָ֖חְתִּי	122	[VO]	SD2	
הוֹדִיעֵ֣נִי דֶּֽרֶךְ־זוּ אֵלֵ֑ךְ	233	VO[V]	SD3	
כִּֽי־אֵלֶ֖יךָ נָשָׂ֣אתִי נַפְשִֽׁי׃	133	PVO	SD3	
הַצִּילֵ֣נִי מֵאֹיְבַ֔י יְהוָ֖ה [9]	122+1	VP+Voc		
אֵלֶ֥יךָ כִסִּ֖תִי׃	122	PV		
לַמְּדֵ֣נִי לַעֲשׂ֣וֹת רְצוֹנֶ֑ךָ [10]	133	VVP	SD4	
כִּֽי־אַתָּ֥ה אֱלוֹהָ֖י	122	[SPred]	SD4	
רוּחֲךָ֣ טוֹבָ֔ה	122	SPred		
תַּנְחֵ֖נִי בְּאֶ֣רֶץ מִישׁוֹר׃	123	VPhr		
לְמַ֣עַן־שִׁמְךָ֣ יְהוָ֔ה תְּחַיֵּ֑נִי [11]	123+1	PV+Voc		
בְּצִדְקָתְךָ֥ תּוֹצִ֖יא מִצָּרָ֣ה נַפְשִֽׁי׃	133	PVO	M4	
וּבְחַסְדְּךָ֣ תַּצְמִ֔ית אֹיְבָ֑י [12]	133	PVO	M4	
וְהַאֲבַדְתָּ֥ כָּל־צֹרְרֵ֖י נַפְשִׁ֑י	124	[VO]	SD5	
כִּ֖י אֲנִ֣י עַבְדֶּֽךָ׃	122	[SPred]	SD5	

Line Types: all the lines are delineated into the constraints of zero to two clause predicators, one to four constituents, and one to four units per line. The majority of the lines contain one clause predicator, two to three constituents, and two to three units.

1. Clause predicators
    a) zero clause predicator: 2/34 lines
    b) one clause predicator: 27/34 lines
    c) two clause predicators: 5/34 lines
2. Constituents
    a) one constituent: 1/34 lines
    b) two constituents: 11/34 lines
    c) three constituents: 21/34 lines
    d) four constituents: 1/34
3. Units
    a) two units: 7/34 lines
    b) three units: 22/34 lines
    c) four units: 5/34 lines
4. Vocatives: Yhwh (four occurrences)

Gross Structure

I divide this thirty-four-line poem into two six paragraphs;

I. First main paragraph (vv. 1-2; 5 lines): summons and petition to seek favorable hearing.

II. Second paragraph (vv. 3-4; 6 lines) complaint about the suffering caused by the enemies.

III. Third paragraph (vv. 5-6; 5 lines) expressions of piety.

IV. Fourth paragraph (vv. 7-8; 8 lines) petition for divine intervention and statement of piety.

V. Fifth paragraph (vv. 9-10; 5 lines) petition for deliverance and statement of piety.

VI. Sixth paragraph (vv. 11-12; 5 lines) petition for deliverance from the enemies.

The corpus of the twenty psalms under study consists of 737 lines. All of the lines conformed to the constraints of Syntactic Description; each contains zero to two clause predicators, one to four constituents, and two to five units per line. The majority of the lines, however, each contains one to two clause predicators, two to three constituents, and two to four units. The below data will be analyzed and compared to other Individual Laments in the next chapter.

1. Clause predicators:
    a) zero clause predicator: 63/737 lines (9%)
    b) one clause predicator: 534/737 lines (72%)
    c) two clause predicators: 134/737 lines (18%)
    d) three clause predicators: 6/737 lines (1%)
2. Constituents
    a) one constituent: 29/737 lines (4%)
    b) two constituents: 329/737 lines (45%)
    c) three constituents: 339/737 lines (46%)
    d) four constituents: 40/737 lines (5%)
3. Units
    a) two units: 187/737 lines (25%)
    b) three units: 377/737 lines (52%)
    c) four units: 158/737 lines (21%)
    d) five units: 15/737 lines (2%)

Chapter Three

Poetic Descriptions of the Twenty Individual Laments

3.0 Introduction

The present chapter will assess the poetic descriptions of the twenty Individual Laments previously analyzed in Chapter Two. This chapter will have two parts, each with its own focus.

The first part of the chapter will focus on three tasks. The first task will be to select a set of uniform sample texts from the twenty psalms for the classification of syntactic structures of the lines. In order to select the best representative texts, I will identify and eliminate those psalms commonly recognized as having distinctive literary forms and contents that set them apart from the rest of the psalms under study. Subsequently, I will group the remaining psalms into smaller groups in accord with their commonalities in content and modes of speeches other than the identified commonalities in the opening lines.

The second task will be to present the findings of the syntactic constraints of the lines. This exercise will serve several purposes:

1. To examine the overall syntactic constraints of the lines in individual psalms(s) and groups of psalms in my corpus of texts
2. To verify HVS's claims concerning the syntactic constraints in biblical Hebrew verse
3. To examine the overall distributions of the line constraints of the psalms under study, and subsequently, point out why Syntactic Description can be

expanded and used as an effective exegetical tool in structural analysis and genre consideration and classification.

The third task will be to classify and define the line types in accord with their syntactic structures and frequencies. The defined line types will serve as the basis for determining the regularities and irregularities of certain types of syntactic structures of the lines in a given psalm or group of psalms. The purpose of this exercise will be to describe, syntactically, the poetic descriptions of each individual psalm and groups of psalms under study.

The second part of the chapter will focus on issues related to genre consideration. The first discussion will engage recent studies and suggestions that are deemed important to the genre reclassification of the Individual Laments. The second discussion will compare, in light of the findings in the first part of the present chapter, the structures of the psalms under study to the other representative Individual Laments in the Psalter and suggest different genre classification.

3.1.1 Initial Grouping of the Twenty Psalms: The Best Representative Sample Texts

As already stated on the preceding page, in order to select a uniform sample of texts for the analyses, the initial task is to identify and eliminate those psalms commonly recognized as having distinctive literary forms and contents that set them apart from the rest of the psalms in the group of twenty under study. In my corpus of texts, eight psalms fit such criteria; the difficulties in the determination of their genres are readily apparent in the commentaries: Psalms 26, 43, 51, 61, 70, 102, 140, and 143.

Psalm 26: This psalm might be best described as a psalm of Protesting Innocence and Plea for Justice. Gunkel has classified Psalm 26 along with Psalms 5, 7, and 17, as a Psalm of Protesting Innocence, a sub-group of the Individual Lament genre. However, unlike Psalms 5, 7, 17, and the majority of the psalms in my corpus of texts, Psalm 26 contains no lament motifs and makes no mention of the enemies.

Psalm 43: As attested by several MSS, the majority of scholars agreed on the reading Psalms 42 and 43 as a single composition, with Psalm 43 being the ending of Psalm 42. It is fruitless to repeat scholars' comments regarding the unity of these two psalms, for the consensus among them in this regard is readily apparent in the commentaries.

Psalm 51: The early church tradition includes Psalm 51 as one of the seven penitential psalms (Psalms 6, 32, 38, 51, 102, 130, and 143). Gunkel has appropriately placed Psalm 51 in a sub-class, i.e., the Psalms of Confession; this psalm contains the confession of a person who was in agonizing pain, having the self-awareness of the sinful condition. Unlike the rest of the twenty psalms under study, this psalm concentrates on

the motifs of sins and forgiveness; it contains neither petitions for deliverance from the enemies, nor oppression by the enemies' motifs. Referring to the structure of this psalm, Tate writes, "The characteristic features as complaint about enemies and prayer for their defeat and/or punishment is missing, as well as any protestation of innocence on the part of the speaker in the psalm."[206] Weiser comments, "there is no evidence of a homogeneous construction of the strophes; it would hardly accord with the tremendous spiritual tension with which the prayer is imbued."[207]

Psalm 61: There is no consensus among scholars concerning the genre of this psalm. Referring to Psalm 61, Weiser suggests calling it a Thanksgiving Song;[208] but for Broyles, it is a prayer for safe pilgrimage.[209] Yet according to Dahood, Psalm 61 is a prayer of a king; however, Tate interprets this psalm as a prayer of a messianic hope.[210] In contrast to the rest of the psalms under study, Psalms 61contains the petition for the king; it lacks also the complaint about enemies and petitions for their punishment.

Psalm 70: This psalm is not a good representative text because the vocative-imperative construction in the opening line requires textual emendation. In addition, this psalm might be a rework/copy of Ps 40:13-17.

Psalm 102: Like Psalm 43, this psalm contains the motif of complaint against the Deity. Noting the mixed motifs this psalm contains, Gerstenberger states, "the main problem of Psalm 102 is the juncture on individual and communal elements, the latter

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[206] Tate, *Psalms*, 8.
[207] Weiser, *Psalms*, 401.
[208] Weiser, *Psalms*, 442.
[209] Broyles, *Psalms*, 254.
[210] Dahood, *Psalms II*, 83; Tate, *Psalms*, 113.

tending to the hymnic side."[211] Perhaps the questions asked by Allen will point out the difficulties concerning the form and content of this psalm:

> Bewildering multiplicities of interpretations have been offered for this complex psalm. Exegetical ambiguities have been exploited to the full and intertwined with variety of views as to form and setting. Is the psalm an individual complaint? Is it cultic in origin? Does the psalmist speak as representative of the community and if so is he a king? Is the psalm a single unit? Has it been interpreted with the supplementary material? Does the psalm assume the destruction of Zion (vv. 15, 17)? What kind of divine intervention is envisaged in v. 14?[212]

Psalm 140: Like Psalm 102, this psalm exhibits both individual and communal motifs.[213] In addition to a lengthy report speech in vv. 7-12, the complex structure of this psalm is apparent through Gerstenberger's comments on vv. 7-8: "Did the text get mixed up or turned around during transmission? Have two psalm fragments been glued together, and we are really dealing with two separate units?"[214]

Psalm 143: Briggs suggests calling this psalm a communal prayer.[215] Dahood, as also Eaton, regarded this psalm as a royal psalm in light of the superscription and the motif of the term "servant" in the last line of the poem.[216] Due to the difficulty in genre determination, this psalm would not serve as a good representative sample text.

After having eliminated the above eight psalms, twelve psalms remain in my corpus of texts: Psalms 5, 17, 35, 54, 55, 56, 57, 59, 64, 69, 86, and 141. I divide these psalms into two groups, A and B. The A group includes Psalms 54, 55, 56, 57, 59, 64,

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[211] Gerstenberger, *Psalms II*, 211.
[212] Allen, *Psalms*, 11. See also W. H. Bellinger, Jr., "Psalm 102: Lament and Theology in an Exilic Setting," in *"My Words Are Lovely": Studies in the Rhetoric of the Psalms* (eds. Robert L. Foster and David M. Howard, Jr.; OTS 467; New York: Clark, 2008) 147-55.
[213] Broyles, *Psalms*, 489.
[214] Gerstenberger, *Psalms II*, 409.
[215] Briggs and Briggs, *Psalms*, 514.
[216] Dahood, *Psalms III*, 322; Eaton, *Kingship*, 64.

and 69; these seven psalms begin with the vocative Elohîm in the opening lines and contain shifts in direction of address. The B group includes Psalms 5, 17, 35, 86, and 141; these five psalms begin with the vocative Yhwh in the opening lines and contain no change in direction of address.

3.1.2 The Syntactic Constraints of the Lines and Their Distributions

Assessing the syntactic descriptions of the twenty psalms previously analyzed in Chapter Two, using the case of one-clause-predicator lines as an example, my corpus of the twenty psalms consists of 531 one-clause-predicator lines out of the total 737 lines, 72%. Compare this figure to the 71% of the HVS's corpora of texts; the two ratios are almost equal. The 72% is a representative figure for one-clause-predicator lines in 737 poetic lines of the twenty psalms as a single corpus of text, just as 71% is for 1,200 lines of HVS's corpora of texts (850/1,200).[217]

However, it should be made clear that the 72% figure is not the comparable range of one-clause-predicator lines representing every individual psalm in my corpus of texts. Likewise, the 71% is not a representative figure for every individual text in the case of HVS. The reason is that the sample psalms contain uneven distributions of various types of constraints.[218]

The uneven distribution tendency will skew the result even more significantly if the body of sample texts is a collection of various corpora of texts consisting of different

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[217] O'Connor, *HVS*, 321.

[218] For example, 35% of the lines in Psalm 70 are one-clause-predicator lines compared to 72% of the 737 lines. A large gap of 32% difference resulted from uneven distributions.

textual traditions that contain different syntactic descriptions, as in the case of HVS.[219] Unless the collection of the sample texts exhibits some comparable uniformity in syntactic patterns, such ratios/results cannot serve as the basis for any meaningful comparison. Yet it is the variations/dissimilarities and the commonalities in the syntactic structures of the lines within and between the two groups of psalms which I hope to identify so that comparisons might be possible.

3.1.3 The Structures of the Lines and Line Types of the Twenty Psalms

As analyzed in Chapter Two, the 737 lines of the twenty psalms of my corpus of texts appear in twenty-eight different line structures.[220] I will classify these twenty-eight line structures in accord with the rates of occurrence, starting with the most regular and ending with the least (cf. Table 3.1.3 on the next page). Type I will be the most regular, i.e., highest rate of occurrence. The second to the highest rate of occurrence will be Type II. The third most regular lines will be Type III; and the least regular lines will be Type IV.

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[219] The 1,200 lines analyzed in HVS came from various corpora of texts: 453 lines came from the Pentateuch (Genesis 49, Deuteronomy 32, Deuteronomy 33, Exodus 15, and Numbers 23-24), 414 lines from the Prophets (Judge 5, 2 Samuel 1, Habakkuk 3, and the Book of Zephaniah), and 358 lines from the Psalter (Psalms 78, 106, and 107). Close examination revealed that Zephaniah 1-3 has different poetic description from Psalms 78, 106, and 107. O'Connor, *HVS*, 164.

[220] The syntactic constraints of the lines of the twenty psalms are the same as HVS's matrix; numerically it accounts for sixty-four combinations but due to the syntactic constraints, only thirty-five combinations are possible. My corpus of texts has twenty-eight different line structures out of the possible thirty-five. For detailed explanations, see O'Connor, *HVS*, 315-16.

Table 3.1.3
Syntactical Structures and Line Types

Type I
123 (1 clause-2 constituents- 3 units)
133 (1 clause- 3 constituents- 3 units)
122 (1 clause-2 constituents- 2 units)
Total lines in Type I = 412 lines/737 lines (56%)
Type II
134 (1 clause-3 constituents- 4 units)
233 (2 clauses-3 constituents- 3 units)
124 (1 clause-2 constituents- 4 units)
244 (2 clauses-4constituents- 4 units)
234 (2 clauses-3 constituents- 4 units)
Total lines in Type II = 217 lines/737 lines (29%)
Type III
022 (0 clause- 2 constituents- 2 units)
222 (2 clauses- 2 constituents- 2 units)
012 (0 clause- 1 constituent- 2 units)
013 (0 clause- 1 constituents- 3 units)
144 (1 clause- 4 constituents- 4 units)
024 (clause- 2 constituents- 4 units)
Total lines in Type III = 72 lines/737 lines (10%)
Type IV
014 (0 clause- 1 constituents- 4 units)
135 (1 clause- 3 constituents- 5 units)
235 (2 clauses- 3 constituents- 5 units)
245 (2 clauses- 4 constituents- 5 units)
333 (3 clauses- 3 constituents- 3 units)
014 (0 clauses- 1 constituent- 4 units)
023 (0 clause- 2 constituents- 3 units)
145 (1 clause- 4 constituents- 5 units)
034 (0 clauses- 3 constituents- 4 units)
033 (0 clauses- 3 constituents- 3 units)
344 (3 clauses- 4 constituents- 4 units)
113 (1 clause- 1 constituent- 3 units)
112 (1 clause- 1 constituent- 2 units)
145 (1 clause- 4 constituents- 5 units)
Total lines in Type IV = 36 lines/737 lines (5%)

As illustrated above, Type I lines in my corpus of texts includes 412 lines (56%); Type II includes 217 lines (29%); Type III includes 72 lines (10%); and Type IV includes 36 lines (5%). One notes that this line typology is similar to that of HVS, the combinations that made up the line types are almost the same.[221] Again, the same arithmetic principle shown in the previous section also applies to these tabulations; the results shown in above list for my corpus of texts do not represent the actual numerical ranges of the four line types and their rates of occurrences for each individual psalm due to uneven distributions of data. However, what has been confirmed is significant; the results of the combined 737 lines and the 1,200 lines of biblical Hebrew verse have shown that the order of regularity of the four line types is accurate, i.e., Type I is the most regular, Type II is the second most and so on.

Yet however representative the findings might be with respect to the regularities of certain types of syntactic structures of the lines of the biblical Hebrew verse, the findings do not exemplify the syntactic description of individual psalms of the sample texts. The results are generic due to uneven distributions of the rates of occurrences of the line types (the same applied to the individual texts of the HVS). Again, it is the disparity and parity in the structures of the lines and their rates of occurrence within and between the twenty psalms that are crucial supporting arguments that I hope to identify in the next step, so that the literary forms of a psalm or group(s) of psalms might be syntactically characterized.

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[221] The percentile ratios of the four line types in my corpus of texts are roughly equal to that of the 1,200 lines analyzed in HVS (56%, 29%, 10%, and 5% compared to HVS's 63%, 20%, 12%, and 5% for Type I-IV respectively); O'Connor, *HVS*, 319-20.

In the preceding, I have presented the line types representing all twenty psalms, i.e., the entire corpus of texts. What will be presented in table T.3.1.3A below are the lines types and their rates of occurrences of each individual psalm in the A group (Psalms 54, 55, 56, 57, 59, 64, and 69; these psalms contain shifts in direction of address). Similarly, table T.3.1.3B will present the four line types of the psalms in the B group (Psalms 5, 17, 35, 86, and 141; these psalms contain no shift in direction of address).

A few remarks should be made concerning the reading of the numerical figures presented in the following tables. Table T.3.1.3A below shows that the fifteen-line Psalm 54 includes two lines having 122 line structure (122 represents one clause predicator/ two constituents/ two units line structure), five lines having 123 line structure, and five lines having 133 line structure. The percentile ratios of 122-line type over the total lines of the poem is 13% (2/15), and 123-line type is 33% (5/15), and of 133-line type is 33% (5/15). Adding these three ratios gives 79% rate of occurrence of Type I lines in Psalm 54.

Table 3.1.3A

The four line types of group A: Psalms 54, 55, 56, 57, 59, 64, and 69
(these psalms contain shifts in directions of addresses)

T.3.1.3A	Psalm 54	Psalm 55	Psalm 56	Psalm 57	Psalm 59	Psalm 64	Psalm 69
Length of poem	15 lines	58 lines	34 lines	30 lines	46 lines	24 lines	80 lines
Type I	Most regular line type in percentiles						
122	13	31	18	17	30	18	12
123	33	10	6	27	16	21	23
133	33	22	41	13	26	33	30
Total	79%	63%	65%	67%	72%	72%	65%
Type II	Second most regular line type in percentiles						
233	20	6	9	13	7	4	6
134		10	12	7	2	4	6
124			3		4	4	
244		3	3		2		6
234					4	8	4
Total	20%	19%	27%	20%	19%	20%	22%
Type III	Third most regular line type in percentiles						
022				2			1
222		2	6	10			1
012		3	2		7		1
013		7				4	1
024					2		1
144		2		3		4	3
Total	0	14%	8%	15%	9%	8%	8%
Type IV	Least regular line type in percentiles						
135							3
245		2					
333				3			
344		2					
355				3			
014							1
033				2			
113							1
112							1
Total	0%	4%	0	8%	0	0	6%

Table 3.1.3B

The four line types of group B: Psalms 5, 17, 35, 86, and 141
(these psalms contain no shift in direction of address)

T.3.1.3B	Psalm 5	Psalm 17	Psalm 35	Psalm 86	Psalm 141
Length of poem	34 lines	40 lines	71 lines	41 lines	24 lines
Type I	Most regular line type in percentiles				
122	31	23	21	20	8
123	16	8	20	18	8
133	6	20	14	10	17
Total	53%	51%	55%	48%	33%
Type II	Second most regular line type in percentiles				
134	13	13	10	10	21
233	6	10	10	12	2
124	6	7	3	2	4
244	10			12	8
234	3	8	3	8	8
Total	38%	38%	26%	44%	43%
Type III	Third most regular line type in percentiles				
022	3	3	3		
222	3		1	3	
012			6		
013			1		8
024		5		2	
Total	6%	8%	11%	5%	8%
Type IV	Least regular line type in percentiles				
144			3		
135	3				
235				3	
245			1		
333			1		
334					12
014					4
023		3	3		
Total	3%	3%	5%	3%	16%

Table 3.1.3C
Line types in percentile for groups A and B

Line Types	Range of Group A (Psalms 54, 55, 56, 57, 59, 64, and 69)	Range of Group B (Psalms 5, 17, 35, 86, and 141)
Type I	63-79%	33-55%
Type II	19-22%	26-44%
Type III	8-15%	5-11%
Type IV	4-8%	3-16%

As shown in tables T.3.1.3A, T.3.1.3B, and T.3.1.3C, the degree of regularity of four line types of the psalms in the A group are predictable; the numbers are roughly equal to that claimed by HVS. For the B group, all line types are somewhat irregular; yet the order of regularity confirms HVS's claim, i.e., Type I being the most common, Type II is next to most common and so on; the same for the psalms in A group. Comparing the two groups, one notes the significant differences in the rates of occurrences in all four types, most noticeably Types I and Type II. The rate of occurrence in Type I for the psalms in the A group is larger than the rate of occurrence in Type I for the psalms in the B group. Conversely, the rate of occurrence in Type II for the psalms in the A group is smaller than the rate of occurrence in Type II for the psalms in the B group.

The above analyses show that the variations in syntactic descriptions, i.e., line types and rates of occurrences, of the classic Individual Laments do exist between those containing changes in direction of address and those that do not contain such changes. At

the same time, the comparability in line types and rates of occurrences also exists among the psalms within the same group(s).

To explain in more details the variations in syntactic descriptions of the two groups of psalms illustrated in the preceding Table 3.1.3C, the texts of Psalms 54 and 141 are given side by side on the next page; Psalm 54 represents group A psalms and Psalm 141 represents group B. Since the translations and syntactic analyses for these two psalms are already provided in Chapter Two, there is no need to present them here. What will be clearly visible from the texts of these two psalms is the significant difference in the surface structure of the lines of the two psalms. One will note that the lines in Psalm 54 are generally shorter than the lines in Psalm 141. Comparing the two psalms, one also will note that Psalm 54 is composed in a much simpler form; the majority of the lines are one-clause-predicator lines with two to three constituents and two to three words, i.e., simple sentences.

In contrast, the syntactic structures of the lines in Psalm 141 are much more elaborate; the majority of the lines, more than three quarter of the poem, contain two to three clause predicators, three to four constituents, and three to four words, i.e., compound or complex sentences. One will also note that unlike Psalm 54 and many other psalms in the Individual Laments, Psalm 141 does not end with praise or promise of praise. In contrast, Psalm 54 ends with praise.

Psalm 54

[3] אֱלֹהִים בְּשִׁמְךָ֥ וֹשִׁיעֵ֑נִי
וּבִגְבוּרָתְךָ֥ תְּדִינֵֽנִי׃
[4] אֱלֹהִ֥ים שְׁמַ֗ע תְּפִלָּתִ֑י
הַ֝אֲזִינָ֗ה לְאִמְרֵי־פִֽי׃
[5] כִּ֤י זָרִ֨ים ׀ קָ֘מוּ עָלַ֤י
וְעָרִיצִ֨ים ׀ בִּקְשׁ֬וּ נַפְשִׁ֗י
לֹ֣א שָׂ֭מוּ אֱלֹהִ֣ים לְנֶגְדָּ֑ם סֶֽלָה׃

[6] הִנֵּ֣ה אֱלֹהִ֣ים עֹזֵ֣ר לִ֑י
אֲדֹנָ֥י בְּסֹמְכֵ֖י נַפְשִֽׁי׃
[7] יָשִׁ֣וב הָ֭רַע לְשֹׁרְרָ֑י
בַּֽאֲמִתְּךָ֥ הַצְמִיתֵֽם׃
[8] בִּנְדָבָ֥ה אֶ֝זְבְּחָ֗ה־לָּךְ֥
אוֹדֶ֥ה שִׁמְךָ֥ יְהוָ֑ה כִּי־טֽוֹב׃
[9] כִּ֤י מִכָּל־צָ֨רָה ׀ הִצִּילָ֗נִי
וּ֝בְאֹיְבַ֗י רָאֲתָ֥ה עֵינִֽי׃

Psalm 141

[1] יְהוָ֗ה קְרָאתִ֥יךָ חִ֑ישָׁה לִ֝֗י
הַאֲזִינָ֥ה קוֹלִ֗י בְּקָרְאִי־לָֽךְ׃
[2] תִּכּ֣וֹן תְּפִלָּתִ֣י קְטֹ֣רֶת לְפָנֶ֑יךָ
מַשְׂאַ֖ת כַּפַּ֣י מִנְחַ֣ת עָ֝רֶֽב׃

[3] שִׁיתָ֣ה ׀ יְהוָ֣ה שָׁ֭מְרָה לְפִ֑י
נְצֹ֖רָה עַל־דַּ֣לֶת שְׂפָתָֽי׃
[4] אַל־תַּ֣ט־לִבִּ֣י לְדָבָ֗רr
רָ֫ע לְהִתְעוֹלֵ֥ל עֲלִלוֹתr
בְּרֶ֥שַׁע אֶת־אִישֵׁ֑י פְּעָלֵי־אָ֗וֶן
וּבַל־אֶ֥לְחַ֖ם בְּמַנְעַמֵּיהֶֽם׃

[5] יֶ֭הֱלְמֵנִי־צַדִּ֣יקr חֶ֑סֶד
וְיוֹכִיחֵ֥נִי שֶׁ֝֗מֶן רֹ֣אשׁ
אַל־יָנֵ֥ע רֹאשִׁ֑י
כִּֽי־עוֹד֮ וּתְפִלָּתִ֪י בְּרָעוֹתֵיהֶ֫ם׃
[6] נִשְׁמְט֣וּ בִֽידֵי־סֶ֭לַע שֹׁפְטֵיהֶ֑ם
וְשָׁמְע֥וּ אֲמָרַ֗י כִּ֣י נָעֲמ֑וּ׃
[7] כְּמ֤וֹ פֹ֣לֵַח וּבֹקֵ֣עַ בָּ֭אָרֶץ
נְפֻזְר֥וּ עַצְמֵ֗ינוּ לְפִ֥י שְׁאֽוֹל׃

[8] כִּ֤י אֵ֣לֶיךָ ׀ יְהוִ֣ה אֲדֹנָ֣י עֵינָ֑י
בָּ֝כָ֗ה חָסְתִּ֥י אַל־תְּעַר נַפְשִֽׁי׃
[9] שָׁמְרַ֣נִי מִיֵּדִ֣י פַ֭ח יָקְשׁ֣וּ לִ֑י
וּמֹקְשׁ֥וֹת פֹּעֲלֵי־אָֽוֶן׃
[10] יִפְּל֣וּ בְמַכְמֹרָ֣יו רְשָׁעִ֑ים
יַ֝חַד אָנֹכִ֗י עַד־אֶעֱבֽוֹר׃

In my corpus of texts, the kingship motif is striking in Psalm 61. This psalm contains the petition for the king and has no petition against the enemies; it also has no lament/complaint motifs. One recalls the gross structure of this psalm as outlined in Chapter Two: a) Summons and petition for help and protection (vv. 2-5), b) Petition for the king and promise of praise (vv. 6-9). Therefore, the classic form-critical Individual Lament genre for this psalm is difficult to accept. It is more accurate to describe this psalm as a petitionary prayer of, or for, a king.[222] The poetic description of this psalm further supports this claim, as illustrated in Table T.3.1.3E below; the uniqueness of syntactic description of this psalm is apparent:

Table T.3.1.3D
Comparisons of Line Types of Psalm 61 to Groups A and B

Line Types	Psalms 54, 55, 56, 57, 59, 64, 69	Psalms 5, 17, 35, 86, and 141	Psalm 61
Type I	63-79%	33-53%	30%
Type II	19-22%	26-44%	60%
Type III	8-15%	5-11%	10%
Type IV	4-8%	3-16%	0%

My syntactic analysis of this psalm shows that in contrast to the predictable line types of both A and B groups, the line types of Psalm 61 are highly irregular. The frequency of its Type I is less than those psalms in both groups. Its Type II frequency is higher than the Type II of both A and B groups. The frequency of Type II of Psalm 61 is higher than its Type I in a 2:1 ratio (60% Type II vs. 30% Type I). It has no Type IV and contains only nine different combinations of constraints out of a possible 35.

[222] So Dahood, *Psalms I*, 83-84.

Given below are the texts of Psalm 61 and Psalm 54 for comparison. One will note that more than half of the lines in Psalm 61 are Type II (one to two clause predicators, two to four constituents, and two to four units). As the result, the lines in Psalm 61 are generally longer than the lines in Psalm 54 (the majority of the lines in Psalm 54 are Type I: one clause predicator, two to three constituents, and two to three units). One recalls that the petition for the king in this psalm has set it apart from the rest of the classic Individual Laments under study. To be sure, the difference in the syntactic description rests on this petition for the king paragraph of the psalm (vv. 6-9). The syntax of the lines in this section of the psalm is more elaborate, and the lines are longer (four to five words in a line), i.e., Type II lines.

Psalm 61

2 שִׁמְעָה אֱלֹהִים רִנָּתִי
הַקְשִׁיבָה תְּפִלָּתִי:
3 מִקְצֵה הָאָרֶץ
אֵלֶיךָ אֶקְרָא בַּעֲטֹף לִבִּי
בְּצוּר־יָרוּם מִמֶּנִּי תַנְחֵנִי:
4 כִּי־הָיִיתָ מַחְסֶה לִּי
מִגְדַּל־עֹז מִפְּנֵי אוֹיֵב:
5 אָגוּרָה בְאָהֳלְךָ עוֹלָמִים
אֶחֱסֶה בְסֵתֶר כְּנָפֶיךָ סֶלָה:

6 כִּי־אַתָּה אֱלֹהִים שָׁמַעְתָּ לִנְדָרָי
נָתַתָּ יְרֻשַּׁת יִרְאֵי שְׁמֶךָ:
7 יָמִים עַל־יְמֵי־מֶלֶךְ תּוֹסִיף
שְׁנוֹתָיו כְּמוֹ־דֹר וָדֹר:
8 יֵשֵׁב עוֹלָם לִפְנֵי אֱלֹהִים
חֶסֶד וֶאֱמֶת מַן יְנָצְרֵהוּ:
9 כֵּן אְזַמְּרָה שִׁמְךָ לָעַד
לְשַׁלְּמִי נְדָרַי יוֹם יוֹם:

Psalm 54

3 אֱלֹהִים בִּשְׁמְךָ וּשְׁיעֵנִי
וּבִגְבוּרָתְךָ תְּדִינֵנִי:
4 אֱלֹהִים שְׁמַע תְּפִלָּתִי
הַאֲזִינָה לְאִמְרֵי־פִי:
5 כִּי זָרִים קָמוּ עָלַי
וְעָרִיצִים בִּקְשׁוּ נַפְשִׁי
לֹא שָׂמוּ אֱלֹהִים לְנֶגְדָּם סֶלָה:

6 הִנֵּה אֱלֹהִים עֹזֵר לִי
אֲדֹנָי בְּסֹמְכֵי נַפְשִׁי:
7 יָשֻׁב הָרַע לְשֹׁרְרָי
בַּאֲמִתְּךָ הַצְמִיתֵם:
8 בִּנְדָבָה אֶזְבְּחָה־לָּךְ
אוֹדֶה שִׁמְךָ יְהוָה כִּי־טוֹב:
9 כִּי מִכָּל־צָרָה הִצִּילָנִי
וּבְאֹיְבַי רָאֲתָה עֵינִי:

3.2.0 Issues Related to the Classic Individual Laments as a Genre

The second part of this chapter will focus on issues related to the classic form-critical Individual Lament genre for the twenty psalms under study. The first discussion will focus on issues related to the poetical structure of a prayer in light of the findings in the first part of the chapter. The second discussion will compare the psalms under study to the other representative Individual Laments in the Psalter.

3.2.1 Concerning the Poetical Structure of Petitionary Psalms

The theological issues related to the definition of a poetic prayer and their surface prosodic forms are complex.[223] In the *Traditional Prayer in the Psalms,* Aejmelaeus attempted to trace the development of traditional prayers from pre-exilic to post-exilic time. Her observation and assessment of the vocative-imperative-motivation clause pattern employed in the classic Individual Laments deserves some comment. Aejmelaeus writes,

> The features which were found to recur, the imperative petitions, the address to Yahweh, and the introduction of expressions of complaint or confidence in Yahweh or the like by employment of the connective כי, seems to constitute a basic pattern common to a great number of individual complaint psalms. This pattern may be understood as a basic element or nucleus of which and around which further forms of prayer could in various ways develop or be developed. [224]

Aejmelaeus claims that the basic vocative Yhwh-imperative-כי clause pattern is typical of a Hebrew basic mode of expression and points toward an early Israelite traditional mode of expression in prayers, rather than a late poetic construction. Aejmelaeus suggests calling these psalms *traditional prayers*. Aejmelaeus' assertion

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[223] Patrick D. Miller, "Current Issues in Psalms Studies," *WW* 5/2 (1986) 132-43.
[224] Aejmelaeus, *Traditional,* 85.

relates directly to the complex issues concerning the origin of the poetic tradition and the form and content of a traditional poetic prayer. In the following section, I will discuss the latter in my analysis of Psalm 39. Concerning the former, to be clear, the use of the vocative-imperative-כי clause pattern in the Individual Laments does not warrant the early date of origin of those psalms, i.e., pre-exilic; and the vocative-imperative-motivational clause pattern is not the mode of expression typically used in prayers only (cf. Provs 4:1-2b; 23:19-21). The reasons are these:

1. It is difficult to determine whether the original forms of the psalms in question have gone through extensive late editorial reworks or not, i.e., the final form might be the original or very close to it. Consider Psalms 141 and 143, these two psalms contain the vocative Yhwh-imperative pattern; however, many do not consider Psalms 141 and 143 as having pre-exilic origin, neither do scholars claim that these two psalms contain traces of editorial reworking.[225]
2. Late linguistic markers in the psalms in question can argue against the early date.
3. While the vocative-imperative-motivational clause pattern might be typical in the Psalter, this mode of speech was not used exclusively to address the Deity in poetic prayer (cf. Provs 4:1-2b; 23:19-21).

[225] So Broyles, *Psalms*, 37; as also Terrien, *Psalms*, 887, 895; and Kraus, *Psalms II*, 527, 536.

4. The vocative-imperative-motivational clause pattern does not occur only with the vocative Yhwh (the vocative-imperative-motivational clause pattern in the opening lines of Psalms 54-57 employ the vocative Elohîm).

However, Aejmelaeus' claims concerning the use of vocative (Yhwh)-imperative combination in the Individual Laments cannot be totally dismissed; as I have shown in Chapter Two, the occurrence of this pattern marks the distinctive mode of speech for many psalms in my corpus of texts, e.g., Psalms 5, 26, 54, and 86.

On a different genre classification suggestion, Craig C. Broyles differentiates two sub-classes within the psalms of lament: 1) in the psalms of plea, the psalmists address God to request divine intervention, and 2) in the psalms of complaint, i.e., the God-lament, the psalmists complain against God.[226] However, one cannot draw a clear line between Broyles' God-lament psalms and petitionary psalms, since petitionary expressions are prevalent, even more prevalent than the God-lament motifs, in the so-called God-lament psalms.

While it is doubtful that one can establish a clearly defined set of criteria differentiating the two classes, a casual reading of the lament psalms can identify those psalms that contain the motif of God-lament and those that do not. Assuming one agrees with Gunkel's Individual Lament genre designation, there are quite a few Individual Laments that do not begin with the vocative and imperative combination in the opening lines. These are Psalms 3, 6, 7, 13, 22, 25, 28, 31, 38, 39, 42, 63, 71, 88, 109, 120, 130, and 142 (hereafter C group for ease of cross reference). Out of this group, a significant

[226] Craig C. Broyles, *The Conflict of Faith and Experience in the Psalms: A Form-Critical and Theological Study* (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1989) 35-51.

number of psalms contain complaints against God (Psalms 3, 6, 13, 22, 38, 39, 42, and 88).

In contrast, one notes that with the exception of Psalms 43 and 102, eighteen out of the twenty psalms of my corpus of texts have no God-lament motif. Regarding Psalms 43 and 102, I have discussed the difficulties regarding the genre of Psalms 43 and 102, so there is no need to repeat them here. Therefore, one may claim that in the classic Individual Lament genre, generally those psalms containing the vocative-imperative combination in the opening lines are not God-lament psalms, i.e., having no complaints against God. The opposite is not true, however, since many of the psalms in the C group identified on the preceding paragraph are also not God-lament psalms.

It is therefore more accurate to describe the psalms in my corpus of texts as prayer psalms or prayer songs instead of complaint/lament psalms, for these psalms primarily function as petitions/pleas to God for help.[227] Yet, if these prayers are speeches addressed to God for help, then it also implies that these monologues are directed to God's hearing alone in petition for removing the crisis or lessening the sufferings of the petitioner. What then can one make of the phenomena of the shifts in the direction of addresses in many of the classic Individual Laments? As analyzed in the preceding section, my corpus of sample texts contains five psalms that address the Deity in their entirety (Psalms 5, 17, 35, 86, and 141), and seven psalms have shifts in direct address (Psalms 54, 55, 56, 57, 59, 64, and 69). Also in the preceding section, I have shown that the syntactic structures of the lines of these two groups of psalms are uniformly

[227] As also Broyles, *Conflict*, 35-51; and Kraus, *Psalms 1-59*, 38-42.

comparable within each group, and that the line types of the two groups have different rates of occurrences. As noted in the structure analyses of the twenty psalms in chapter two, the change in the direction of address often marks a change in mode of speech, i.e., a break in the surface structure of the poem as the structure outlines of Psalms 54, 55, 56, 57, 59, 64, and 69 have shown. These psalms open with vocative phrases naming the Deity as the person to whom the speech is addressed.

However, not only do these psalms directly speak to the Deity using second-person singular verb forms, but they also speak about the Deity using third-person singular verbal forms in many instances. The question is then to whom the statements of "speaking about the Deity" are directed? [228]

One logical explanation for such shifting of address from second-person singular to third-person singular with reference to the Deity is that it is a literary phenomenon, i.e., an oblique form of direct address that recurs quite often in biblical Hebrew verse. Another explanation is that the "speaking about the Deity" suggests the presence of human audiences. Some have suggested that the Psalms of Lament were composed for

[228] One good discussion concerning the shifts in direction of address is the dissertation by Weldon D. Suderman, "Prayers Heard and Overheard: Shifting Address and Methodological Matrices in Psalms Scholarship," (Ph.D. diss., University of St. Michael's College, 2007). In addition, the following recent studies also contain good discussions regarding the topic of change of mood in the psalms of laments: Carl J. Bosma "Discerning the Voices in the Psalms: A Discussion of Two Problems in Psalmic Interpretation," *CTJ* 7/43 (2008) 183-212; and "Discerning the voices in the Psalms. Part 2: A Discussion of Two Problems in Psalmic Interpretation," *CTJ* 44/1 (2009) 127-170; Karlfried Froehlich, "Discerning the Voices: Praise and Lament in the Tradition of the Christian Psalter," *CTJ* 36 (2001) 75-90; Carleen Mandolfo, *God in the Dock: Dialogic Tension in the Psalms of Lament* (JSOTSup 357; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002); also Federico G. Villanueva, *The Uncertainty of a Hearing: A Study of the Sudden Change of Mood in the Psalms of Lament* (VTSup 121; Leiden, Neitherlands: Brill, 2008).

continuing use in liturgical and ritual settings, i.e., primarily communal and not individual.[229]

Further complicating the issues, the change in direction of address does not always involve change from speech directed to God to descriptive speech about God, i.e., shifts from second-person singular to third-person singular verbal forms in reference to the Deity. One example is Psalm 43; this psalm contains a change of subject in the direction of speech. Psalm 43 starts out with the familiar opening lines and progresses through the structure of a prayer psalm addressing the Deity directly, using second-person singular verb forms (Ps 43:1-3). Nonetheless, it changes the direction of address briefly in v. 4, speaking about the Deity in third-person singular forms (an oblique form of direct address?). The direction of address then shifts again in the ending with self-addressed meditation/motivation expressions in v. 5. As printed in the BHS, can one call the entire composition of Psalm 43 a petitionary prayer?

The quick reading of the structural analysis of Psalm 39 given on the next page will further illustrate the complex phenomena of the shift in the direction of address and the difficulty in interpreting every classic Individual Lament as a single poetic composition of petitionary prayer:

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[229] Sigmund Mowinckel, *The Psalms in Israel's Worship* (2 vols.; trans. D. R. Ap-Thomas; Nashville Abingdon, 1962) 1. 1-22; Gerstenberger, *Psalms:Part I*, 11-14.

Psalm 39

2 אָמַ֗רְתִּי אֶשְׁמְרָ֣ה דְרָכַ֑י	I said, "I will guard my ways
מֵחֲטֹ֥א בִלְשׁוֹנִ֑י	That I may not sin with my tongue;
אֶ֝שְׁמְרָ֗ה לְפִ֤י מַחְסֹ֥ם	I will keep a muzzle on my mouth
בְּעֹ֤ד רָ֨שָׁ֥ע לְנֶגְדִּֽי׃	As long as the wicked are in my presence."
3 נֶ֭אֱלַמְתִּי דוּמִיָּ֑ה	I was silent and still;
הֶֽחֱשֵׁ֥יתִי מִטּ֗וֹב	I held my peace to no avail;
וּכְאֵבִ֥י נֶעְכָּֽר׃	My distress grew worse,
4 חַם־לִ֭בִּי בְּקִרְבִּ֑י	My heart became hot within me.
בַּהֲגִיגִ֥י תִבְעַר־אֵ֗שׁ	While I mused, the fire burned;
דִּבַּ֥רְתִּי בִלְשֹׁנִֽי׃	Then I spoke with my tongue:
5 הוֹדִ֣יעֵ֭נִי יְהוָ֣ה קִצִּ֑י	"LORD, let me know my end,
וּמִדַּ֥ת יָ֝מַ֗י מַה־הִ֥יא	And what is the measure of my days;
אֵ֭דְעָה מֶה־חָדֵ֣ל אָנִֽי׃	Let me know how fleeting my life is.
6 הִנֵּ֣ה טְפָח֣וֹת נָ֭תַתָּה יָמָ֑י	You have made my days a few handbreadths,
וְחֶלְדִּ֥י כְאַ֝יִן נֶ֗גְדֶּךָ	And my lifetime is as nothing in your sight.
אַ֤ךְ כָּל־הֶ֨בֶל֮ כָּל־אָ֪דָם נִצָּ֥ב סֶ֗לָה׃	Surely everyone stands as a mere breath. *Selah*
7 אַךְ־בְּצֶ֣לֶם ׀ יִתְהַלֶּךְ־אִ֗ישׁ	Surely everyone goes about like a shadow.
אַךְ־הֶ֭בֶל יֶהֱמָיֽוּן	Surely for nothing they are in turmoil;
יִ֝צְבֹּ֗ר וְלֹא־יֵדַ֥ע מִי־אֹסְפָֽם׃	They heap up, and do not know who will gather.
8 וְעַתָּ֣ה מַה־קִּוִּ֣יתִי אֲדֹנָ֑י	"And now, O Lord, what do I wait for?
תּוֹחַלְתִּ֖י לְךָ֣ הִֽיא׃	My hope is in you.
9 מִכָּל־פְּשָׁעַ֣י הַצִּילֵ֑נִי	Deliver me from all my transgressions.
חֶרְפַּ֖ת נָבָ֣ל אַל־תְּשִׂימֵֽנִי׃	Do not make me the scorn of the fool.
10 נֶ֭אֱלַמְתִּי לֹ֣א אֶפְתַּח־פִּ֑י	I am silent; I do not open my mouth,
כִּ֖י אַתָּ֣ה עָשִׂ֣יתָ׃	For it is you who have done it.
11 הָסֵ֣ר מֵעָלַ֣י נִגְעֶ֑ךָ	Remove your stroke from me;
מִתִּגְרַ֖ת יָדְךָ֣ אֲנִ֣י כָלִ֔יתִי׃	I am worn down by the blows of your hand.
12 בְּתוֹכָ֤חוֹת עַל־עָ֨וֹן ׀ יִסַּ֬רְתָּ אִ֗ישׁ	"You chastise mortals in punishment for sin,
וַתָּ֣מֶס כָּעָ֣שׁ חֲמוּדֽוֹ	Consuming like a moth what is dear to them;
אַךְ־הֶ֖בֶל כָּל־אָדָ֣ם סֶֽלָה׃	surely everyone is a mere breath. *Selah*
13 שִׁמְעָ֣ה־תְפִלָּתִ֣י יְהוָ֑ה	"Hear my prayer, O LORD,
וְשַׁוְעָתִ֖י הַאֲזִינָ֣ה ׀	And give ear to my cry;
אֶל־דִּמְעָתִ֣י אַל־תֶּחֱרַ֑שׁ	do not hold your peace at my tears.
כִּ֤י גֵ֣ר אָ֭נֹכִי עִמָּ֑ךְ	For I am your passing guest,
תּוֹשָׁ֥ב כְּכָל־אֲבוֹתָֽי׃	An alien, like all my forebears.
14 הָשַׁ֣ע מִמֶּ֣נִּי וְאַבְלִ֑יגָה	Turn your gaze away from me, that I may smile again,
בְּטֶ֖רֶם אֵלֵ֣ךְ וְאֵינֶֽנִּי׃	Before I depart and am no more." (NRSV)

Psalm 39 can be outlined as follow:

I. Reflection and meditation (vv. 2-4)

II. Direct speech: Prayer to God (vv. 5-14)

a) Complaint against God, (contains wisdom motifs, vv. 5-7)

b) Complaint against God (vv. 8-12)

c) Summons and general petitions (vv. 13-14)

The structure of Psalm 39 is unique; this psalm addresses God using second-person singular forms throughout vv. 5-12 of the psalm. One notes that, unlike the psalms in my corpus of texts, the familiar pattern of the vocative-imperative-causal clause does not appear at the beginning but at the final paragraph of the poem. There is no commonality in the opening lines in the first half structure of this psalm and the opening lines of the psalms in my corpus of texts.

In this psalm, the opening paragraph is the poet's self-reflection/meditation that begins with the quotation marker אָמַרְתִּי. Immediately followed the meditation the psalmist addresses God directly using the quotation marker: דִּבַּרְתִּי. The question is then, "Who are the intended audiences in the opening paragraphs of the poem?" The human-Deity direct monologue takes place after v. 4 of the poem. The opening lines of the direct speech, i.e., the complaint against the Deity, vv. 5-7, contain wisdom motifs. The second half of the poem consists of the complaint and the petition mode of speech, which is also in the form of direct speech. Thus, the prayer addressed to God includes only vv. 5-14 of the psalm.

As the above analysis of its structure has shown, Psalm 39 does not have the familiar structures seen in my corpus of texts. The entire poetic composition does not resemble a structure of a petitionary prayer but a composition of self-reflection and prayer. Further, this psalm contains neither the motif of the enemy's oppression, nor petition for the enemy to be punished, nor praise, nor promise of praise. The structure analysis of Psalm 39 further supports the thesis of my dissertation that the structures of the psalms in my corpus of texts are different from those that do have such combinations in the opening lines.

The following examples, given on the next page, will further substantiate the difference in the opening lines between the psalms in my corpus of texts and other psalms in the classic Individual Laments. Instead of the usual vocative-imperative-causal clause pattern in the opening lines, i.e., summons-general petition-motivation clause, Psalms 3, 6, 13, 22, and 38 begin with the vocative-negative prohibitions or vocative-interrogative pattern expressing the complaints against God:

Ps 3:2-3

2 יְהוָה מָה־רַבּוּ צָרָי	O Yhwh, how my foes have increased!
רַבִּים קָמִים עָלָי:	Many are rising against me;
3 רַבִּים אֹמְרִים לְנַפְשִׁי	Many are saying to me,
אֵין יְשׁוּעָתָה לּוֹ בֵאלֹהִים סֶלָה:	"There is no deliverance for him in God."

Ps 6:2-4

2 יְהוָה אַל־בְּאַפְּךָ תוֹכִיחֵנִי	O Yhwh, do not rebuke me in your anger,
וְאַל־בַּחֲמָתְךָ תְיַסְּרֵנִי:	Nor discipline me in your wrath.
3 חָנֵּנִי יְהוָה כִּי אֻמְלַל אָנִי	Be gracious to me, O Yhwh, for I am weak;
רְפָאֵנִי יְהוָה	O Yhwh, heal me,
כִּי נִבְהֲלוּ עֲצָמָי:	For my bones are dismayed.
4 וְנַפְשִׁי נִבְהֲלָה מְאֹד	My soul also is greatly dismayed,
וְאַתָּה יְהוָה עַד־מָתָי:	But you, O Yhwh, how long?

Ps 13:2-3

2 עַד־אָנָה יְהוָה תִּשְׁכָּחֵנִי נֶצַח	How long, O Yhwh? Will you forget me forever?
עַד־אָנָה תַּסְתִּיר אֶת־פָּנֶיךָ מִמֶּנִּי:	How long will you hide your face from me?
3 עַד־אָנָה אָשִׁית עֵצוֹת בְּנַפְשִׁי	How long must I take counsel in my soul?
יָגוֹן בִּלְבָבִי יוֹמָם	Sorrow is in my heart all day long.
עַד־אָנָה יָרוּם אֹיְבִי עָלָי:	How long shall my enemy be exalted over me?

Ps 22:2-3

2 אֵלִי אֵלִי לָמָה עֲזַבְתָּנִי	My God, my God, why have you forsaken me;
רָחוֹק מִישׁוּעָתִי דִּבְרֵי שַׁאֲגָתִי:	So far from my deliverance, from the words of my groaning?
3 אֱלֹהַי אֶקְרָא יוֹמָם וְלֹא תַעֲנֶה	O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer;
וְלַיְלָה וְלֹא־דוּמִיָּה לִי:	And by night, and I have no rest.

Ps 38:2-3

2 יְהוָה אַל־בְּקֶצְפְּךָ תוֹכִיחֵנִי	O Yhwh, do not rebuke me in your anger,
וּבַחֲמָתְךָ תְיַסְּרֵנִי:	Or discipline me in your wrath.
3 כִּי־חִצֶּיךָ נָחֲתוּ בִי	For your arrows have sunk into me,
וַתִּנָּחֵת עָלַי יָדֶךָ:	And your hand has come down on me.

3.3 Conclusion

In the preceding section, I have grouped the selected twelve psalms into two separate groups based on the commonalities in modes of speeches and poetic descriptions (Psalms 5, 17, 35, 86, 141 as one group and Psalms 54, 55, 56, 57, 59, 64, and 69 as the other). These commonalities draw a clear line dividing these psalms into two distinctive groups of petitionary prayers. I suggest calling Psalms 54, 55, 56, 57, 59, 64, and 69 as *Petitioner- Elohîm -Overhearers* prayer songs since these psalms have the classic prayer style structures. What further sets these seven shift-in-direction-of-address psalms as a group is the employment of the vocative "Elohîm" in the opening line; Elohîm is directly addressed in the background presence of the overhearing audiences. These psalms are pleas to God for deliverance from the persecution of enemies (Psalms 56, 57, 59, 64, and 69), for vindication (Psalm 54), for deliverance from a treacherous friend (Psalm 55). Besides the commonality in the opening lines, these seven psalms share other commonalities listed below:

a) They have the basic prayer structure presented in Chapter Two.
b) They begin with a vocative and imperative combination in the opening lines, addressing the Deity directly using the vocative Elohîm.
c) Unlike many of the classic form-critical Individual Laments that do not begin with vocative and imperative combinations, they contain no complaint against God.
d) They are considered by many scholars as relatively earlier psalms (they are all in Book II of the Psalter).

e) They contain shifts in direction of address.

f) The rates of occurrence of their line types are predictably consistent and significantly different from Psalms 5, 17, 35, 86, and 141 (these psalms contain no changes in direction of address).

In contrast to Psalms 54, 55, 56, 57, 59, 64, and 69, the opening lines of Psalms 5, 17, 35, 86, and 141 employ the vocatives "Yhwh." I suggest calling these psalms *Petitioner-Yhwh prayer songs* since these psalms are also composed in petitionary prayer style but without change in direction of address. These prayer songs are pleas to Yhwh seeking divine deliverances from enemies (Psalms 5, 17, 35, 86), or the evil ones (Psalm 141). These prayer songs share the commonalities given below:

a) They have the basic prayer structure presented in Chapter Two.

b) They begin with the vocative and imperative combination in the opening lines, addressing the Deity using the divine name Yhwh.

c) Unlike many of the classic Individual Laments that do not begin with vocative and imperative combination, they contain no complaint against the Deity.

d) They contain no shift in direction of address, addressing the Deity alone in the entire compositions.

e) The rates of occurrences of their line types are predictably consistent and significantly different from Psalms 26, 54, 55, 56, 57, 59, 64, and 69 (these psalms contain change in direction of address).

Chapter Four

Conclusion

4.0 Introduction

The focus of this chapter will be on summarizing the content of the dissertation and assessing my thesis in light of the discussions in the previous chapters. In this chapter, I will recapitulate important points leading to the claims set forth in this dissertation.

The dissertation claims that O'Connor's Syntactic Description model can be useful in analyzing the structural patterns of the thirty-seven psalms in the Psalter that combine vocative and imperative in the opening lines. Using the Syntactic Description model, the dissertation investigates how such combination operates in a poem, especially as a way of opening a poem, and what effects it might have on the articulation, structure, and theological significance of the poem as a whole.

In Chapter One the dissertation states a two-fold argument: (1) that these thirty-seven psalms, specifically the twenty Individual Laments, have other similar structural features beyond the combination of vocative and imperative in the opening line, and (2) that the contents of these poems are structured differently than those composed without such opening combination of vocative and imperative.

The accuracy and reliability of the Syntactic Description as one important exegetical tool for the lineation, line structure, and gross structure delineation of the poem will be evaluated. I will also summarize the findings concerning the genre classification for the twenty psalms studied and conclude with closing remarks.

4.1 The Survey

In the first chapter, I have attempted to show that the pre-critical and recent studies of the biblical Hebrew verse clearly have not explained the rich and allusively complex literary and theological traditions of biblical poetry of the Psalter in full detail. The very basic question of what makes the text poetry has caused many disagreements and unresolved issues among scholars. One hallmark of biblical verse is the rhythmic structure balance between the lines of the poem, upon which the overall gross structure of the poem is united. While it is clear that this sense of rhythmic balance can be demonstrated through certain descriptive linguistic correspondences and parallelistic phenomena that occur within and between the basic building blocks of the poem, modern scholars have not yet to ascertain the regularity of these linguistic correspondences and their role in the overall structural cohesiveness of the poem.

For many scholars the rhythmic balance can be identified by the sounds of the words; for these scholars the suggestion that poetry is a language of thought and not sounds plays havoc with the ancient oral tradition of the biblical verse. Yet what has been ascertained about the metrical form of the biblical verse is the predominance of unregulated poetic lines, and that this predominance surely has overwhelmed the metrical models with unnecessary textual emendations, erroneous lineation, and incorrect structural delineation that subsequently have prevented the understanding of the poem. Future studies of the meter in biblical Hebrew verse might result in new rhythmic patterns of sounds, stresses, or accents, but for now, the poetry of the Psalter shows no signs of consistency in such systems.

For other scholars, the pre-critical Lowthian synonymous, antithetic, and synthetic parallelism of the bicolon system is the means by which the sense of rhythmic balance is conveyed through the meaning of the two adjacent lines, i.e., semantic parallelism. A modified semantic model that has the potential to replace the Lowthian model is one advanced by James Kugel as mentioned in Chapter One. This model, generally, claims that the meaning conveyed by the two adjacent lines, A and B, are interconnected.

It is well to focus on the meaning, but parallelism in itself has no meaning but is a linguistic phenomenon that can take place in many linguistic features besides semantic correspondences. According to Robert Lowth, the father of semantic parallelism, parallelistic correspondences of one line with another take place also in the form of grammatical construction. Hence, Adele Berlin carried out what Lowth had left unfinished by explaining the parallelistic phenomena of biblical Hebrew verse in a number of linguistic aspects.

However, in Chapter One, I have argued against the idea that parallelism is the hallmark of biblical Hebrew verse, and that Berlin's analysis approaches the poem from the angle of parallelistic phenomena that take place between the two adjacent lines only, i.e., the bicolon, and does not account for the linguistic phenomena that extend beyond the bicolon. Berlin's analysis does not address the syntactic features that form the structural cohesiveness of the poem, and necessarily so, since the focus of her *Dynamic of Biblical Parallelism* was the parallelistic phenomena of the bicola of the poem and not the poem itself.

Second, there are many instances where not one but several linguistic correspondences or parallelistic phenomena take place within a given bicolon. The question is then not in the defining of the types of parallelism but rather which linguistic correspondence or parallelistic phenomenon among those which took place in a given bicolon can serve as the determining criteria in identifying and classifying types of parallelism. Third, Berlin did not address the issue regarding the predominance of parallelism as a phenomenon in biblical Hebrew verse versus prose. Finally, regarding parallelism as the hallmark of biblical Hebrew verse one may ask: what are the function and effect of parallelism with respect to the understanding of the poem?

4.2 Assessment of Syntactic Description regarding Lineation

On the issue of lineation, students of the Old Testament know that the Talmudic scholars in both Babylonian and Palestinian traditions might have based the verse divisions on information drawn from the available manuscripts and on whatever information handed down from oral tradition they could gather.[230] The sense of rhythmic structure of the bicolon marked by the Masoretic disjunctive accents and cantillation accentuations might have reflected the way the text was delineated and interpreted in the Talmudic period even before the Masoretic tradition was established.[231] However, as mentioned in Chapter One, we have no treatise on the ancient art of biblical verse, and the invention of the Masoretic-Tiberian system is more than a millennium later than the

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[230] Cf. Würthwein, *Text*, 21.

[231] E. J. Revell, "The Interpretative Value of the Masoretic Punctuation," in *Hebrew Bible / Old Testament: The History of its Interpretation* (ed. Magne Saebo; vol. I, part 2; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 2000) 1. 64-73. See Bibliography for additional essays, articles, and monographs by Revell in this area.

time the ancient Hebrew psalms were first spoken. As the result, disparities in the lineation of poetic materials can be seen in modern English translations in many instances of the texts. The same goes for the modern Hebrew versions BH^3 and BHS of the MT, as O'Connor has pointed out in HVS.[232]

O'Connor's definition of a line was not made up from thin air; it was based on the assessment of 1,225 lines of the MT where "the vowels letters and word division of the MT are respected."[233] His lineation of Psalms 54, 78, 106, and 107 aligned with the MT's major disjunctive accents in the majority of the cases.[234] In my view, what HVS does in instances where the MT's lineation is dubious, e.g., Ps 17:1-3, is to employ the syntactical patterns/structures of the lines it has identified from the assessment of 1,225 lines as the guideline to resolve lineation difficulty (i.e., using the normal pattern to evaluate the abnormal pattern). From those conventional syntactic patterns/structures of the lines comes O'Connor's definition of a line described in grammatical terms. With this basic definition of a line, in instances where the lineation of the lines are difficult to determine as presented by BHS, one has a grammatical basis to argue against the editorial textual emendations and proposals that are often found to be metrically motivated (e.g., Ps 5:4; 26:1; 54:8; 102:6, 20).

Thus in this sense, besides Kosmala who came close in this regard, the late Michael P. O'Connor was the first to advance significantly the definition of the line of biblical Hebrew verse. I have illustrated in Chapter Two that O'Connor's definition of the

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[232] O'Connor, *HVS*, 167-296.
[233] O'Connor, *HVS*, 168.
[234] For O'Connor's analysis of Psalm 54, see *Contour of Biblical Hebrew Verse: An Afterword to Hebrew Verse Structure* (Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 1997).

line has proven to be very useful. As a summary, consider again the lineation of Ps 26:1 arranged by the MT and the editors of the BHS:

MT

שָׁפְטֵנִי יְהוָה כִּי־אֲנִי בְתֻמִּי הָלָכְתִּי
וּבַיהוָה בָּטַחְתִּי לֹא אֶמְעָד׃

BHS

שָׁפְטֵנִי יְהוָה כִּי־אֲנִי בְתֻמִּי הָלָכְתִּי
וּבַיהוָה בָּטַחְתִּי לֹא אֶמְעָד׃

The variation in lineation is apparent in some modern translations; the NIV arranges the verse in four lines; the NASV has it in two lines; and the NRSV scans three lines. Using the constraints of Syntactic Description, one has a grammatical basis of support to scan Ps 26:1 into three lines. As arranged below, the opening lines, i.e., the Summons and General Petition, generally contain one imperative and one vocative in the opening line. Two lines containing two causal clauses, i.e., syntactic dependency of subordination to the core clause, usually follow the opening line. The vocative-imperative-כי clause pattern is typical of biblical Hebrew verse in the Psalter:

שָׁפְטֵנִי יְהוָה
כִּי־אֲנִי בְתֻמִּי הָלָכְתִּי
וּבַיהוָה בָּטַחְתִּי לֹא אֶמְעָד׃

Vindicate me, O Yhwh,
For I have walked in my integrity;
And in Yhwh I trusted so that I will not be moved.

4.3 The Independence of the Line and Syntactic Ties beyond the Bicolon System

O'Connor also has observed that the linguistic correspondences of the biblical Hebrew verse are not confined to the bicolon system since in many instances the

linguistic phenomena extend beyond the boundary of the adjacent lines. Thus, for O'Connor, the line is the basic building block of the poem.

With respect to the benefit of taking the line as the basic building block of the poem, I have shown the independence of the line in the exegesis and lineation sections in Chapter Two. To summarize the support for this claim, consider again Ps 54:6-9; the MT lineation of these three verses, which I retain, exemplifies such independence of the line as linguistic correspondences extend beyond the bicolon system:

6 הִנֵּה אֱלֹהִים עֹזֵר לִי	Lo, God is a helper for me,
אֲדֹנָי בְּסֹמְכֵי נַפְשִׁי׃	The Lord is the supporter of my life.
7 יָשִׁוב הָרַע לְשֹׁרְרָי	He returns evil to my foes.
בַּאֲמִתְּךָ הַצְמִיתֵם׃	In your faithfulness, wipe them out.
8 בִּנְדָבָה אֶזְבְּחָה־לָּךְ	Then by freewill, I will sacrifice to you.
אֹודֶה שִׁמְךָ יְהוָה כִּי־טֹוב׃	I will praise Yhwh, because it is good;
9 כִּי מִכָּל־צָרָה הִצִּילָנִי	For he has delivered me from all troubles,
וּבְאֹיְבַי רָאֲתָה עֵינִי׃	So that my eye gazed upon my enemies.

The advantage of taking the line as the basic poetic building block is noted in vv. 6-7a where linguistic correspondence extends beyond the two lines/bicolon of v. 6 and splits the next two lines in v. 7. These three lines, vv. 6-7a, cannot be separated since line 7a is in apposition to the objects "supporter of my life" and "helper" in lines 6a and 6b.[235] The next five lines, vv. 7b-9b, together form a sub-unit; lines 7b-8a are conditional clauses; line 7b is a request (independent clause, protasis) and lines 8a is the promise to return the favor if the request is granted (dependent clauses, apodosis).[236] Again, the standard bicolon system does not hold in this case as syntactic links uniting the concluding two lines, v. 9a-b, to the preceding line v. 8b. These causal clauses subordinate to the preceding line and serve as the conclusion of the section.

4.4 The Syntactic Constraints

In Chapter Two of the dissertation, I have provided the Syntactic Description of the texts of the twenty Individual Laments. The result of the 737 lines of the twenty psalms of my corpus of texts confirmed HVS's claims concerning the syntactic constraints in biblical Hebrew verse. All of the lines conformed to the constraints of Syntactic Description; each contains zero to two clause predicators, one to four constituents, and two to five units per line. Using the case of one-clause-predicator lines as an example, my corpus of the twenty psalms consists of 531 one-clause-predicator

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[235] Cf. O'Connor, *HVS*, 131. The three lines in vv. 6-7a are independent clauses; one may argue against O'Connor that the grammatical feature "apposition" does not always constitute the syntactical dependency of the lines.

[236] Cf. Waltke and O'Connor, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 636.

lines out of the total 737 lines, 72%. Compare this figure to the 71% of the HVS's corpora of texts; the two ratios are almost equal.

Using O'Connor's system, in Chapter Three, I have classified the twenty-eight different line structures appeared in my corpus of texts, 737 lines in total, into four line types. What I have confirmed is significant in that the order of regularity of the four line types as claimed in HVS is accurate, i.e., Type I is the most regular and Type II the second most and so on.

4.5 The Problem of Outlining Themes and Major Motifs as Structure Divisions

With respect to structure divisions of the twenty psalms presented in Chapter Two, one notes that a batch, i.e., a poetic paragraph, did not normally fall into the predictable range of number of lines as described in HVS, and that structure breaks did not and cannot be determined by a predetermined number of lines.[237] Why is it so? Because the lengths of the poems are varied, and the changes in modes of speeches and content focuses of the poem are not subject to any rigid rules. Having stated that, what would then be the driving force behind the structure breaks decisions? If it were that the major motifs and themes mark the divisions, then why bother with Syntactic Description? As I have previously stated, the gross structure of any given psalm may be delineated syntactically in conjunction with the literary forms and content focuses, and structural divisions of the psalms based on the motifs and themes alone are often found to be erroneous in instances where clear thematic markers are lacking.

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[237] O'Connor, *HVS*, 529.

4.6 The Basic Problem of the Classic Individual Lament as a Genre

Many modern scholars have avoided the classic label "Individual Lament." The disagreement among scholars in terminology might have been prompted by the disagreement in the interpretations of the contents, forms, and functions of the classic Individual Laments as a genre group, as in the cases of Broyles, Miller, and also Kraus. Perhaps the arguments made by these scholars and others further reinforce the need for genre reclassification. The problem of genre labeling is apparent in the commentaries:[238]

a) Hans J. Kraus: *Prayer Songs Psalms*

b) Craig C. Broyles: *Prayer Psalms of the Individual*

c) Walter Brueggemann: *Psalms of Disorientation*

d) Patrick D. Miller: *Prayers for Help*

e) Erhard S. Gerstenberger: *Individual Complaint*

f) Sigmund Mowinckel: *Personal Psalms of Lamentation*

g) Claus Westermann: *Psalms of Petition*

4.7 Going from Known to Unknown

In Chapter Three, I have eliminated from my corpus of texts the psalms commonly recognized as having distinctive literary forms and contents that set them apart from the rest of the twenty psalms under study. Second, I have pointed out that a number of psalms in my corpus of texts contain changes in direction of address. Third, I have pointed out that the psalms in my corpus of texts are not God-lament psalms except for Psalms 43 and 102. Finally, I have also separated out those psalms having the vocative

[238] These works are cited in note 86.

Yhwh in the opening line from those having the vocative Elohîm in the opening line. Thus, the first task was to select, based on these known commonalities and variations, a set of uniform sample texts from the twenty psalms for the classification of syntactic structures of the lines.

The so-called "Elohistic Psalter," forty-one psalms (Psalms 42-83), shows a preference for God instead of Yhwh. If one agrees with Gunkel's genre designation, out of these forty-one Elohistic psalms fourteen are Individual Laments (Psalms 42,43; 51; 54, 55, 56, 57; 59; 61; 63; 64; 69; 70; 71). My corpus of texts includes a significant number of these fourteen Elohistic psalms, i.e., eleven (Psalms 43, 51, 54, 55, 56, 57, 59, 61, 64, 69, and 70).

After I have eliminated those psalms that are commonly recognized as having distinctive literary features that set them apart from the psalms in my corpus of texts, I divided the remaining psalms into two groups. The first group includes Psalms 5, 17, 35, 86, and 141; these five psalms contain no change in direction of address. The second group includes Psalms 54, 55, 56, 57, 59, 64, and 69. On the surface, these seven psalms share these commonalities besides having the vocative-imperative combination in the opening lines:

1) They contain shifts in the direction of address

2) They belong to the collection of Davidic psalms (Psalms 51-65; 68-70)

3) Their opening lines contain the vocative Elohîm in contrast to Psalms 5, 17, 35, 86, and 141; these five psalms begin with vocative Yhwh and contain no change in direction of address.

4) They are not God-lament psalms

These psalms belong together as a group because of these known commonalities. What was not identified was the commonality, if any, in syntactic structures of the lines, i.e., the Line Types, that unite them as a group; also unknown was the variation in syntactic structure of the lines that set them apart from the group of Psalms 5, 17, 35, 86, and 141. Thus, the next step was to analyze the syntactic structure of the lines of these psalms, and the result of the syntactical analyses in Chapter Three has illustrated that there are significant variations in the Line Types between these two groups of psalms.

4.8 The Opening Lines of other Psalms in the Larger Individual Lament Genre

Besides the twenty psalms in corpus of texts, the classic form-critical Individual Lament genre includes Psalms 3, 6, 13, 22, 38, and 39; these psalms contain God-lament motifs. In Chapter Three, I have shown that instead of the usual vocative-imperative-causal clause pattern in the opening lines, Psalms 3, 6, 13, 22, and 38 begin with the vocative-negative prohibitions or vocative-interrogative patterns expressing complaints against God. Also, as shown in the example of Psalm 39, the gross structures of those psalms that do not contain vocative-imperative combinations in the opening lines are different from those in my corpus of texts.

Using Syntactic Description, Chapters Two and Three of the dissertation have demonstrated that these thirty-seven psalms, specifically the twenty Individual Laments, have other similar structural features beyond the opening line. Chapter Three also has shown that the contents of these poems are structured differently than those composed without such an opening combination of vocative and imperative.

With respect to Syntactic Description, the dissertation has illustrated its usefulness in lineation and gross structure divisions. It has also confirmed HVS's claims concerning the constraint of the lines and the rate of occurrence of various line types. The dissertation also has shown that the twenty classic Individual Laments, more specifically, the representative sample texts of the twelve psalms share other commonalities in structural features beyond the opening line. In addition, as a group, these psalms share the distinctiveness in syntactic description with respect to line types and rates of occurrences.

4.9 Closing Remarks

The dissertation is directed to a two-fold objective besides the thesis: 1) it intends to convince the reader why Syntactic Description is one effective exegetical tool in lineation and structural analyses of the biblical Hebrew verse, and 2) it intends to present the syntactical analyses in support of genre classification. This two-fold objective is achieved without burdening the reader with strange technical terms and teeming numerical data. Thus, the decision to avoiding the HVS's analyses of the *weight of the paragraph* and the *Trope/non-Class I ratios* proved correct since the similarity and variation of the syntactic line structures across the texts studied could be identified without using those analyses.

As illustrated in Chapter Three, the two groups of psalms in my corpus of texts contain the commonalities and variations in the direction of speech, in the employment of the Deity names in the opening lines, and most notably in the rate of occurrence of the line types. As my analyses progressed in separating the psalms by the commonality in

the direction of speech, I ended up with two distinctive groups of psalms. The first group includes Psalms 5, 17, 35, 86, and 141, and the second group includes Psalms 54, 55, 56, 57, 59, 64, and 69. The latter group belongs to the Davidic collection, and the former group employs the Divine name Yhwh in the opening lines. As illustrated in the dissertation, there are literary variations in the psalms of David in this study as a corpus of texts besides the titles and superscriptions attached to these psalms.

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